

Oskar Morawetz: The Czech Prism

by

Radka Hanáková

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts

Faculty of Music
University of Toronto

© Copyright by Radka Hanáková 2020

Oskar Morawetz: The Czech Prism

Radka Hanáková

Doctor of Musical Arts

Faculty of Music
University of Toronto

2020

Abstract

Oskar Morawetz (1917 – 2007) carved out a successful career in Canada, yet he remains relatively obscure in his native Czechoslovakia (now the Czech Republic). The complexity of his social, political and cultural background framed his identity as a person and musician.

Understanding Czech–Canadian dualism is a vital component of grasping both his identity as a composer and reception of his music in the two countries.

The Czech Prism is a documentation of a multidisciplinary project I developed and carried out in the years 2015 – 2019 in both Morawetz’s homelands – Canada and the Czech Republic – in order to unveil the Czech identity of the composer. It is neither an analysis nor a biography, but it contains elements of both. As such it follows Morawetz’s footsteps geographically: beginning in Europe, then moving to Canada, and finally returning to the Czech Republic.

Among the most valuable contributions of this research is the discovery of a large amount of fascinating Czech correspondence in the Morawetz fonds in the Library and Archives Canada in Ottawa. The correspondence contains letters Morawetz exchanged with both his family members

and others in Czechoslovakia, mostly between the years 1939 and 1995. This is the first time that this material has been examined, translated, and incorporated into a research document.

In addition to the correspondence this study deals with other primary sources such as: contemporary press clippings; interviews with people from Morawetz's generation as well as with music experts in both Canada and the Czech Republic; a documentation of lecture-recitals carried out in the Czech Republic; and a performer's analysis of the work *Fantasy in D* (1948).

Set in the context of Czech-Canadian social, political, and cultural background, the information unearthed during this research project is sifted, examined, and perhaps most importantly revealed here for the first time. What emerges is a large tapestry of prisms that ultimately merge into an accurate image of a more complete identity of the composer of Czech and Canadian origin, Oskar Morawetz.

Dedications and Acknowledgments

This thesis is a largely collective work that is indebted to the many people who, directly or indirectly, inspired and contributed to either its content or to the logistic process behind it.

First of all, I would like to thank most sincerely my thesis supervisor, Professor Robin Elliott, for his tireless devotion, expertise, and kind, heartfelt support I felt throughout the process. He provided a precious, carefully guided space that enabled me to find and develop my own creative way of shaping this project from the beginning to the end.

I am grateful to my mentor and dear friend Joseph Macerollo for his encouragement, inspiration, contagious optimism, and endless belief in my work. His recommendations regarding my writing style contributed immensely to my ability to express my ideas in a more concise way in English, which is my second language.

A sincere thanks go to the other committee members: my piano Professor James Parker for his artistic insights into the *Fantasy in D* in particular, and for his guidance and support during my years at the University of Toronto; to Professor Gillian MacKay and Professor Elaine Keillor for sharing with me their personal experiences of performing Oskar Morawetz's music as well as for their thorough reading of my work.

I am very much indebted to Claudia Morawetz, the daughter of Oskar Morawetz. She not only created a website that was one of the largest sources of information for my research, she also generously provided me with additional materials from her private collection, and above all, she read the paper thoroughly just before its final submission. Her reflections, on the biographical facts especially, contributed greatly to the validity of the work.

Unique contributions and added value to this work have been brought by the personal accounts of the people whom I had the fortune and opportunity to interview on the topic. Among these people were personalities from Morawetz's family: Sonja Sinclair (his sister) and Claudia Morawetz (his daughter); Morawetz's friends from the Czech community in Toronto: Josef Čermák, Dagmar Rydlová, and Zdeněk Koníček; and music experts from both Canada and the Czech Republic: John Beckwith, Larysa Kuzmenko, Jan Kachlík, and Luboš Sluka.

I would also like to express my gratitude to the conservatories of music in the Czech Republic, namely to the Jaroslav Ježek Conservatory, Pardubice Conservatory, and Prague Conservatory, for enabling me to carry out the lecture-recitals for their students, whose impressions from the program I had prepared for them, enriched this work immensely.

Finally, I would like to thank to my parents. Despite the fact that they were not professional musicians themselves, they endowed me with all the love and support I ever needed to have become one.

I dedicate this thesis to the memory of my father, who passed away during this research and to my mother, who continues on her own providing a safe, unconditionally supportive and loving place that is called home.

Table of Contents

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Abstract..... | ii |
| Acknowledgments..... | iv |
| Table of Contents..... | vi |
| List of Appendices..... | ix |
| Chapter 1 Prelude..... | 1 |
| 1 Czech – European heritage; Family background; Canadian musical environment during Morawetz’s active career; Musical language of Oskar Morawetz; Reception of Morawetz’s music by his contemporary environment in Canada and North America..... | 1 |
| 1.1 Roots of national awareness: the Czech National Revival... .. | 2 |
| 1.1.1 Czech National Revival in music: creation of the national style | 3 |
| 1.2 The Morawetz family background..... | 5 |
| 1.2.1 First musical experiences: Prague..... | 9 |
| 1.3 Contemporary musical environment in Canada during Morawetz’s active career | 11 |
| 1.4 Musical language of Oskar Morawetz | 16 |
| 1.4.1 Musical studies..... | 17 |
| 1.4.2 Musical style | 21 |
| 1.4.3 Music as a drama and the theme of death. <i>Memorial to Martin Luther King and From the Diary of Anne Frank</i> | 23 |
| 1.4.4 Spirituality and music | 28 |
| 1.4.5 The role of the piano | 31 |
| 1.4.6 Orchestration..... | 33 |
| 1.4.7 Musical form..... | 34 |
| 1.5 Reception of Oskar Morawetz’s music by his contemporary environment in Canada and North America | 36 |
| 1.5.1 The Gould connection..... | 38 |
| 1.5.2 My teacher, Oskar Morawetz: an interview with Larysa Kuzmenko | 39 |

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 1.6 Chapter conclusion..... | 43 |
| Chapter 2 Morawetz and the Czechoslovak Community in Toronto..... | 45 |
| 2 Immigration in Canada; Czechoslovak immigration to Canada; Czech music in Canada; The Morawetz family and the Czechoslovak community in Toronto; Oskar Morawetz and the Czechoslovak community in Toronto | 45 |
| 2.1 The history of Czechoslovak immigration to Canada..... | 47 |
| 2.1.1 Major Czechoslovak institutions in Canada and the governing philosophy of Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk..... | 49 |
| 2.2 Czech music in Canada..... | 55 |
| 2.2.1 Visiting Czech musical ensembles, conductors, and interpreters in Canada | 55 |
| 2.2.2 Composers of the Czech origin in Canada..... | 56 |
| 2.2.3 Music and the Czechoslovak community in Toronto | 58 |
| 2.3 The Morawetz family and the Czechoslovak community in Toronto..... | 59 |
| 2.3.1 Czech Patriarch Hero to Fellow Newcomers: Richard Morawetz..... | 60 |
| 2.4 Oskar Morawetz and the Czechoslovak community in Canada | 64 |
| 2.4.1 Performances of Morawetz’s works by Czech performers and ensembles..... | 68 |
| 2.4.2 Interviews with Morawetz’s Czech compatriots in Toronto..... | 72 |
| Chapter 3 The Full Circle: Morawetz in Czechoslovakia/the Czech Republic | 81 |
| 3 Historical evidence; Czech contemporary musical environment..... | 81 |
| 3.1 Czech music after World War II: historical overview of the period between 1945 and 1989; Oskar Morawetz and his Czechoslovak connection | 83 |
| 3.1.1 Morawetz and his Czechoslovak connection..... | 86 |
| 3.3.1.1 History of performances of Morawetz's music in Czechoslovakia/the Czech Republic | 86 |
| 3.3.1.2 Correspondence between Morawetz and Czechoslovakia/the Czech Republic | 93 |
| 3.2 Czech contemporary musical environment..... | 111 |
| 3.2.2 <i>Fantasy in D</i> : the performer’s perspective | 112 |

| | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 3.2.3 Lecture – recitals at the Czech conservatories of music | 117 |
| Bibliography | 125 |
| Appendices..... | 129 |

List of Appendices

| | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Appendix A: Reviews of <i>Piano Concerto No. 1</i> | 129 |
| Appendix B: A Letter from Larysa Kuzmenko to Robert Falck, the Associate Dean of the Faculty of Music at the University of Toronto... .. | 130 |
| Appendix C: Correspondence between Oskar Morawetz and his parents... .. | 131 |
| Appendix D: Miscellaneous... .. | 132 |
| Appendix E: Interviews with the Czech music experts... .. | 141 |

Chapter 1

Prelude

1 Czech – European heritage; Family background; Canadian musical environment during Morawetz’s active career; Musical language of Oskar Morawetz; Reception of Morawetz’s music by his contemporary environment in Canada and North America

“Postwar immigration brought the world in microcosm to Canadian shores.” (Gould)

It was on June 17, 1940, after almost ten months of hardships escaping the Nazis, that Oskar Morawetz (1917 – 2007) finally arrived in Canada, a country which adopted him and provided a shelter and a home for him and his family.¹

In Canada, Morawetz soon established himself as one of the country’s leading classical music composers. It was in Canada that he carved out a successful and prolific career which reached far beyond the Canadian borders. His works have been programmed worldwide: in North and South America, Asia, Europe and Australia. A list of outstanding performers and conductors who have performed Morawetz’s music includes names such as Zubin Mehta, Seiji Ozawa, Sir Charles Mackerras, Rafael Kubelík, Karel Ančerl, Glenn Gould, Anton Kuerti, Rudolf Firkušný, Angela Hewitt, Mstislav Rostropovich, Yo-Yo Ma, Shauna Rolston, and many other distinguished musicians.

Despite his enormous success he remains relatively obscure in his native Czechoslovakia (now the Czech Republic). In this paper, I will juxtapose the cultural traditions and political settings of both the Czech Republic and Canada in order to unveil how the complexity of his political and cultural background framed his identity as a person and as a musician.

¹ Unless otherwise indicated, all Oskar Morawetz’s biographical facts displayed in this paper are sourced from the website www.oskarmorawetz.com. The website was created by the composer’s daughter Claudia Morawetz and is dedicated to his life and legacy.

1.1 Roots of national awareness: the Czech National Revival

“Despite their strong commitment to the avant-garde, the Czechs are nevertheless associated with conservative trends. The reason for this involves what may be called the ‘critical cement’ of Smetana’s design for a Czech style: the reliance on folk music and folk stylizations.”

(Beckermann)

A vital part of Czech history has been a struggle for independence coupled with political and cultural autonomy. This is essential in evaluating the aesthetics and philosophy of Czech music circles.

Given its small size as well as geographical position in Central Europe, the Czech lands have always been in a vulnerable position towards their stronger neighbours. Historically, the Czech lands were under Habsburg rule from 1526 until 1918, when the Czechoslovak Republic was established. During World War II, the Nazis took over and Czechoslovakia became the German Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia (1939 – 1945).² The Communist party took power in 1948 and was sustained by the Russian occupation of Czechoslovakia from 1968 to 1989. Democracy was not revived until the Velvet Revolution in 1989.

Almost all prominent Czech composers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries demonstrated a significant commitment and desire to define their music as Czech. The beginning of this tendency stemmed from the period of the Czech National Revival, which took place in the Czech lands during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The Czech National Revival was a cultural movement. By fostering national self-confidence and identity, by reviving the Czech language and culture, which was being oppressed by the Germanisation politics of the Habsburg Emperors in the nineteenth century, this Revival is the reason that the Czech language has survived as a spoken language within the nation today.³

² Slovakia became the independent Slovak Republic on 14 March 1939.

³ The efforts to prove that the Czech culture has as strong roots as the German were supported by the alleged “discovery” of two medieval manuscripts of poetry *Queen’s Court Manuscript* and *Green Mountain Manuscript*, which in their origin predated *Nibelungenlied*, at the beginning of the nineteenth century. There were doubts concerning the authenticity of the manuscripts throughout the nineteenth century, but it was not until 1886, when Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk took a skeptic posture in his journal *Atheum* by publishing an article by Jan Gebauer about the need of a further research regarding the authenticity of the documents, that the manuscripts were proved to

The conflicts between the Habsburg monarchy and the Bohemian estates date as far back as the sixteenth century and culminated in the *Battle of White Mountain* (1620), where Bohemian estates were defeated and Habsburg absolutism was established.

Religion had a primary significance in the conflicts. While the Habsburgs were Roman Catholic, the majority of Czechs were adherents of the Protestant Church, founded and based on the Reformation ideas of a Czech Roman Catholic priest, theologian, and rector of the Charles University in Prague named Jan Hus (1369 – 1415). Hus in his teaching criticized the Roman Catholic Church and advocated for the supremacy of the Bible over that of the Roman Catholic Church. Ultimately, he was convicted of heresy at the Council of Constance and burnt at the stake. His teaching inspired a movement called *Hussitism*. After the Habsburgs took absolute power over the Czech lands in 1620, a violent reinstatement of the Catholic Church took place, which caused a major emigration of Czech intellectuals who resented having to give up their religious beliefs.

The Czech language was essentially exterminated from official and scholarly annals and it survived only as a regional language among peasants, who were mostly illiterate. The future leaders of the Czech National Revival movement originated in these rural communities.

The primary commitment of the Czech National Revival was to preserve the Czech language. Since the majority of the peasant people could not read, the most effective way to deliver the progressive ideas of the movement to them was through theatre and music.

1.1.1 Czech National Revival in music: creation of the national style

In an effort to revive the Czech language at schools, the generations of schoolmasters (*kantori*) of the eighteenth and the nineteenth century found the most powerful tool was music.⁴ It

be inauthentic. This resulted in a wave of hatred against Masaryk, since the manuscripts were seen as a symbol of national conscience by many.

⁴ The terms such as “kantor” as well as “musikant” referred to both social and moral status of a teacher/musician. The modesty of the occupation as well as its mission was considered highly as a virtue: “An old Czech kantor shall always remain as a beautiful example of a modest Czech musician who has devotedly served his people. Music did not represent only a living necessity for him, but a fulfilment of his life.”- Kovařík, Vladimír. *Vývoj hudební výchovy na českých školách* [Evolution of the Music Education at the Czech Schools]. Prague. 1960, 73.

partly due to the legacy of Jan Amos Komenský (1592 – 1670)⁵ with his emphasis on positive influence of music in an educational process, that music and singing became an organic part of elementary education. The schoolmasters were collecting folksongs, singing them to students, and composing their own music. The most prominent composers from this period were Jakub Jan Ryba (1765 – 1815)⁶ and František Škroup (1801 – 1862).⁷

The joint effort of schoolmasters and other musicians became an integral and crucial part of the Revival movement. The idea to sustain the sovereignty of Czech culture as well as its creative potential was crucial in music as much as in other areas. Integrating national symbols from history into music and Czech original literature has become a common practice ever since the eighteenth century. Through reviving milestones and memorable events and figures of the nation's past, and by employing the beauty and the aesthetic potential of the Czech language, the composers were strengthening the self-assurance of the Czech people.

There are many examples of the ways the Czech composers associated their music with the nation's past. Citations of the old Czech chants such as *Ktož sú boží bojovníci* or *Svatý Václave*, as well as utilizing topics related to the most celebrated figures from Czech history (such as Jan Hus, Dalibor, Libuše), has become a tradition ever since the time of Bedřich Smetana, who had emerged as a national symbol of Czech music.

This movement culminated in the oeuvres of Bedřich Smetana (1824 – 1884), Antonín Dvořák (1841 – 1904), Josef Suk (1874 – 1935), and Zdeněk Fibich (1850 – 1900), and the tradition can be traced through to today.⁸

⁵ Jan Amos Komenský [John Amos Comenius] (1592 – 1670) was a Czech philosopher, pedagogue, and theologian. For his modern and prophetic philosophy of teaching he has been considered worldwide as the father of modern education.

⁶ Jakub Jan Ryba (1765 – 1815) was a Czech composer and collector of folksongs. Besides his symphonic, chamber and organ works, he is most famous for his *Česká mše vánoční* [Czech Christmas Mass] to a Czech text, which has been a traditional and widely popular part of concert programs around the Christmas season in the Czech lands.

⁷ František Škroup (1801 – 1862) was a Czech conductor and composer. He is an author of the first Czech opera *Dráteník*, and other operas on both Czech and German librettos. The Czech anthem *Kde domov můj?* originated from his music for a play *Fidlovačka, aneb žádný hněv a žádná rvačka*. The text of the anthem is unique in the context of anthems of other European countries. It reveals the nation's deep affection for its land by praising the beauty of its nature.

⁸ Appreciation of tradition and therefore a tendency towards rather conservative trends has always been a feature of Czech composers. At the same time their commitment to a European avant-garde is undeniable in the styles of

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, Prague became a major centre of music. High level music education institutions were established such as Prague Conservatory (1808) and Organ School (1830). As well, major performance venues and music ensembles such as the National Theatre (1881), the State Opera (1888) and the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra (1896) were founded, thereby confirming Prague's culturally strong position in Central Europe.

1.2 The Morawetz family background

Oskar Morawetz was one of four children born to Frida and Richard Morawetz. The Morawetz family had had a long tradition in industrial business and they were among the wealthiest and most influential people in Czechoslovakia. Besides a cotton factory, which was founded jointly by Richard's grandfather Philip Morawetz and Philip's brother-in-law, Moritz Oberlander, in 1852, Richard owned a large estate in the area of the small town Světlá nad Sázavou.⁹

Morawetz's family could be referred to as "aristocratic" in positive terms. They were influential, wealthy, and well educated people with a strong social commitment towards the society in which they lived.¹⁰ Richard was actively involved not only in business public life (board of the Czech Textile Manufacturers' Association, member of the Industrial Council of Vienna, President of

certain major Czech composers. As Michael Beckerman put it: "Czech composers were writing tonal music well into 1950s. (...) The 'Czech style' only emerges when both Czech and non-Czech elements are filtered through this all-embracing world view." – Beckerman, Michael. "In Search of Czechness in Music." *19th-Century Music* 10: 61 – 73, 1986, 68 – 71.

⁹ Retrieved from <http://www.oskarmorawetz.com/Tabs/TabPerson/Svetla.php> (18 March 2017). For a picture of the castle the Morawetz family owned in Světlá, please see Appendix 4. The castle in Světlá was only a part of the estate owned by Richard Morawetz in Czechoslovakia. It is documented that by 1916 Richard Morawetz owned an area of a size of 3520,13 hectares (approximately over 8698 acres). This included agricultural and forest grounds with two castles – Světlá and Zboží. Constituent parts of the estate included a distillery and a starch factory in Světlá, and a starch factory in Zboží. The family took a patronage over three Catholic churches that belonged to the estate. It is documented that the family provided these churches with as much care as they provided to the Jewish community in Světlá. - Hořejš, Miloš, "Arizace pozemkového majetku židovských elit v Protektorátu Čechy a Morava na příkladu rodiny Morawetzů" [Arization of the Land Estate of the Jewish Elite on the Example of the Morawetz Family] in *Šlechticův Žid Žid šlechticem* [A Nobleman's Jew a Jew – a Nobleman], Spyra, Janusz, "ed." Zářický, Aleš "ed." Županič, Jan "ed." Ostravská univerzite v Ostravě, Akademia im. Jana Długosza w Czestochowie, Ostrava, Czestochowa. 2015, 187.

¹⁰ A comparison between the Morawetz and the Baťa family comes to mind. While the Morawetz's field was cotton, the Baťa clan had a long history in the shoe industry. Both Baťa and Morawetz were visionaries clearly ahead of their time and they both made a significant impact on the society they lived in. Interestingly enough, both families eventually moved and settled in Toronto where they both established successful businesses. Sonja Morawetz Sinclair (b. 1921), the sister of Oskar Morawetz, wrote a book about Tomáš J. Baťa, *Baťa: Shoemaker to the World* Toronto: Stoddart, 1990.

the International Cotton Congress in 1932), but he was also a member of many cultural and social organizations (Národněhospodářský ústav při České Akademii císaře Františka Josefa pro vědy, slovesnost a umění [National-Economic Institute at the Czech Academy of the Emperor Franz Joseph for the Science, Literature, and Art]; Textilní skupina Technického muzea království českého [Textile Group of the Technical Museum of the Czech Kingdom]; Český klub automobilistů [Club of the Czech Automobilists]; Ústřední jednota českého herectva [Central Union of the Czech Actors]; Klub za starou Prahu [Club for the Old Prague]; Národní klub [National Club]; Český pánský klub [Club of the Czech Men]; Česká zemská komise pro ochranu dětí a péči o mládež v Království českém [Czechland Panel for the Protection of Children and the Youth in the Czech Kingdom]; Jubilejní fond spolku pro podporu nemajetných židovských žáků na českých školách [Jubilee Fund for the Support of the Dispossessed Jewish Pupils at the Czech Schools]; etc.).¹¹

As a part of his business duties, Richard Morawetz travelled extensively to different places in Europe, the United States, and Asia. He particularly liked England for the “freedom, sportsmanship and general atmosphere” of the country.¹² He remained an anglophile for the rest of his life and his passion for the country played a major role in his decision to finally settle in Canada, which he considered to be an extension of England.¹³

As stated above, social conscience was an important feature of Richard’s activities throughout his life. He was truly a man ahead of his time. Here are just a few examples of his many contributions to society: raising money for a sanatorium for people with tuberculosis from his lectures about his travels; along with his brother Moritz he founded a modern day-care for his factory workers’ children; during the WW1 era in the years 1915 – 1916, from his own capital, he founded and ran a private lazaret on his castle in Zboží; throughout WW1 he financially supported many charitable associations and to many children he enabled a summer stay at his

¹¹ Hořejš, 183 - 199.

¹² Retrieved from <http://www.oskarmorawetz.com/Tabs/TabPerson/Svetla.php> (18 March 2017).

¹³ There is a note from Richard’s future wife Frida that she wrote in her diary after she met Richard. She described him as an “enormously intelligent man, who has seen a great deal and can talk about it, he is thoroughly good and noble.” She was fascinated by his education and by a broad spectrum of activities spanning travelling, photography, acting, and his human involvement in the factory and public life. He also impressed her with the “description of the castle in Světlá, which must be marvellous, and the park which belongs to it.” – Ibid.

castle in Zboží. For these activities during the War he received the Officer Honorable Badge of the Red Cross with the war decoration.¹⁴ After the war he extended his financial support to Deyl's Institute for the Blind, Jedlička Institute for the Crippled, Association for the Care of the Mentally Sick, and the Israel Orphanage for Boys.¹⁵

Richard's various activities as a Maecenas are also documented. Apart from a plan to turn the castle in Světlá into a centre of a cultural life for the entire area,¹⁶ Richard donated more than 150 artefacts from his trip to Asia to the Museum of Industry in Hradec Králové. After WW1 he was also supporting Russian émigré artists.¹⁷

During his professional career Richard developed contacts among the most influential people in Czechoslovakia in business, politics, and culture. His contacts with the first democratic President of Czechoslovakia, Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk (1850 – 1937),¹⁸ and his son Jan Masaryk (1886 – 1948)¹⁹ are well documented on the Morawetz website and will be elaborated upon in the next chapter.²⁰

Being an admirer of art, in the approximately two decades until his emigration to Canada in 1939, Richard Morawetz collected different kinds of artefacts such as: paintings (about thirty works, including comprehensive collection of Dutch paintings of the 17th century, among others), drawings, graphic art, sketches, sculptures, a collection of books printed from the 15th century to the 19th century, manuscripts and personal documentation in literature (Čech, Dyk, Havlíček, Machar, Němcová, Třebízský, Vrchlický), and music (Dvořák, Mysliveček, Smetana, Tomášek,

¹⁴ Hořejš, 188.

¹⁵ Ibid. In this regard, Oskar truly followed his father's footsteps. As Josef Čermák, his tax lawyer remarked: "It was remarkable to see how many organizations he was financially supporting." – Čermák, Josef. Interview with the author (15 March 2019).

¹⁶ The WW2 interrupted this plan and thus as such it has never been realized.

¹⁷ Hořejš, 191.

¹⁸ Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk (1850 – 1937) – the first democratic president of Czechoslovakia.

¹⁹ Jan Masaryk (1886 – 1948) – a Czech diplomat. He was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs for the Czech government in exile when it was established in London in 1940 and held the office until his death in 1948.

²⁰ Retrieved from: <http://www.oskarmorawetz.com/Tabs/TabPerson/Parentage.php> (15 March 2017).

Wagner). The collection later became known in Czechoslovakia as “The Morawetz Collection.” The value of the collection was enormous for its both historical and artistic merits.²¹

Being born to a family of such a prosperous businessman and truly enlightened person represented for the young Oskar both a great opportunity to grow up in a noble and sophisticated environment, and the prospect of never having to deal with material troubles. He had access to the best international education (his first piano teacher was French). But he also experienced “terrible worries” when it came to his wish to become a professional musician. As Morawetz put it himself:

I wanted to become a musician, and, of course, in the environment in which I lived, and I mean to say it was the characteristic of the whole Europe by that time, a person whose father was a prosperous businessman couldn't possibly become a musician. I was not the only one: Tchaikovsky was prohibited by his father to become a composer, Rimsky-Korsakov too. My father said: “You would have to live very poorly as a musician,” and he was right. There was no union for musicians so unless you were Toscanini, the life was extremely difficult. Oh, my parents were very generous to me. They gave me the best teachers and so on, wanted that I know as much music as possible, and so on, but the idea that I wanted to become a musician was something what was almost ridiculed by my relatives. It all changed only after Hitler came. Until then, music was a hobby to me.²²

Having great respect towards his father, Oskar followed family advice and entered a so called “Practice School” (Cvičná škola) (1926) at first, and then was in high school in Prague²³ (1927 – 1935), followed by an enrollment in a forestry university program in Prague.²⁴ In Prague he also resumed his music studies and took private piano lessons with the Director of the State

²¹ Mainly thanks to the help of two of Richard's friends in Czechoslovakia, Jan Kábrt and Josef Cibulka, most of the works were saved from the Nazis and were placed in sites such as the National Gallery, Memorial of National Literature, and the Czech Museum of Music. Even though some of the works were returned to the Morawetz family after 1989 in a restitution, the value the family received was shamelessly low compared to the actual merit of the artefacts. This injustice, along with the efforts of some people to dishonour the name and legacy of Richard Morawetz in Czechoslovakia, caused Oskar Morawetz much distress in the 1990s. – Sonja Sinclair. Interview with the author (16 March 2019).

²² *Prof. Oskar Morawetz*. Dir. Josef Čermák, Československá Televize Okno, Edice Profily, 1991.

²³ The Lyceum in Truhlařská Street in Prague.

²⁴ Retrieved from: <http://www.oskarmorawetz.com/Tabs/TabPerson/Prague.php> (20 March 2017). According to Oskar's brother Herbert, Richard Morawetz had planned for Oskar eventually to take over the responsibility for the forests in Světlá the family owned. The idea was that from this income Oskar would pay for his hobbies, music in particular. – Kašparová, Alena – Kamp, Michal. *Židé na Havlíčkovobrodsku* [Jews in the Havlíčkův Brod Area]. Havlíčkův Brod 2008, 266-277.

Conservatory Karel Hoffmeister (1869 – 1952),²⁵ and in basic rudiments of music theory with the Czech composer Jaroslav Křička (1882 – 1969).²⁶

Shortly before the threat of the Nazi conquest of Europe, the Jewish Morawetz family emigrated to Canada. Oskar's father yielded to Oskar's desire to follow music as a professional pursuit, sending him to study music in Vienna with Julius Isserlis (1889-1968) and later to Paris to study with Lazare Lévy (1882-1964).

1.2.1 First musical experiences: Prague

“I grew up in Czechoslovakia and almost everything I know about music I have learned in Prague.” (O. Morawetz, Letter to Jiří Dvořáček)

Oskar Morawetz moved to Prague in 1927 when he was ten years old and stayed there until his move to Vienna in 1937. Prague by that time had a rich musical life, with centres such as the National Theatre, National Opera House, as well as the great concert halls Smetana Hall in the Municipal House, and Žofín Palace.²⁷ The opportunity to hear an opera frequently or to attend weekly rehearsals of the Czech Philharmonic represented tremendous benefits in Morawetz's musical development.²⁸ It was still the time when recordings were not widely available and

²⁵ Karel Hoffmeister was one of the most influential figures in music and music education in Prague. He admired romantic music by Dvořák, Suk, Novák, and Smetana in particular. He wrote monographs on Dvořák, Smetana, and others. Among his pupils in piano performance are musicians such as Josef Páleníček, and František Rauch.

²⁶ Jaroslav Křička (1882 – 1969) was a Czech composer, conductor and teacher. He was a friend with Vítězslav Novák as well as with Alexandr Glazunov and George Szell. Presumably, it may be to Křička's credit that Morawetz got introduced to Szell, who offered Morawetz a position as his assistant as a conductor of the Prague Opera. There are two versions of reasons why Morawetz declined the offer. While Paul Gonder in his thesis on Morawetz states that Morawetz did not feel qualified enough for the job, Morawetz's daughter Claudia understood that Morawetz declined the job because he really wanted to pursue being a pianist. Gonder, Jonathan Paul. “Style and Form in Selected Works of Oskar Morawetz,” Master's thesis, University of Western Ontario, 1979, 2. - Morawetz, Claudia. Conversation with the author (5 September 2019).

²⁷ Another significant cultural venue of Prague – Rudolfinum – was founded in 1885. The first performance of the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra under the baton of Antonín Dvořák in 1896 took place in its major hall, which was later named after him (Dvořák Hall). It has been a home stage of the Czech Philharmonic ever since, except for the years between 1918 – 1946 when the hall served different purposes.

²⁸ It was during these rehearsals, that Morawetz developed a close friendship with a composer and accomplished pianist, but most importantly one of the greatest Czech conductors in history, Rafael Kubelík (1914 – 1996). The founder of the Prague Spring International Music Festival had his debut with the Czech Philharmonic at the age of nineteen. He emigrated after the Communist coup in 1948 to the USA and became the music director of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in 1950. After he resigned that position in 1953 he became the principal conductor of Concertgebouw Orchestra, from 1955 – 1958 he served as a musical director of the Royal Opera in Covent Garden, and later on he became the principal conductor of the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra in Munich, where he

hearing a live performance gave him a major opportunity to hear a variety of tone colours in the orchestra as well as to expand his knowledge of the symphonic repertoire. He experienced personalities such as Sergei Prokofiev and Igor Stravinsky playing the piano and Paul Hindemith conducting.²⁹ Morawetz truly embraced the opportunity for varied musical experiences and became immersed in the musical and cultural environment in Prague. Subsequently, all these experiences coalesced in the creation of his personal style.

More than anything else, he loved opera, as he claimed, because “there was action with the music.”³⁰ The first live opera he ever heard was a performance of Carl Maria von Weber’s *Der Freischütz* which took place in Prague.³¹ During this time he also visited Bayreuth twice to see Wagner’s operas *Tannhäuser*, *Parsifal* (conducted by Arturo Toscanini), and *Der Ring des Nibelungen*.³²

These experiences activated a life-long admiration for the genre. According to his recollections, he went to hear an opera performance every weekend. He bought the score of the opera, and, being a very fast sight-reader, played it through from beginning to end. “I had an ambition which actually never left me until today, to get to know as much music as possible, and I think by the time I was thirteen, I went through – I counted once – close to twenty-five operas.”³³

Morawetz’s obsession with reading through musical scores even affected his academic standing. His sister Sonja recalls that “Oskar never had good marks at school. It was because during

stayed for 18 years. After the fall of communism he was invited to return back home and to conduct Smetana’s *Má Vlast* [My Country] with the Czech Philharmonic at the Prague Spring Festival in 1990. At this event, which was one of the most memorable moments in the history of the Czech Philharmonic, and Czech music in general, his friend Oskar Morawetz was present. Kubelík maintained the friendship with Morawetz throughout his life. Kubelík conducted Morawetz’s *Carnival Overture* with the Chicago Philharmonic in Chicago in 1952.

²⁹ Prof. Oskar Morawetz.

³⁰ Retrieved from: <http://www.oskarmorawetz.com/Tabs/TabMusician/MusicStudies.php> (1 April 2017).

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ Cornfield, Eitan. “Morawetz Documentary.” *Oskar Morawetz: Canadian Composers Portraits*. Centrediscs CMCCD 8702. 2002.

classes he was always busy reading music under the table. But of course, he always managed to pass.”³⁴

Curiously, he never attempted to write an opera himself. “This form has always been in the back of my mind. But unfortunately, I find that a good libretto is of great importance and it is a difficult thing to find. Gifted poets are not necessarily good librettists and most of the operas in the standard repertoire would not be successful if they were being premiered now because of the weakness of the lines.”³⁵ In an interview in 1959 for the *Globe and Mail* he revealed the practical and economic limitations behind this: “It [opera] is still my first love, but I find it difficult to reconcile myself to the sacrifice of spending perhaps three years composing a work and of having it performed only once, if that. The cost of producing an opera is prohibitive anyway, but when the work is unknown the thought becomes frightening. Besides this, though there are many opera lovers, most people want to hear only the familiar operas.” In this interview it was noted that “his songs counteract in part his frustration in opera.”³⁶

The closest Morawetz ever came to write an opera is his operetta *Father William*.

1.3 Contemporary musical environment in Canada during Morawetz’s active career

“I was in the middle of great circles and enjoying myself in Paris. All the pictures I had seen of Canada were vast, barren lands, with horses. It seemed to me like going to the wilderness, with no musical culture.” (Morawetz, *Escape*)

The music environment in Canada in the first decades of the twentieth century had two major branches, each with their own aesthetics and musical centres: the French-Canadian tradition and the Anglo-Canadian tradition. While the province of Quebec had Montreal as its centre of French-Canadian music, Toronto represented the centre for the Anglo-Canadian camp of composers and musicians. The climate was largely conservative and rooted heavily in the

³⁴ Sonja Sinclair. Interview with the author (16 March 2019).

³⁵ Kidd, George. “Composer Morawetz: Need Good Book for My Opera.” *Telegram*, Oct. 6, 1962. Note: Unless indicated otherwise, all reviews and newspaper articles are from the Oskar Morawetz Collection, Files 2004 – 2018, National Library of Canada.

³⁶ Fusco, Maria. “Morawetz Still Pursues First Love.” *Globe and Mail* 14 Nov. 1959.

standard repertoire and styles, in both music schools and concert stages; indeed, “to audiences in Canada the bulk of Bach, Mozart, Brahms, and Debussy was still music to become familiar with.”³⁷

During World War II, the climate of the musical world in Canada changed tremendously. One of the significant aspects of this change was an influx of immigrants from the European countries affected by the war. Glenn Gould described the unique Canadian context at that time and the prospect of musical migration to Canada:

During and since the war the climate for composers especially has changed immensely because there have been so many sources of immigration of people from Central and Eastern Europe who had a very strong musical background of diverse kinds and this is the healthiest thing that could have happened because there have been twelve-tone composers of the caliber of István Anhalt³⁸ in Montreal and people of more conservative bent like Oskar Morawetz who came from Czechoslovakia. And this has added immeasurably to music in Canada. Not that their works or they themselves are very well known, perhaps. But that they are around, they have teaching positions and they have influenced younger people and so on, and not only influenced them individually but collectively to show that there are many directions one may take. Music at the moment is at the crossroads and there are so many possibilities for it, that everybody has a chance to be right, really. And I think this is a fascinating thing. And in a country like Canada, much more so than in the European countries where, although there is no longer a national tradition, there is no longer a Viennese School that broke up in the thirties and so on, but nevertheless to an extent it still does exist. A music that is in some way identifiable with the country. Whereas in Canada it does not exist at all. Everyone is for himself. Which is in one sense a bad thing but on the other hand it is a tremendous strength, individually. But there is a lot of Canadian music which is I think of first grade caliber and a few things that are extraordinary.³⁹

When Oskar Morawetz arrived in Toronto in 1940, the city was already home to three major musical institutions:

The Toronto Conservatory of Music (est. 1886)

University of Toronto, Faculty of Music (est. 1918)

Toronto Symphony Orchestra (est. 1922)

³⁷ Kallmann, Helmut. “Music History”, *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, 2.7. 2006 (retrieved 15 May 2018).

³⁸ István Anhalt (1919 – 2012), a Hungarian-Canadian composer.

³⁹ Tovell, Vincent. “At Home with Glenn Gould.” *Canadian Broadcasting Corporation*: 4 Dec. 1959.

Given the above, it was not a complete wilderness to which Morawetz arrived in Canada. Quite the contrary, Canada, and more especially Toronto, provided him with a nurturing artistic environment. Having been given the opportunity to study piano under the excellent teacher Alberto Guerrero, Morawetz found himself in the company of classmates such as Glenn Gould and John Beckwith. However, in comparison to great musical centres such as Prague, Vienna and Paris, the musical life in Canada was still in its early stages of evolution.

The musical establishment prevailing in Canada in the first decades of the twentieth century was largely conservative and deeply rooted in the nineteenth century. The leading figures of musical life – representatives of an older British conservative style – were the composers Healey Willan (1880 – 1968), Leo Smith (1881 – 1952), and Sir Ernest MacMillan (1893 – 1973). All of them also held teaching positions at the University of Toronto and therefore had a direct impact on the younger generation of musicians. The younger generation of composers was frustrated by the conservative music climate in both music schools⁴⁰ and concert halls.⁴¹ This conservative climate along with the lack of musical infrastructure created a specific context which led to a generational conflict between the “old” and “new” schools.

⁴⁰ John Beckwith (b. 1927), a Canadian composer and writer, described the frustration he experienced as a young student of composition at the University of Toronto: “Taking a bachelor’s degree in music at Toronto in the 1930s and 1940s was as thoroughly English an experience as could be found anywhere in Canadian university life of the period. Thursdays you went in threes and fours to Healey Willan, who blew pipe smoke at you, told you witty anecdotes about English notables of the turn of the century, and called you ‘old man.’ Mondays you went in similar small convoys to Leo Smith, who stroked his white pencil-line moustache, caressed the piano keys, and called you ‘dear boy...’ But I found a bewildering gap between their programs and priorities and music as I was experiencing it as a young performer and aspiring composer. In the same year that I heard for the first time the Bartók quartets – a stunning discovery – I prepared for a viva-voce test in which the prescribed score was a particularly insipid choral composition by...one of MacMillan’s teachers.” – Wolters-Fredlund, Benita: “A League against Willan? The Early Years of the Canadian League of Composers,” 1951 – 1960, *Journal of the Society for American Music*, Vol.5, No.4 (2011): 451.

⁴¹ John Weinzwieg (1913 – 2006) a Canadian composer, criticised the conservatism in his 1942 article “The New Music”: “The concert hall has become a museum where the so-called ‘classics’ are perpetuated to the exclusion of contemporary music by a dictatorial patronage that plays upon the economic instability of the symphony orchestra. ... It is surely a sign of artistic decadence when the public and even many scholars and performers regard music as one of the dead languages used for expressive purposes only by men of the past. ... Must contemporary music await the excavations of some future archeologist? The composer needs his public now – sorry, he cannot wait.” – Henniger, Richard, ed., “Writings by John Weinzwieg,” *Les Cahiers canadiens de musique/The Canadian Music Book 6* (1973): 51.

The young composers rallied around John Weinzweig, called for collective action, and founded a group called Canadian League of Composers (est. 1951).⁴² The mission of the group was “dedication to the new sound” especially to Bartók, Stravinsky and Schoenberg.⁴³

Their three main objectives were:

- 1) To provide an organization and facilities by means of which Canadian composers may advance their joint and several interests
- 2) To promote the composition and playing of creative music
- 3) To stimulate the interest of the people of Canada in the work of their composers.⁴⁴

The group soon earned labels such as “radicals” or “ultra-radicals.”⁴⁵ Even though the style within the group spanned from serialism, polytonality, and chromaticism, to folk-inflected styles, the preferences were on the side of the more radical approach of the so called “Toronto twelve-tone school.”⁴⁶ To some degree these composers were favored more than the others and it was particularly reflected in the frequency of having their works performed.⁴⁷

After they established a solid reputation, the league shifted its focus from concert-giving activities to lobbying efforts. The group expanded largely and today it includes more than 500 members.⁴⁸

Benita Wolters-Fredlund summed up the context and legacy of the group:

The league’s tendency to feature works perceived as inaccessible gained them a reputation as modernists and even radicals. Although very few composers were truly radical avant-

⁴² Initially, membership was by invitation. The members were composers such as Jean-Papineau-Couture, Kenneth Peacock, François Morel, Clermont Pépin, Walter Kaufmann, and Oskar Morawetz, among others.

⁴³ Benita Wolters-Fredlund: “A League against Willan? The Early Years of the Canadian League of Composers, 1951 – 1960,” *Journal of the Society for American Music*, Vol.5, No.4 (2011): 445 – 480.

⁴⁴ CLC Scrapbooks, *Canadian League of Composers Constitution*, (1951): 1.

⁴⁵ Wolters-Fredlund, 452.

⁴⁶ This group included John Weinzweig and his students Somers, Beckwith, and Adaskin, beside others. - Wolters-Fredlund, 462.

⁴⁷ Wolters-Fredlund, 462.

⁴⁸ Wolters-Fredlund, 464.

gardists by European or New York standards, in Canada a member of the league was considered to be in the avant-garde of their time. Their reputation as rebels has to be understood in the context of the conservative musical climate in the country at the time, and the fact that their approach to composition marked such a striking contrast with that of the previous generation of composers.⁴⁹

After World War II musical life in Canada expanded and flourished immensely. The period saw the growth and expansion of national music organizations such as the Canadian League of Composers (1951), the Canadian Music Centre (1959), and the Canadian University Music Society (1965), and many others, as well as the establishing of new festivals and concert series, providing opportunities and a nurturing environment for musicians. The establishment of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation in 1936 with its many programs featuring classical music broadcasts, commissioning Canadian compositions and providing wide ranging exposure for both composers and performers was a tremendous impetus for the growth of classical music in Canada. The creation of new ways for funding the arts from governmental agencies, such as The Canada Council and The Ontario Arts Council, also helped to establish the new musical identity in Canada.

John Beckwith reflects on the musical life in Toronto by the time he came to study with Alberto Guerrero:

The Toronto Symphony was very active. It had revived from a lot of the people who had left to go to the War and who came back. At the same time, I don't think that the repertoire was greatly changed because the same composer had been conducting there from 1931, it was Ernest MacMillan. He was very good, but I don't think he changed the repertoire a great deal. He added more Canadian repertoire because there were more active composers in that period. That's how I got some performances, Oskar got performances. Weinzweig became very active. He was in the War, came back and showed his music around. The Opera Company just started right after the War so that was very new. They started with the University and made occasional bases for opera. The first performances were student performances really. But they gradually became the Canadian Opera Company and by 1950 they were really a professional company.⁵⁰ The television started in 1952 so they started broadcasting operas on TV. Nowadays they don't do opera on TV but at that time they did.

⁴⁹ Ibid, 464.

⁵⁰ The first name of the institution was the Royal Conservatory Opera School. In 1950, three people founded the Royal Conservatory Opera Company (which later became the Canadian Opera Company), two of them were of Czech origin: Nicholas Goldschmidt, Arnold Walter and Herman Geiger-Torel. – Morris, C. and Morey, C. "Canadian Opera Company." *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. 30 Jan. 2011 (retrieved 11 Feb. 2019).

Every year there were four or five television performances besides the performances in the theatre.

We started to have these performances. Bartók started to become known. Bartók had been very little played here. The pianists knew some of his piano music. But large pieces like *Bluebeard* or *Miraculous Mandarin* had not ever been done until after the War. The recording of his complete six string quartets, the first release, was by Juilliard Quartet. It came out when I was a student and that was a big event. The *Concerto for Orchestra* was first played here in 1948, I think.

What was sour, was the neglect of Schoenberg and the Second Viennese School. They were played very little. The famous second quartet of Schoenberg was done in Toronto I think, just after it was written before the First War. It was not that it was never played. It was a sensation but it was not continuously programmed. My teacher Alberto Guerrero had done the *Piano Pieces Op. 19* and *Opus 25*, he had played those pieces in Toronto. In 1930s, before I came into Toronto. So there are few isolated examples of that. But as a general thing that repertoire was not cultivated until quite a bit later.⁵¹

1.4 Musical language of Oskar Morawetz

In this section I will examine Morawetz's philosophy of composing, as well as his beliefs, styles and the process of writing. Contemporary context pertaining to responses to his music will also be examined.

The complexities stemming from Morawetz's background make it possible to define potential influences on his musical philosophy. The core of his musicianship was created and nurtured during his youth in Europe. He immersed himself in the musical life of Prague, Vienna, and Paris as well as various centres in Germany, hearing Wagner's and Verdi's operas, symphonic works by Prokofiev, Bartók, Stravinsky, Hindemith, Ravel, and R. Strauss along with Czech composers such as Josef Suk, Vítězslav Novák, and Leoš Janáček.⁵²

Morawetz was strongly influenced by the tradition of composers such as Antonín Dvořák, Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky, Giuseppe Verdi, Richard Wagner, Bela Bartók, Gustav Mahler, Arnold Schoenberg, Richard Strauss, and Sergei Prokofiev, among others. He was a great admirer of the

⁵¹ Beckwith, John. Interview with the author (15 November 2018). MacMillan conducted Bartók's *Concerto for Orchestra* (1943) with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra on Jan. 31, 1950. Schoenberg's *String Quartet No. 1* (publ. 1907) was performed in Toronto by the Academy String Quartet on May 31, 1915.

⁵² Rajewsky, V. I. Biographical sketch from the Canadian Music Centre file, "Morawetz – Biography and List of Works." Toronto, *Canadian Music Centre*, 1961.

music by Berg, Stravinsky, and in particular Britten, whom he regarded as the greatest composer of the twentieth century.⁵³

Morawetz's compositional style grew out of the middle European tradition. Essentially, he was a product of late-romantic music but was also influenced by some trends of the twentieth century. Ultimately, he developed a style which was predicated on his pursuit for excellence, personal growth and maturation over the years of his career in composition.⁵⁴ His main objectives were the expression of his own ideas and emotions as well as communication of those to the listener.⁵⁵

1.4.1 Musical studies

“I am sincerely happy that your studies with me were of such a help to you and that it provided a foundation which, together with your own strength and hard work, helped to develop your talent so successfully.” (Hoffmeister)

As a composer Morawetz considered himself self-taught.⁵⁶ Before he left Czechoslovakia, he studied theory with Jaroslav Křička in Světlá nad Sázavou and in Prague, but he studied only “the basic rudiments of harmony.”⁵⁷ Later on, at the University of Toronto he found the guidance of Leo Smith useless and primitive, as did many other young composers who were interested in composing music in the contemporary idiom.

He (Leo Smith) did just things which very average teachers would do. He pointed out to me a few perfect fifths and octaves, and then he sent me home; so I took with him about six lessons and I found that it was completely useless. I left him and that's all the instruction I ever had. But there was one terrific benefit in those things. You had to have for these exams certain things to do within three hours. (...) It was the first time I realized in my life that the only way really to become a composer and to be free of all of these technical handicaps is not to worry about it, and start to write, to write, to write. (...) All those things which took

⁵³ Gonder, 4.

⁵⁴ Ibid, 72.

⁵⁵ According to an interview, when he listens to music he expects it to move him. The greatest works move him to a point of silence. He also believed that a musical work survives through the ages because of its quality of craftsmanship and its emotional power to move a listener. – Ibid, 4.

⁵⁶ Ibid, 3.

⁵⁷ *Prof. Oskar Morawetz*. In November 1938 Křička issued a certificate to Morawetz stating that “Mr. Oskar Morawetz studied with me privately harmony, counterpoint, and musical forms (practically) with a mark ‘excellent’. His talent for the score reading is unusual, utterly exceptional.” – Oskar Morawetz, Files 2004 – 2018, Oskar Morawetz Collection, National Library of Canada.

me eight hours, I could do them, in the end, in two hours. This was one of the greatest discoveries.⁵⁸

However, as a student of piano performance, Morawetz was extremely fortunate with his two main teachers: Karel Hoffmeister and Alberto Guerrero.

Karel Hoffmeister (1868 – 1952) was a Czech pianist, writer, teacher, and a Dean of the Prague Conservatory of Music. According to Morawetz’s website, Hoffmeister did not insist on perfection in practicing a piece of music but rather exposed his students to a large amount of music. He favoured music from the Romantic era and wrote monographs on Dvořák and Smetana, among others. As a pianist and musician, he truly belonged to the Czech family of musicians, as Beckerman meant it. His own teachers’ musical lineage reaches back to Smetana’s roots in the tutelage of Joseph Proksch (1794 -1864), while among Hoffmeister’s own students belong the greatest Czech pianists and teachers such as Josef Páleníček (1914 – 1991), František Rauch (1910 – 1996), and Otakar Vondrovic (1908 – 1985). All the above held teaching positions at the Academy of Performing Art (Páleníček and Rauch) and at the Janáček Academy of Music in Brno (Vondrovic), and they influenced directly the next generations of composers and pianists. Among their students are musicians such as Ivan Klánský (born 1948) and Miroslav Langer (1945 – 2010).

According to his friends, Morawetz scarcely ever reflected on his first musical studies in Europe, but when he did, he credited Hoffmeister with having had the strongest influence upon him. As he put it himself: “Hoffmeister was such a fine man. A close friend of Josef Suk and Vítězslav Novák. He knew Dvořák too and he shared so much about them with me. Perhaps my love for their music was initiated by him.”⁵⁹

In Toronto, Morawetz had the fortune to be a part of the piano studio of Antonio Alberto García Guerrero (1886 – 1959). Guerrero was a Chilean-Canadian pianist, teacher, composer, and organizer. He was one of the most fascinating and influential figures in the history of Canadian music. He was invited to come to Canada in 1918 to join the Hambourg Conservatory of Music, and in 1922 he moved to the faculty of The Toronto Conservatory of Music. An open-minded

⁵⁸ Cornfield.

⁵⁹ Čermák Josef. Interview with the author (15 March 2019).

musician whose broad spectrum of interests reached far beyond piano and music (opera, philosophy, aesthetics, visual art), he was a champion of both Early Music composers such as those of the Tudor era and Domenico Scarlatti, as well as of twentieth century serial music by the composers of the Second Viennese School. Guerrero stayed away from the conservative establishment at the Conservatory and taught mostly at home. He was known for encouraging his students to look for an inspiration away from just practicing the instrument and, according to his students, he had a tremendous respect for each student's individual approach and artistic needs. Thus it does not come as a surprise that among his students were, apart from the great Canadian pianist Glenn Gould (1932 – 1982), who studied with Guerrero for nine years, many pianists who pursued a career in composition. Composers such as R. Murray Schafer, John Beckwith, and Oskar Morawetz, beside many others, graduated from his class. He had a tremendous influence on generations of musicians in both Chile and Canada, perhaps comparable to the influence of the great pianist and teacher Heinrich Neuhaus (1888 – 1964) in Russia. Even though there are no records of Morawetz's account about Guerrero's influence upon him, one can imagine that the impact was significant. They had many things in common: the aristocratic family background and upbringing, love for opera and open-mindedness for a wide spectrum of musical styles.

John Beckwith ponders Guerrero's influence on his own compositional style:

Alberto Guerrero was a very unusual musician and very influential. Guerrero was a composer himself, it was in his youth when he was more interested in composition than he was in piano. When I started my own composing I would show him the stuff I did and he was very encouraging. I dedicated my piece for piano and orchestra to him. But he did not want to preach and he never did. But he certainly was one of the strongest influences for me and I know that he was so for quite a wide circle of people who knew him, who studied with him, or who heard him play. Many people admired him. And here comes in the Oskar's story because he studied with him. I was studying with Guerrero at the same time and I know that he admired him very deeply. But I don't know any details.⁶⁰

However, the musical beginnings in Canada were not easy and smooth for Morawetz. After the year of escaping the Nazis and trying to get a visa to finally join his family in Canada, it was the first time for Morawetz to pursue music on a professional level. Despite having had the best

⁶⁰ Beckwith, John. Interview with the author (16 November 2018).

teachers in Prague, music was meant to be just a leisure activity for Morawetz during his years in Czechoslovakia:

The beginnings in Canada were not easy for me. In fact, it was the first time I was entering the world of professional musicians and even though I was in a very good level speaking from the amateur standards, from the professional point of view I was not so good. I was still thinking I was going to become a pianist by then. It may sound comic but sometimes I think that I became a composer because as a pianist I was not good enough. But I am very glad for that. Because even if I had made a great career as a concert pianist, I would not be any happier in my life. I suffer from a terrible stage fright and I was never able to overcome that. (...) In fact, becoming a composer helped me to be more at ease at the piano. Because I could always say: But I am a composer, not a pianist!⁶¹

The above quotation is rather an exaggeration of the facts by Morawetz himself. Josef Čermák, who witnessed Morawetz's appearances on stage as a pianist during the many occasions of the Czech events observed that Morawetz looked very "natural and relaxed at the piano."⁶²

His first official composition was the String Quartet No. 1 in 1945 for which he won the Canadian Performing Art Society award (CAPAC) for the best classical composition of the year.

If I look at it now, considering the fact, that I had never written anything before, it is quite good. But if I were to present it to somebody as my work today, I would rather avoid that. Even though it already has some temperament, technically it is very imperfect. The fact, that I received the award reveals how little developed the classical composing in Canada was by the time. I do not think that the composition would win any award today.⁶³

From Morawetz's own experience he knew that the inspiration and craft of composing could come together only as a result of a hard work. He deconstructed the fable of writing music many people believed in:

Though I have wanted to be a composer since my boyhood in Prague, when I first attempted to write I would see flaws in my work. My knowledge of music was further ahead than my ability to write, and I became discouraged and stopped composing. It was not until my early twenties that I realized facility comes with constant work.⁶⁴

⁶¹ *Prof. Oskar Morawetz.*

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ Fusco, Maria. "Morawetz Still Pursues First Love." *Globe and Mail* 14 Nov. 1959.

He also took a realistic approach to the word inspiration. “Contact with the keys and music paper gives me more inspiration than the immediate impact of a beautiful scene.”⁶⁵

“When my creative writing goes well and my ideas take favorable shape, I can become very excited. But passive inspiration from above sounds far-fetched. I believe the Lord Helps those composers who help themselves.”⁶⁶

1.4.2 Musical style

Morawetz developed his own musical language in a very consistent and personal way. He believed music should always initiate an emotional response in the listener. “Music always meant something terribly emotional to me.” He rather resented many “modern” and “progressive” genres such as electronic or twelve-tone music. He expressed reservations towards the influence of twelve-tone music, which was at the time very important: “This is crazy. I would like to continue in the way I have always felt music should be written.”⁶⁷

One of Morawetz’s superb gifts as a musician and perhaps a key to understanding the fundamentals behind the formation of his musical language was Morawetz’s incredible musical memory. Given this unique talent and the opportunity to absorb the standard musical repertoire, he embraced all of these influences, various traditions and styles in order to evolve a musical language which is founded on a sense of drama, orchestral colour, concepts of formal design, as well as an absorption of a variety of contemporary styles and techniques in composition.⁶⁸ To put it another way – Morawetz was perhaps a self-taught but not a self-made composer. He took up

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Thomson, Hugh. “TSO Commissions Oskar Morawetz.” *Star Weekly*. 1959.

⁶⁷ Cornfield.

⁶⁸ Music critic William Littler stated: “You would study the elements of composition, you know, form, fugue, and all sort of stuff, but he was essentially self-taught as a result of that, but he taught himself from very good models. He looked to the traditions of the past, and when he wrote a passacaglia, he knew Bach. Oskar went to the scores, to the music that appealed to him, and studied it, and because he had very good tools of analysis in himself – he was an extraordinary skilled musician – this is a man who could sit down at a piano, and reduce an orchestral score at sight, and this is something very, very few musicians can do. Because he had this kind of skill, he was able to learn very quickly from the past masters what he needed to know, and so he formed himself, and I think that’s an extremely nice way to be able to become a composer. We all would like to think that we are self-made people; he is one of the few composers I know who really is.” – Cornfield.

the torch from the music tradition of the past and carried it further along throughout the twentieth century.

His musical memory was remarkable. He could remember parts of the middle of classical pieces which were just very hard to identify in your own memory even if you have heard all the Beethoven Quartets and so on. I have heard all the symphonic music that he knew. He could just stand at the piano and reproduce it. Maybe not precisely but very close. He was a very good pianist too.⁶⁹

Anton Kuerti, a renowned American-Canadian pianist and a champion of Morawetz's music, commented on Morawetz's style and compositional skills in a documentary: "He is probably the most highly qualified composer in Canada in terms of really knowing the materials of his craft, but he was thought of as being an antique. And while it is not extremely advanced, it is personal, original, and the craft is flawless."⁷⁰

Kuerti also considered Morawetz's musical memory to be a key factor in creating his musical language: "He had an uncanny memory for a great deal of music from the past, and from his acquaintance with it he knew thoroughly all about balance, form, orchestration, and sound colours. Had he been a visual artist, one would admire how wonderfully he could draw rather than just splash paint on a canvas."⁷¹

John Beckwith is convinced about the influence of the Czech tradition: "In my opinion, he was very much influenced by the strong Czech tradition: Smetana, Janáček, Dvořák, Suk. He knew all their music and his own idea of music came from there. He was also an admirer of Britten's operas and Janáček's operas, which he knew very well. I think that his own music was formed by his sense of the Czech tradition."⁷²

It was perhaps for this very perception in Canadian musical circles, which consistently associated Morawetz with the "Slavic" or "romantic style", that despite his deep affection for Czech music and Dvořák especially, he disliked his own music to be associated solely by that standard:

⁶⁹ Beckwith, John. Interview with the author (16 November 2018).

⁷⁰ Cornfield.

⁷¹ Martin, Sandra, "Czech wartime refugee became one of Canada's greatest composers." *The Globe and Mail*, 20 June 2007.

⁷² Beckwith, John. Interview with the author (16 November 2018).

There is one “Slavic” composition, *Carnival Overture*, which dates at the beginning of my composing career in 1946. In that work I used the Slavic idioms such as melodic invention and rhythms and I avoided any modern harmonies. I did not even name it myself as I had not expected this work to be performed at all. The title *Carnival Overture*⁷³ came from the conductor Ernest MacMillan who premiered the work. Eventually, this work became one of my most performed works until today. Personally, I would not say that I am ashamed for that work. But I do not send this composition to anybody as it is an early work and my style has developed and matured after that. If Wagner was asked to send his representative piece of music to somebody who had never heard his work before, certainly he would not send the *Wedding March* from *Lohengrin*.⁷⁴

According to William Littler, Morawetz was always true to his roots: “He was never willing to deny his formation, and he loved harmony. He loved the roots of tonality, and he loved polyphony. He loved traditional forms and he was able to write them with a great skill, but it was a skill that did not represent the future. It was an acknowledgement of the virtues of the past, and he was brave enough to be true to himself, rather than to be true to the party line of the moment.”⁷⁵

1.4.3 Music as a drama and the theme of death. *Memorial to Martin Luther King* and *From the Diary of Anne Frank*

“The important dramas of life – Shakespeare is a case in point – are tragic in nature. The contemporary idiom is essentially dramatic.” (Morawetz, 1978)

As much as he believed in the importance of discipline in composition, in many works it was the life and events which took place around him which gave the initial impulse to write a piece of music.

The events which attracted his attention were mostly of a dramatic character. As composer Larysa Kuzmenko⁷⁶ observed “A lot of his music is very dark. In fact, I think I have been

⁷³ Another association with Dvořák and his composition with the identical title *Carnival Overture* Op. 92.

⁷⁴ Prof. Oskar Morawetz.

⁷⁵ Cornfield.

⁷⁶ Larysa Kuzmenko (born 1956) is a Toronto-based composer and teacher at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto and at the University of Toronto. She studied composition with Morawetz for six years. He particularly influenced her by his comment: “You have to write from your heart.” She also remarked that he taught her to be herself. – Cornfield.

influenced by that.”⁷⁷ His daughter Claudia Morawetz remembers that “my father has always been one of those people who takes tragedies a lot more seriously than maybe he should.”⁷⁸ In the same documentary Littler found a link between Morawetz’s traumatic experiences of the Holocaust and his enormous sensitivity to tragedy and human suffering. To him Morawetz was musically speaking a “man of feeling,” for whom life is a tragedy.⁷⁹

In fact, the two works Morawetz considered to be among his most accomplished works characterizing his musical language, were the ones inspired by human suffering, injustice, and racial discrimination: *Memorial to Martin Luther King* and *From the Diary of Anne Frank*.

Memorial to Martin Luther King

The sensitivity and fascination with death in his childhood had a direct influence on orchestration of one of his most accomplished works: *Memorial to Martin Luther King*.

When I was thinking of the orchestration of the piece, the essential idea was for the orchestra to represent the funeral mood created on the base of the spiritual *Free at Last* with the solo cello weeping above the marching procession epitomizing the cry of the people. And then it struck me. The image of the funeral processions passing by our house in Úpice when I was seven. I used to watch it with despair and deep sadness, thinking of the person who had died. I recalled that these processions were always accompanied by a wind band and drums.⁸⁰ And so the idea of the funeral march being played solemnly by the wind instruments was born.⁸¹

Timothy Maloney in his article “Oskar Morawetz’s *Memorial to Martin Luther King* for Solo Cello, Winds, Percussion, and Piano,” written in 2003, recognized Morawetz’s work as “A singular specimen in the Canadian wind-ensemble literature, it has achieved the wide circulation

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ The Czech traditional funeral procession comprises of a marching wind band accompanied with drums.

⁸¹ *Prof. Oskar Morawetz*. There is at least one more example in the music literature of this unique style of orchestration, when the solo cello is being the only string instrument in the setting, and that is Jacques Ibert’s *Concerto for Cello and Wind Instruments* (1926). Morawetz was not familiar with that piece at the time he composed the *Memorial*. – *Prof. Oskar Morawetz*.

and attention that many composers hope for but do not manage to achieve.”⁸² Another statement of highest acclaim came from the Canadian music critic Eugene Cramer, who has described the *Memorial* as “one of the best contemporary works I have heard and which in time should rank with the Berg *Violin Concerto* as one of the monuments of 20th century music of its kind.”⁸³ One of the highlights of the history of performances of this work is the New York Philharmonic performance in 1993 in New York with Kurt Masur⁸⁴ conducting and Yo-Yo Ma taking the solo cello part. It has been performed extensively in Canada and all over the world. Two performances by the Czech Philharmonic took place in Prague: the first time with the Polish conductor Henryk Czyz and the Czech cellist Josef Chuchro, the second time with Victor Feldbrill conducting and Shauna Rolston as a soloist.

Two performances of the *Memorial* have taken place at Morawetz’s lifelong work environment, the University of Toronto. The first one in 2007⁸⁵ and the second one at 2017. Both performances were given by Gillian MacKay as conductor of the University of Toronto Wind Ensemble and Shauna Rolston as solo cellist. MacKay reflected on the Morawetz work in the following sentences:

The *Memorial to Martin Luther King* is unlike anything else in the Canadian wind repertoire: in its dramatic scope and its technical demands for both the soloist and the ensemble. Partially because of the subject matter and partially because of the musical language of the composer, it is always highly expressive, often sublimely beautiful and occasionally very distressing. I think the composer left the strings out to increase the directness of the sound and the starkness of the colour palette. It has a wonderful history – it was inspired by a request from Mstislav Rostropovich, who asked for something of a soloistic nature but not in a traditional format.⁸⁶

In his entire career the star cellist Yo-Yo Ma, who has performed the *Memorial* extensively, has been striving to connect people through the music he performed, and to “speak to our common

⁸² Maloney, Timothy. “Focus on Canadian Repertoire: Oskar Morawetz’s ‘Memorial to Martin Luther King’ for Solo Cello, Winds, Percussion, and Piano.” *Canadian Winds: The Journal of the Canadian Band Association* 1.2 (2003): 35 – 39.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Kurt Masur conducted *Memorial* twice; the first time was with the Cleveland Orchestra in 1987.

⁸⁵ Morawetz was present at the 2007 performance, “although he was already in poor health. It was just a few months before he passed away.” – MacKay, Gillian. Conversation with the author (7 October 2019).

⁸⁶ Ibid.

humanity at a time when our civic conversation is so often focused on division.”⁸⁷ For Yo-Yo Ma the *Memorial* represents the humanistic ideals he believes in:

This piece is a programmatic music: the shot is there, the march, his favourite spiritual. You cannot help but to think about Martin Luther as you are playing. However, I think it is not just about the event but it tries to also think about where are we now twenty-five years later? What has he accomplished and are we in a better state now than before he started? The piece ends on a question mark. It is very reflective. And the reflective part I hope stays with me and with listeners.

What I love about music is that it does cross all kinds of cultural barriers. The idea that I am playing a piece which is dedicated to a black person, an African-American, should I not have sympathy for him? Just because he was a great human being, maybe also flawed like all of us, but he attempted to do something that nobody else has done? I think that there is so much more that binds us together than things that separate us. And that is something I will always think about.⁸⁸

Morawetz himself often faced the question how he – a Jew from Europe, and a white person – could relate to the story of Martin Luther King, which was so embedded in the “black” American experience. He refused that type of categorization by saying that it is the same kind of discrimination and struggle.⁸⁹

Having shared common humanistic ideals and philosophy, Morawetz and Yo-Yo Ma developed a friendship which lasted until Morawetz’s passing in 2007.

From the Diary of Anne Frank

Perhaps Morawetz’s most successful work is *From the Diary of Anne Frank* (1970), which holds a special place in his output for various reasons.⁹⁰ It is a mature work that Morawetz considered, next to *Memorial to Martin Luther King*, as the most representative of his style.⁹¹ Ever since its

⁸⁷ Yo-Yo Ma about his “Bach project” during which he tours the world playing Bach’s six cello suits. – Retrieved from <http://www.yo-yoma.com> (15 May 2019).

⁸⁸ Retrieved from: <http://www.oskarmorawetz.com/Tabs/TabMusic/display.php?page=notes&Webcode=MemorialKing> (14 September 2018).

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ For a more detailed study on this work, please refer to a dissertation by Jami Rhodes: “A performer’s guide to Oskar Morawetz’ *From the Diary of Anne Frank*.” Louisiana State University, 2009.

⁹¹ *Prof. Oskar Morawetz*.

premiere was given in Toronto in 1970 by one of the most celebrated Canadian sopranos, Lois Marshall, with the conductor Lawrence Leonard and the TSO, the work has received at least thirty-eight performances around the globe.⁹² Among the most memorable ones are the American premiere in 1972 in Carnegie Hall with Lois Marshall, Karel Ančerl⁹³ and the TSO, and a performance in Israel in 1976 by the soprano Adi Etzion-Zak, the conductor Uri Segal, and the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra. The *Diary* is also one of the handful of works that was performed in Morawetz's native land, Czechoslovakia. In 1977 the Czech soprano Eva Děpoltová and conductor František Vajnar with the Czech Philharmonic gave the Czechoslovakian premiere of this work.

As the *Toronto Star* critic William Littler in his review in 1995 put it, "it is a work that has clearly stood the test of time."⁹⁴ It also received a Juno Award for Best Classical Composition in 2001.

Morawetz was deeply touched and felt a strong connection to Anne's story, which he could relate to so closely, given his own personal experience of the Holocaust. His major contribution to her legacy was undoubtedly the musical opus he wrote. But he also dedicated part of his life to lecturing about Anne's life and sharing her legacy with the others. He developed and maintained a friendship with her father Otto Frank and he also met Victor Kugler, one of the people who hid the Frank family in Amsterdam.⁹⁵

There is another work in Morawetz's output that is closely associated with the Anne Frank story: the choral piece *Who has Allowed us to Suffer* (1970). It is dedicated to Anne's father Otto Frank. The title cites the words Anne Frank wrote in her diary: "Who has allowed us to suffer? Who made us Jews so different from all other people? (...) Who knows, it might be our religion

⁹² Retrieved from; <http://www.oskarmorawetz.com/Tabs/TabMusic/display.php?Webcode=DiaryAnneFrank> (14 September 2018).

⁹³ Karel Ančerl described the work as "one of the most moving works he had conducted during the last two decades." – Ibid.

⁹⁴ Littler, William: "Morawetz Stands Test of Time," *The Toronto Star*, December 7, 1995.

⁹⁵ *Prof. Oskar Morawetz.*

from which the world and all people learn good and for that reason – and that reason only – we have to suffer now.”⁹⁶

Among the works with tragic themes and the theme of death are some of Morawetz’s most successful opuses. Besides *Memorial to Martin Luther King*, *From the Diary of Anne Frank*, and *Who has Allowed us to Suffer?*, such works include *Passacaglia on a Bach Chorale*, and *Sonata Tragica* for piano, among others. As he said about the latter: “It is an expression of extreme sadness about the fate of so many innocent people who disappeared without trace, and make my past seem like one big cemetery.”⁹⁷

1.4.4 Spirituality and music

Morawetz’s extreme sensitivity towards the topic of death, as well as to any kind of injustice, discrimination, and human suffering such as he and his family experienced so closely, yielded marginal concerns associated with his spiritual and religious life. Morawetz was a humanist at heart and he often turned to the spiritual world to look for the answers to his questions across the religions.

Spirituality is evident in Morawetz’s works throughout his career and became even more prominent in his late period, when he turned his focus to writing for the piano more frequently. Even though Morawetz’s religious background was Jewish, nobody in the family was observant or particularly religious. They followed the Christian tradition in celebrating Christmas in a traditional way.⁹⁸ Josef Čermák pointed out that the family was torn between Judaism and Christianity:

Religion was a chapter he never talked about. It struck me as a great surprise that he asked for a funeral service to be held in a synagogue. Their family was a bit divided into being half-Christian, half-Jewish. But there was clearly something Jewish in Oskar, I believe.

⁹⁶ Retrieved from: <http://www.oskarmorawetz.com/Tabs/TabMusic/display.php?page=Notes&Webcode=WhoAllowedSuffer> (15 September 2018).

⁹⁷ “Virile Morawetz Art Survives Nazi Horrors.” *Globe and Mail*. 22 March. 1946.

⁹⁸ Retrieved from: <http://www.oskarmorawetz.com/Tabs/TabPerson/Prague.php> (14 October 2018).

Something in his thinking and feeling. After all, one of his major works is the *Diary of Anne Frank*. I have always sensed that the Jewish heritage was inwardly important to him.⁹⁹

However, Morawetz's daughter Claudia reflected on this observation by Josef Čermák as follows:

The family was “divided” in that Oskar and his siblings were Jewish by birth, and their spouses were all Christians by birth. But no one individual felt personally divided between being Christian or Jewish: they were one or the other (or many in my generation, neither). I find it interesting that Čermák says the family was “torn” between Judaism and Christianity. I do not agree. The Morawetz family was simply not religious. Adolf Glaser was a devoted Jew, proud of his position as a prominent Jewish citizen, but none of his seven children were religious; the Morawetz family celebrated Christmas more like a fun, national holiday, not because they felt any attachment to Christianity. I would say Oskar was spiritual, not religious, and certainly not torn between two religions - after all, he never had any Christian education. If anything, he had an affinity to Judaism: he attended the synagogue for high holidays, he never attended church. I don't think it odd at all that he wanted his funeral in a synagogue. It may have come as a surprise to Čermák, but it is not inconsistent with how he lived his life. I knew years before he died that he wanted to be buried next to his father in the Jewish cemetery, and for that, he would have to have a Jewish funeral.¹⁰⁰

The father of Oskar's mother, Adolph Glaser, was elected as “mayor of the Jewish City of Prague” and it was this grandfather who influenced Oskar and his two brothers to study and pass the bar mitzvah.¹⁰¹ Morawetz also maintained a relationship with the Jewish community in Toronto.

One of the major questions in religion for Morawetz was the hereafter. “I have been interested in the topic of death and especially in the hereafter since my very young years. I often asked representatives of different religions to give me their opinion and I felt very distracted when I found out that often they did not even believe in that. That is something I have always been worrying about.”¹⁰²

⁹⁹ Josef Čermák. Interview with the author (15 March 2019).

¹⁰⁰ Morawetz, Claudia. Conversation with the author (15 September 2019).

¹⁰¹ Retrieved from: <http://www.oskarmorawetz.com/Tabs/TabPerson/Prague.php> (16 October 2018).

¹⁰² Prof. Oskar Morawetz.

While he felt a great unity with the Jewish community not only for the family tradition but more importantly for their racial discrimination throughout history and the horrors they were submitted to during the war, in Christianity and in the life and suffering of Jesus he looked for answers related to the relationship between God and human suffering and injustice. Both are reflected in his music.

There is a number of works in Morawetz's output with a direct influence from Jewish culture: *Fantasy on a Hebrew Theme* (1951), *Who Has Allowed Us to Suffer?* (1970), *From The Diary of Anne Frank* (1970), and sketches for an unfinished *Fantasy* based on the style of songs of Sephardic Jews. Some of his works such as *Fantasy on a Hebrew Theme* and *Who Has Allowed Us to Suffer?* were commissioned by the Canadian Jewish Congress.

The Christian inspiration existed in Morawetz's music in a few opuses: *Psalm 22*, *Passacaglia on a Bach Chorale*, *Crucifixion*. I believe it is not by accident that the element of Christianity and suffering in Morawetz's music is associated with Johann Sebastian Bach and his *St. Matthew Passion* in particular. It contains the most powerful message to the whole of humanity in depicting the last hours of Jesus's life with an utmost intensity and Morawetz was moved by the work deeply ever since he heard it for the first time in his youth.¹⁰³

The words of *Psalm 22* "My God, why have you forsaken me?" are interpreted by both the Jewish and Christian religions and Morawetz closely associated them with the people dying in Nazi death camps:

I think it is one of the most moving passages of the Bible and, of course, from the musical point of view it offers a tremendous opportunity for contrasting moods – a strong belief in the absolute justice of God and, at the same time, a terrible fear that He has abandoned his people during their terrible suffering in the hands of enemies. [...] Though the Psalm was written several thousand years ago, I could not help but be reminded again vividly of the suffering and fate of prisoners in the Nazi camps during World War II.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ Retrieved from:

<http://www.oskarmorawetz.com/Tabs/TabMusic/display.php?page=Notes&Webcode=Psalm22> (13 November 2018).

¹⁰⁴ Ibid. In search for the words which spoke to Morawetz the most strongly, he studied three English translations of the Bible: The Oxford, the Jerusalem, and the New English Bible. – Notes to *Psalm 22*.

The words of Psalm 22 are incorporated in his work *Psalm 22*. Another depiction of a desperate person being abandoned by God is the movement *Prayer in Distress* from *Five Poetic Sketches* for piano.

For the purpose of a central theme for the *Passacaglia on a Bach Chorale*, Morawetz chose an opening phrase from the chorale *Wenn ich einmal soll scheiden* from the *St. Matthew Passion*. The chorus which is sung after Jesus died offers solace in the face of death.

When one day I must depart,
 Do not part from me,
 When I must suffer death,
 Then stand thou by me!
 When by the greatest fear
 My heart is beset,
 Then wrest me from my anguish
 By the strength of thine own fear and pain.¹⁰⁵

In my opinion this choice once more reveals vividly Morawetz's main concerns, doubts, and hope in the relationship between God and man: holding fast and not abandoning God in the time of death and suffering.

1.4.5 The role of the piano

The piano had an enormous significance in both Morawetz's musical growth as well as in his process of composing.

He wrote works for solo piano throughout his composing career and therefore they can serve as demonstrative examples of his development and trends in his style.

¹⁰⁵ English text from the King James translation.

Essentially, the piano was Morawetz's instrument, which got him initiated in music as a child. Very soon he became a musically omnivorous being and his urge to know as much music as possible made him develop fast sight-reading skills. His fascination with opera allowed him to sight-read orchestral scores at a very young age. Since he also had the opportunity to hear actual opera live with orchestral accompaniment, the contact with the piano keyboard and its sound may have created an affinity to the colours he had heard from the orchestra.

I can write perfectly without the piano. But I write with it because for some reason – say if I want to get a certain colour – the closeness to the keyboard, the closeness to the sound, the actual hitting of the keys, gives me an emotional outlet. And I don't think I could ever get the music away from it. I always found those works I wrote away from the piano, they're okay, there is nothing wrong. But some excitement is missing.¹⁰⁶

John Beckwith considers the piano improvisatory element to be the core foundation of Morawetz's style: "He improvised a lot. The base of his writing was taking an idea and improvising it on the piano. Piano improvising was a source of his originality. Perhaps that is how it happened. Through piano improvisation he got into the habit of composing. Habits of making larger ideas out of original thoughts."¹⁰⁷

In analyzing Morawetz's songs Kimberly Enns-Hildebrand pointed out that the piano accompaniments are an equal partner to the voice, both in difficulty and expressivity. She finds his use of the piano interesting for it "portrays elements of the poetry."¹⁰⁸ After examining the piano score she concluded that it is a "writing that exploits various registers and colours as if the composer were trying to capture the essence of an orchestra."¹⁰⁹

A very similar conclusion about Morawetz's connection between the orchestra and a keyboard was articulated by Elaine Keillor in her article "Perspectives on the Late Piano Music of Oskar

¹⁰⁶ Classical Music Magazine, April/May 1992. – Retrieved from: <http://www.oskarmorawetz.com/Tabs/TabMusician/Composer.php> (12 December 2018).

¹⁰⁷ Beckwith, John. Interview with the author (16 November 2018).

¹⁰⁸ She used an example of the piano introduction of the song "Mother, I cannot mind my wheel" as a good example of introducing the poetry through the piano before the voice comes in. She also finds that his style of song-writing emulates Schubert (in the manner Morawetz used the piano to introduce characters in a particular song), and Samuel Barber (for its dramatic scope). – Hildebrandt, Kimberly Enns. "The Songs of Oskar Morawetz." *Journal of Singing*. 64.2 (2007): 176 -178.

¹⁰⁹ Hildebrandt, 179.

Morawetz and John Weinzweig.” In his solo piano compositions, he employed the entire breadth of the keyboard throughout his career. He also favoured a great deal of density and contrapuntal textures in his piano writing. To that end, he often used up to four staves. In addition, in his later piano works he also explored the impressionistic and sonic possibilities of the piano.¹¹⁰

The core of his repertoire as a pianist was music by Czech composers such as Dvořák, Smetana, and Suk. After he became more and more focused on his own composing he performed less frequently and when he did, it was almost exclusively for an event of the Czech community in which he was usually accompanying other Czech performers. The repertoire was also almost exclusively Czech. His own compositions such as songs or piano pieces were included. There is one documented diversion from this “rule.” When Maureen Forrester premiered *Psalm 22*, a piece she commissioned herself, she asked for Morawetz to premiere the piece with her. The performance took place in Toronto in 1980 and the recording is available in the Canadian Music Centre online archive.

1.4.6 Orchestration

Morawetz’s desire for colour in orchestration was one of his highly acclaimed qualities as a composer, and his approach to orchestration highlights how his phenomenal musical memory (as well as the tremendous amount of exposure to live music in his early years) translated into the compositional technique he developed in his formative years. For every combination of instruments in the orchestra he associated the colour with one or more excerpts from a piece of another composer. He would often recall them when writing his own music.¹¹¹ It is another example of how essential the exposure to a wide variety of music in his young years may have been in the process of creating his own musical language.

¹¹⁰ Keillor, Elaine. "Perspectives on the Late Piano Music of Oskar Morawetz and John Weinzweig." *Intersections: Canadian Journal of Music* 33.2 (2013): 35-52.

¹¹¹ Retrived from: <http://www.oskarmorawetz.com/Tabs/TabMusician/Composer.php> (10 November 2018).

1.4.7 Musical form

According to the Morawetz website, when he approached a composition, “he did not have a grand plan of overall structure of a composition on which he was working. Rather, he tackled each new piece section by section.”¹¹²

Until his late compositional period, the element of recapitulation was important and that was somehow reflected in his choice of forms.¹¹³ He believed that a musical idea had to undergo further exploration and development. In fact, the concept of development is crucial and influences all the other aspects of his style.¹¹⁴

Morawetz stated that “a recapitulation must be a second development” and that an exact repetition must be avoided. In accordance with this philosophy, he developed a technique of organic development or continual variation, which became a critical form of development in his mature works.¹¹⁵

During his mature period, he developed an approach of greater economy of means, utilizing this at both the microcosmic and a macrocosmic level. This translated into shorter length, less density of texture and fewer and shorter themes.

He often used an irregular phrase structure as well as frequent change of metre. Gonder also observes and analyses the usage of intervallic (motivic) cells and their development throughout a composition.

In Morawetz’s style, changes of texture were more essential to create contrast rather than a new theme.¹¹⁶ With a change of a texture he usually felt a change of tempo was needed as well.

Friedemann Sallis examined the influence of Schoenberg’s concept of “musical prose” on Morawetz’s style, which can be observed in his late works such as String Quartet No. 5 “A

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Gonder, 64.

¹¹⁴ Ibid, 70.

¹¹⁵ Ibid, 71.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, 70.

Tribute to Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart”. In these late works, Morawetz abandoned recapitulation and applied the technique of “musical prose” and “developing variations” instead.¹¹⁷ Through this technique he admitted common roots with composers such as Bartók and Schoenberg.

After analysing the style of String Quartet No. 5 “A Tribute to Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart,” Sallis summed up the achievement and marriage of the past and present in Morawetz’s work:

Morawetz is not simply quoting musical material from another age for its own sake in some neo-classic or post-modern fashion. (...) The composer is expressing himself through the legacy of the past but in a style and using a technique that he considered to be part of his musical present. This is musical prose as Schoenberg conceived it: past and present are welded together as two sides of the same coin and are inextricably bound up in the technique used to express this relationship.¹¹⁸

The use of musical prose was observed by Keillor in Morawetz’s late piano works such as *Five Poetic Sketches* (1991) and *Four Contrasting Moods* (1986). She discovered that its application encourages imagination in the listener.¹¹⁹ In her analysis of these works she observes techniques such as polytonality and extended harmony usage from the late Romantic period. There is always a tonal centre, but it is not necessarily established by chords, but rather by repetition and the movement of melodic lines.¹²⁰

Melodic lines in Morawetz’s compositions are motivically generated. He admitted that “there are not many long melodies in my works.”¹²¹ With the tendency to shorten melodies in his later works there is less lyricism contained in them as well.¹²²

¹¹⁷ Sallis, 16.

¹¹⁸ Ibid, 23.

¹¹⁹ Keillor, 38.

¹²⁰ Ibid, 41.

¹²¹ Gonder, 67 – 68.

¹²² Morawetz made a commentary on perception of his melodic writing in the present and in the past. It demonstrates the variety of aesthetic judgments, which relate more often to a period/tradition/place/individual rather than to the quality of the actual subject of a judgement: “One day somebody asked me if I find much difference between how composing was taught when I was a child and today and I said yes, a big difference. Because when I was a child a teacher would say: ‘I don’t think you should become a composer because you have no gift for melody.’ Nowadays they say: ‘Listen, this work will not get anywhere, you have too many melodic lines.’” – Retrieved from: <http://www.oskarmorawetz.com/audio/19920117CBCMelodicLines.wav> (20 November 2018).

1.5 Reception of Oskar Morawetz's music by his contemporary environment in Canada and North America

“Oskar Morawetz throughout his entire career had to negotiate the pitfalls of place and identity, not in the country of his birth, but rather here in Canada.” (Sallis, 2003)

Oskar Morawetz was one of the most successful Canadian composers of his generation. In his era a younger generation of composers in Canada took a rather radical approach to composition in order to overturn the old and conservative music establishment of Healey Willan and his musical circles in both the concert stages and at the university. Morawetz remained in touch with both the musical traditions of the past and with his audience. As a result he was among the most performed and celebrated Canadian composers of his day both internationally and nationally, but at the same time neglected and criticized for his “conservatism” by others. As he once confessed: “I was knocked down.”¹²³

Morawetz himself commented on the “party politics” of composers in Toronto: “Composing is almost like a party politics. You know a true-blue party member thinks even the crooks in his own party are better men than the leading, good men of the Opposition. It is that way in composing, too.”¹²⁴

The criticism came from some of his more progressive composer colleagues and critics for writing in a conservative and Romantic idiom. In other words, he was labelled old-fashioned. However, he did not seem to be bothered by this stamp to a great extent as he was firm in his own beliefs. He took examples from the history of music to prove that he was not the first one who dealt with such a denigrating label: “Benjamin Britten, whom I admire greatly, is also considered old-fashioned by most of the English composers today. Brahms and Bach got the same treatment. What does it matter? When we listen to Brahms, Bach, or Richard Strauss, do we bother whether they wrote in the style that was the fashion of their times?”¹²⁵

¹²³ Cornfield.

¹²⁴ Thomas, Ralph, “Scorned but Successful.” *Toronto Daily Star* 30 March 1965.

¹²⁵ Cornfield.

One of Morawetz's primary concerns in composition was the emotional impact on the audience. He was also one of the few contemporary composers who felt that his work should be grasped easily. In the following comments he expressed this belief and reflected on the tendency of his fellow composers to separate the two, composer and listener. "A composer should not compose for a vacuum, as so many do. One can be modern but one should never lose touch with the audience."¹²⁶ "I can't agree with these people who say you have to listen to a work 10 to 15 times to understand it. If I don't like a piece of food, I don't eat it 10 more times to persuade myself that I do."¹²⁷

He did not believe that music has to be explained in order to be appreciated. "Too much analysis strikes me as a self-defence. (...) Mind you, I have nothing against explanation, but music should not be explained to *make* you like it, but only *in case* you like it."¹²⁸

There are many sources from newspaper articles, reviews and interviews reporting on the magnitude of success Morawetz's works received on both national and international levels. He was often called "the most successful Canadian composer" or "one who gets performed most frequently." After the world premiere of his *Piano Concerto No. 1*, which was performed by the Montreal Symphony Orchestra with Zubin Mehta as conductor and Anton Kuerti as soloist, in Montreal in 1963, the reviews were positive and enthusiastic. They were praising especially Morawetz's colourful orchestration, power of imagination, and the strong personality the work had shown.¹²⁹

According to his colleagues he was "old fashioned" and that's why he was so successful. It was Morawetz's aesthetic choice not to break ties with the past, but rather to grow out of it. He was aware of the opposition he stood up for against the "avant-garde" mainstream: "I don't suppose any composer in Canada would agree with me about Puccini. I have a tremendous admiration for him. He had a tremendous sense of orchestration which made him one of the most important

¹²⁶ Cobb, David, "This Winning Composer Prefers to be Different." *Toronto Daily Star* 18. Sept. 1962.

¹²⁷ Thomas, Ralph, "Scorned but Successful." *Toronto Daily Star* 30. March 1963.

¹²⁸ Graham, June. "Yes, I'm a Composer," *CBC Times*, 5 – 11 Dec. 1959.

¹²⁹ For more excerpts from the reviews please see Appendix A.

composers of all times.”¹³⁰ And it was Morawetz’s very own and brilliant technique of orchestration he received so much praise for from the press after the successful premiere of the *Piano Concerto No. 1*.

As Anton Kuerti put it:

Oskar’s treatment by his colleagues, his fellow composers, I think, can only be called despicable. They didn’t want to allow composition majors to study with him. They relegated him at the University of Toronto to teaching keyboard harmony to music education majors, and you know totally trivial courses which were far beneath him.¹³¹ (...) He was in no way experimental or avant-garde, during a time when radical innovation and destruction of tradition was highly prized by the critics and other would-be oracles, if not by the general public. For this he earned considerable disdain. But his music is absolutely sincere, just as his personality was, and it was extremely well crafted and has a distinct aroma of its own. (...) I think some of his best works should continue to keep a foothold in the repertoire.¹³²

1.5.1 The Gould connection

Glenn Gould was a great ambassador for Morawetz’s music and he spoke enthusiastically about it and about Morawetz’s contributions to Canadian music. An early substantial piece for piano, Morawetz’s *Fantasy in D* (1948), was one of only a handful of works by Canadian composers recorded by Gould and it became a standard piece in his repertoire.¹³³

Morawetz initially knew Gould from the Royal Conservatory as they were both studying piano with Alberto Guerrero at the same time. Morawetz felt immediately, that in the then thirteen-year-old Gould “he had found a soul mate, somebody who knew as much about music as himself, and with whom he could discuss any musical topic.”¹³⁴ According to the Morawetz

¹³⁰ Cobb, David. “This Winning Composer Prefers to be Different.” *Toronto Daily Star* 18 Sept. 1962.

¹³¹ This comment refers to the fact that Oskar Morawetz was never appointed to teach composition majors at the University of Toronto. Kuerti pointed out that the politics of that time played an essential role in that Morawetz was ignored, to a certain extent, by the music establishment at the University. – Cornfield.

¹³² Martin, Sandra. “Czech Wartime Refugee Became one of the Canada’s Greatest Composers.” *Globe and Mail* 20 June. 2007.

¹³³ For more information on Gould and the *Fantasy in D*, please see pages 113 - 115.

¹³⁴ Retrieved from: <http://www.oskarmorawetz.com/Tabs/TabMusician/MusicianFriends.php> (28 November 2018).

website they became good friends, exchanging letters, and talking over the phone almost daily. Gould also attended Morawetz's wedding in 1958.¹³⁵

There is a postlude to this friendship between the great pianist and the composer. In 1992 the CBC opened a new performance studio in Toronto and named it after Glenn Gould, whose fascination for the immense possibilities of technology to a performer was eminent. For the occasion of the inauguration of the Glenn Gould Studio, the CBC commissioned three compositions for string quartet inspired by Gould's art, life, and philosophy. The selected composers were the three Canadian composers whose pieces Gould recorded in 1967: István Anhalt, Jacques Hétu, and Oskar Morawetz.

The composition which Morawetz wrote for the occasion was *Improvisation on Four Inventions by J.S. Bach*. Morawetz explained his choice behind the compositional process of this piece himself:

As I have known Glenn for nearly thirty-seven years, I was very well acquainted during our many conversations and meetings about his musical tastes and the reasons why he adored some composers and violently disliked others. Though he changed his views many times during all these years, one thing which remained always unchanged was his admiration for Bach and equal fascination for works by some of the late romantics which included Wagner's *Tristan*, Strauss' *Elektra*, and Schoenberg's *Transfigured Night*. With this in mind I decided to compose a work based on four inventions by Bach clothed in the harmonic language of Gould's favourite romantic composers.¹³⁶

1.5.2 My teacher, Oskar Morawetz: an interview with Larysa Kuzmenko¹³⁷

As already mentioned above, Oskar Morawetz was never officially given the opportunity to teach majors in composition at the graduate levels at the University of Toronto. There were very

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Notes to *Improvisations on Four Inventions by J.S. Bach (String Quartet No. 6)*, Retrieved from: <http://www.oskarmorawetz.com/Tabs/TabMusic/display.php?Webcode=StringQuartet6Bach> (28 November 2018).

¹³⁷ Kuzmenko, Larysa (b. 1956 in Mississauga, Canada) is a Juno Awards – nominated Canadian composer. She studied composition with Oskar Morawetz and Walter Buczynski at the University of Toronto. Her works have been broadcasted by CBC and CJRT and have received numerous performances. She has had a number of works commissioned by CBC, Ontario Arts Council, besides private commissions. Her output stretches from solo piano, to chamber music for various ensembles, to choral works and oratorios. Kuzmenko's compositions have received performances by many distinguished performers and ensembles such as Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Peter Oundjian, Shauna Rolston, Anton Kuerti, and Elmer Esler Singers, among others. She currently teaches composition, piano and harmony at the Faculty of Music at the University of Toronto.

few isolated examples of students who made their individual efforts and found a way to study with him. The accomplished Canadian composer and professor at the University of Toronto Larysa Kuzmenko was one of them and I had the opportunity to interview her. In the interview she revealed the teaching methods of Morawetz as well as his personality, philosophy, and the beliefs he shared with her during the eight years she studied with him, providing insight into Morawetz as both a teacher and a person.

How did you get to know Oskar Morawetz?

I came across Oskar's *Prelude No. 9* in the RCM grade 10 piano book. I was drawn to this piece and wanted to know more about this composer. As a young pianist, I was not aware at the time that he was a Canadian composer and that someday I would be his student. His music was quite different and unique from the usual classical/romantic repertoire I was playing at the time.

When I was accepted into the composition program at the University of Toronto, I was thrilled to be studying with him. We really connected. He was a very encouraging teacher and often told me that I had a gift. He introduced me to a number of his works, such as his *Piano Concerto No. 1*. I really liked this work, especially the second movement, which I would listen to often. That was a little difficult to do since the recording was on a black disc and the second movement was connected to the first movement. It was hard having to drop the needle in the right place.

Composers go through extreme stress when pressed to deliver commissioned works on time. But Oskar's story was quite unique regarding his piano concerto. He finished the concerto on the day it was due and had to deliver the score to Anton Kuerti at the airport, while his wife went into labor! Now that is stress!

You were one of the very few students who studied composition with Morawetz as he was not officially allowed to teach composition at the graduate level. How did you achieve that?

Oskar was not a member of the School of Graduate Studies and was not allowed to teach graduate students. I asked to study with Oskar but was told by the Dean of the graduate department at the time that this was impossible. I thought it was strange that one of Canada's most distinguished composers could not teach at the grad level. I asked why and was told

that those were the rules. I wrote a letter to Dean Gustav Ciamaga asking him permission to study with Oskar. Although this caused some friction, I was eventually granted permission.¹³⁸

What were the strongest influences on Oskar Morawetz?

His earlier compositions were influenced by Dvořák, for example, the *Carnival Overture*. His *Scherzo* for piano solo was influenced by Beethoven, but by that time he was already absorbed with Wagner. He could recite all the leitmotives from the *Ring* cycle from memory. Another great influence was Bartók. He was familiar with the *Mikrokosmos* and the *Viola Concerto* and was influenced by the multiple tempo changes Bartók used. This is called juxtapositional form. Ideas are juxtaposed instead of moved smoothly from one to another. That is something most composers did not do during that time. There is not much of a direct Czech influence in his music, aside from his *Carnival Overture*, although there is something in his language which seems very Eastern European. His mature language is basically post-tonal. He had his own style. You can tell immediately that a piece was written by Oskar Morawetz.

How would you describe his teaching methods?

Oskar would first look over my music, play it on the piano, and then, if needed, make changes directly on the score. I learned compositional technique just by observation. He stressed contrapuntal writing. His language and approach influenced me very much while I was student. Once I graduated, it was important for me to find my own voice.

What was his temper as a teacher?

He was a very passionate teacher with little tolerance for sloppiness or ignorance in his students. I remember the day when I saw my friend being thrown out of Oskar's studio along with his music. I asked him what happened? And he replied: Oskar did not like my harp writing. I asked to see his score and noticed that he wrote very chromatically for the harp, which is not idiomatic writing for the instrument, since the harpist has to change pedals for every chromatic pitch. The harp player would virtually be tap dancing while playing his music.

¹³⁸ For a letter concerning the same matter from Larisa Kuzmenko to the Associate Dean Robert Falck, please see Appendix B.

What was his relationship to twelve-tone music and to the avant-garde?

During this time in his life, twelve-tone and avant-garde music were on the rise. Oskar did not like twelve-tone or avant-garde music. However, he liked Alberto Ginastera's *Piano Concerto*. When I told him that the composer incorporated a unique form of twelve-tone writing in the piece, he was very surprised and then said: "I am not sure I like the piece anymore". He also commented on John Weinzweig's *Harp Concerto*. This piece uses a number of extended techniques and is written in the twelve-tone style. He said although he got some harp tips from this concerto, he felt that one can get too carried away using extended techniques for the sake of using them: why not just hit the harp with a broom?

Don't you think that the music composed in these days is more accessible and traditional than the music composed fifty years ago?

There are a variety of styles and approaches in today's music. In my opinion nobody is really unique or is doing something different than what has already been done. Some music may be more accessible to audiences than others. However, I think our audiences today are a little more open to new music.

Given the amount of exposure to all kinds of classical music in his young years in Europe along with his incredible memory, he brought this European tradition to Canada in his music, at a time when this music was not easily accessible. I think this is one of his greatest contributions to Canadian music. Do you think it was being appreciated?

I think his music was appreciated, mainly by performers. He was the most performed Canadian composer of his time.

In the Czech tradition, composers often reflected on the tragic political events of the Czech lands. What do you think about the fact, that even though Morawetz wrote pieces on Kennedy or Martin Luther King, he never made an artistic statement on Czech events, such as the communist persecutions in the fifties or the Soviet invasion in 1968?

This is a very interesting observation. Being of Ukrainian heritage, I wrote two works based on two of the most horrific tragedies that occurred in Ukraine. *Voice of Hope* for soprano and string orchestra that commemorates the 1932–1933 famine that occurred in Ukraine. My

mother's family died from starvation, but she lived, eating leaves and anything that she could find. I also wrote a work called *In Memoriam: to the Victims of Chernobyl*. I was moved by this terrible and deadly disaster. A friend of mine told me a story that her mother was performing in the area after the disaster and later died from thyroid cancer. Although Oskar was born in Czechoslovakia, he seemed to me to be more Canadian than Czech. He never spoke to me about politics. He did write music on the Kennedy, Martin Luther King and Anne Frank tragedies, but nothing about his homeland, which I found quite interesting.

1.6 Chapter conclusion

This chapter outlined and examined the vital aspects of Oskar Morawetz's family, cultural, spiritual, and political background, as well as the major influences in his musical style and philosophy. It observed the formative years of his career in Canada as a composer, teacher, and pianist. In its synthesis it displayed a singular quality of various components that defined his identity as a person and as a musician.

Morawetz's family background was rather exceptional in the context of Czechoslovakian society at the beginning of the twentieth century. His father was a very successful businessman of Jewish origin who travelled the world, owned a castle, and knew the president of Czechoslovakia personally; he provided Oskar with a sophisticated and nurturing upbringing. It embraced ethical and social philosophies that far outreached the borders of just one nation. Growing up in such a privileged environment, Morawetz did not conform to the archetypal picture of the modest Czech 'musikant'. However, despite not being allowed to consistently pursue musical studies on the professional level until his arrival in Canada, Morawetz deeply absorbed the large amount of various musical experiences he had been exposed to in his early years in Europe. The extraordinary gift of a phenomenal musical memory endowed Morawetz with a fabric critical for the emergence of the musical language of his own.

Enhanced by his personal Holocaust experience, Morawetz was a humanist in heart. His strong sensitivity towards any injustice and violence based on racial, cultural or religious discrimination gave an incentive for his most accomplished works: *Memorial to Martin Luther King* and *From the Diary of Anne Frank*. Even though he scarcely talked about it, he maintained inner spirituality throughout his life and it is evident in his music.

After the horrors of escaping the Nazis, Morawetz found in Canada both a safe home and a country that entirely facilitated his musical pursuits. He brought a synthesis of the European musical heritage to a country, which was by that time ‘on the crossroad’, as Glenn Gould put it.¹³⁹ And that was Morawetz’s critical contribution to Canada’s musical life.

Morawetz also maintained an active relationship with the Czechoslovak community in Toronto throughout his life. An in-depth insight into his engagements with the community and the Czechs in Canada, constitutes a framework of the next chapter.

¹³⁹ Tovell, Vincent. “At Home with Glenn Gould.” *Canadian Broadcasting Corporation*: 4 Dec. 1959.

Chapter 2

Morawetz and the Czechoslovak Community in Toronto

The interactions between Oskar Morwetz, his family and the Czechoslovak community in Toronto constitute the core of this chapter. The historical context of Canadian immigration as well as the imprint of Czech music and Czechoslovak musicians in Canada is displayed and examined.

2 Immigration in Canada; Czechoslovak immigration to Canada; Czech music in Canada; The Morawetz family and the Czechoslovak community in Toronto; Oskar Morawetz and the Czechoslovak community in Toronto

“The story of Canadian immigration is not one of orderly population growth; it has been and remains both a catalyst to Canadian economic development and a mirror of Canadian attitudes and values; it has often been unashamedly and economically self-serving and ethnically or racially biased.” (Troper)

It was likely the Huron-Iroquois word “kanata” (“village”) from which initially the name of the country later known as “Canada” originated.

The history of immigration to Canada dates as far back as 1000 AD when Vikings first settled for a brief period at L’Anse aux Meadows in Newfoundland. No further European explorations took place until the fifteenth century when the British took possession of some territories and later in the sixteenth and at the beginning of the seventeenth century along with the French colonists established additional settlements.

This French – British duality culminated in the creation of the Constitutional Act in 1791, dividing the colonial Province of Quebec into predominantly French-speaking Lower Canada and English-speaking Upper Canada, granting each a sovereign legislative assembly. This was the first step towards the realization of Canadian Confederation, which was achieved with the British North America Act of 1867.

The great Western migration began after Confederation was established. The Prairie provinces opened to settlement in the late nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth. The government created far-reaching programs with a purpose to encourage and recruit immigrants to come and work. Although the preferences were clearly given to people from the British Isles, Northern Europe, and the USA, the need was such, that the doors were eventually opened to accepting immigrants even from so-called “less desirable” backgrounds. Nevertheless, these “less ideal immigrants” continued to be referred to as “foreigners.”¹⁴⁰

Another wave of bigotry came with the arrival of the First World War, with racism manifested against Germans and those immigrants who were born in the enemy countries. The least acceptable immigrants remained the ones with Asian backgrounds and Black people. The latter ones were virtually blocked and discouraged from entering the country.

The economic collapse followed by the Great Depression in the 1930s caused a stagnation in the encouragement of immigrant policies. Canada was one of the most drastically affected countries by the Depression and it left many people jobless and hungry. As an effect, the restrictive immigration policies which quickly followed caused Canada to refuse to accept many of Hitler’s political opponents as well as Jews. This exercise ultimately failed to save hundreds of thousands lives of World War II victims.

After the end of World War II, together with the economic boom, the immigration door re-opened to the traditionally preferred nationalities at first, but eventually included the rest of the Europe as well. The onset of the Cold War encouraged lots of immigrants from Eastern Europe.

The increased pressure to respect human rights caused a major reform in Canadian immigration in the post-war years. The change was first initiated from within by Canadian residents as they fought for equality and against discrimination based on the country of origin, religion, or culture. The ethnic, religious, and racial barriers were removed from Canadian immigration policy legislation by the late 1960s. For the first time in Canadian history, the country opened its doors

¹⁴⁰ The list of ideal settlers was created by the immigration authorities in a descending preference: British, American, French, Belgian, Dutch, Scandinavians, Germans, Ukrainians, and Poles. Less desirable were Italians, South Slavs, Greeks, and Syrians. The very last were Jews, Asians, Gypsies, and Black persons. – Troper, Harold. “Immigration in Canada.” *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. 22 Apr. 2013 (retrieved 19 May 2019).

to the majority of non-European immigrants and this led to Canada becoming one of the most multicultural countries in the world.¹⁴¹

Ever since the ideological transformation in both the immigration politics and mindset of its citizens, Canada generously provided a safe home to millions of refugees worldwide seeking a safe place to live. Often described as a “political mosaic” rather than a “melting pot”, which the United States has been referred to, modern Canada has strived to observe and respect the cultural diversity of its residents. Instead of imposing a shared vision and common philosophy, Canada’s identity stems from the acceptance and appreciation of the diverse cultures, religions, languages, and nationalities of its people. In other words, Canada finally provided not only a home to its newcomers but also a safe space to preserve their original identities. Those people have learned to live peacefully and respectfully one next to another and that is a unique and rare, if not a solitary, occurrence in the whole world.

2.1 The history of Czech immigration to Canada

Josef Čermák, a Czech émigré to Canada himself, expressed in just a few sentences the hardships of people who decide or are forced by circumstances to leave their native country in order to seek asylum in a safer place:

Most of us do not like to leave our homes and our native land. The familiarity of our surroundings, the language we learn from our mothers, the friends of our youth, the memories of first loves, all have a powerful pull on our hearts. But these are luxuries we cannot always afford. We have our egos and our families to feed, we want to soar and we feel that we need more elbow room for our destinies. Thus we emigrate to prove ourselves.

If emigrating is difficult, being forced to leave one’s country because of religious and, in modern time particularly, political oppression, becoming an exile, is even tougher. But for the immigrant, the economic advantages and, for the exile, a life in freedom offer a worthwhile compensation.¹⁴²

Canada has become the country with the second largest population of Czech origin, after the USA. Among the Czech immigrants have been personalities who made an eminent contribution

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Čermák, Josef. *It all Began with Prince Ruppert; The Story of Czechs and Slovaks in Canada*. Luhačovice: Atelier IM Pub. Co. 2018, 144 – 145.

to Canada. Names such as Leon Koerner and Tomáš Baťa are well known to most Canadians but they only represent a few of the many others whose contribution in the fields of industry, culture, education, and politics in Canada was significant. The Czech immigration to Canada can be dated as far back as the 1870s and it came in four waves:

1. Before World War I: 1870 – 1914
2. Interwar period: 1919 – 1939
3. The Communist coup d'état: 1948
4. The Soviet invasion: 1968

Different historical, economic, and political circumstances of the Czech territory yielded various types of immigrants. The first two periods are mostly marked by people searching for a better economic standing and better available farmland in the West of Canada which became the destination for most Czech immigrants at that time. The other two periods were defined by difficulties caused by political turmoil.

The Munich Agreement in 1938 brought to Canada hundreds of refugees escaping the Nazi's anti-Jewish propaganda. People wanted to fight against Hitler's regime. There was only a short period of relative political ease in Czechoslovakia after the end of World War II. In February 1948 the communist coup d'état took place in Czechoslovakia and marked the beginning of a period of over forty years of totalitarianism. Many intellectuals and freedom-loving people were forced to leave during that time to make a new home for their families in foreign lands, including Canada. After the fall of the communist regime, democracy was re-established and many families were reunited.

Overview of the historical landmarks of the Czech lands in the twentieth century.

Austro-Hungarian Empire: 1867 – 1914

World War I: 1914 – 1918

Origin of Czechoslovakia: 1918

Munich Agreement: 1938

World War II; government-in-exile: 1939 – 1945

Communist coup d'état followed by totalitarianism: 1948 – 1989

Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia: 1968

The “Velvet Revolution” and re-establishment of democracy: 1989

The split of Czechoslovakia into Czech Republic and Slovak Republic: 1992

Due to intense historical events happening in rapid succession in Europe in the twentieth century, the statehood of the Czech lands has undertaken multiple changes over the course of these years.

Initially, the Czech lands belonged to the Austro-Hungarian Empire until Czechoslovakia was established in 1918. The so called “First Republic“ governed by the first democratic president Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk lasted until the Munich Agreement took place in 1938. The Agreement was commonly called the “Munich Betrayal” by Czechs since France and England abandoned Czechoslovakia instead of confronting Hitler directly. With this pact, Czechoslovakia was forced to cede its German-populated region called Sudetenland to Germany and so the “Second Republic” was established. It only lasted 169 days until the German invasion on March 15, 1939. Czechoslovakia was split into the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, and Slovakia, which seceded from Czechoslovakia on March 14, 1939 to become a separate pro-Nazi state. As such, it existed from the years 1939 – 1945 when Czechoslovakia was re-established. The dissolution of the shared statehood between Czechs and Slovaks dates to 1992 when they became two sovereign republics.

2.1.1 Major Czechoslovak institutions in Canada and the governing philosophy of Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk

As a smaller Slavic community in Canada, Czechs have tended to prefer small and informal group organizations when compared with the larger Ukrainian, Polish, and Russian communities in Canada. This is in part due to many Czechs having achieved a higher level of institutional assimilation. While most Czechs retain their ethnic identity, they are less

likely to participate in community institutions, preferring to join non-ethnocultural Canadian organizations.¹⁴³

Despite the fact that the Czech nature in general tends to prefer to assimilate into a new environment as opposed to unite in a creation of a tightly closed community, the Czechs in Canada have founded and developed a large network of associations, churches, schools, theatres, newspapers, television and radio broadcasts, as well as other cultural and community centres. The major associations were The Czech and Slovak Association of Canada, Sokol Canada, and the Masaryk Memorial Institute, among others. There were various purposes for the different associations which will be covered in more detail later. But above all, there was one uniting idea: to preserve and cultivate the Czech ethnocultural heritage in both the oppressed native land and the adoptive home in Canada. The community cherished and practiced the ideals of democracy of the first president of Czechoslovakia, Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk.

Democratic ideas of Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk and the power of truth

“Knowledge is power. With the truth to the justice. Where there is no truth, greatness cannot be achieved.” (Masaryk)

The leading idea behind the life and legacy of the philosopher, sociologist, and first democratic president of Czechoslovakia Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk (1850 – 1937) was an unconditional belief in the absolute strength of and necessity for the truth: in politics, religion, and all aspects of personal life. In the context of the Czech tradition he aligned with Jan Hus and Jan Amos Komenský. His successor, the writer, dissident, and the first democratic president after the fall of Communism in 1989 in Czechoslovakia, Václav Havel (1936 – 2011), also conformed to this lineage based on the search for truth with his statement *“Pravda a láska zvítězí nad lží a nenávistí”* [The truth and love shall win over the lie and hatred].

Masaryk’s life motto *“Nebát se a nekrást”* [do not fear (politically) and do not steal (economically)] became legendary in the Czech and Slovak lands. His philosophy to achieve strength, growth, independence, and democracy was based on facing realism through the detailed, honest, and truthful knowledge of history at any cost. Masaryk never ceased to stand

¹⁴³ Raska, Jan. “Czech Canadians.” *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. 18 Feb. 2010 (retrieved 10 February 2019).

for his ideas throughout his life despite the many waves of animosity that his often unpopular stances caused in his nation.¹⁴⁴

Historically, for the Czech people Masaryk and his humanist legacy became a symbol of what the honest, pure democratic ideas represent, namely the ideas which were being violated so severely and so often throughout the twentieth century in Czechoslovakia. It is no accident that Masaryk's legacy has been embraced as a sort of a mirror employed whenever the question of the violation of human rights occurred in the Czech or Czechoslovak Republic. It is a philosophy, towards which the Czechs have always looked with admiration during times of oppression but, perhaps for its uncompromising and often uncomfortable honesty, mostly struggled to come to terms with in the contemporary democratic establishment.

The Czech and Slovak Association of Canada¹⁴⁵

The original incentive for the incorporation of the Association in 1939 was governed by historical events in Europe. The Munich Agreement in 1938 followed by the loss of sovereignty of Czechoslovakia to Germany elicited an urgent call of leaders of the Czech and Slovak associations in Canada to unite in order to contribute to a re-establishment of freedom in occupied Czechoslovakia. The main objectives of the Association were:

- To develop the highest standards of citizenship in Canadians of Czech and Slovak origin;
- To promote tolerance, understanding and goodwill between all ethnic groups in Canada;
- To assist Czech and Slovak refugees;
- To help to maintain and defend freedom and democracy in Canada;
- To support Canada's efforts to uphold, strengthen and establish democratic systems of government everywhere in the world.¹⁴⁶

The Association expanded quickly during the war and with its 91 branches across Canada was actively involved in providing aid to Czechoslovak units based in Great Britain in particular.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁴ See fn. 1.

¹⁴⁵ Originally under the name of Czechoslovak National Association of Canada. – Retrieved from: <http://www.cssk.ca/brief-history-and-activities> (19 May 2019).

¹⁴⁶ Čermák, 210.

¹⁴⁷ The Association along with the Sokol Canada association collected \$331,000 for the Czechoslovak Army in Great Britain as well as for other causes. One of the major contributions came from the industrialist Tomáš Baťa and his Baťa Company founded in Batawa, Ontario. In his letter to the Batawa branch Jan Masaryk, the Minister of

Another call for action occurred with the communist coup d'état in 1948 in Czechoslovakia. The Association responded with a statement of condemnation towards this act and incorporated the Canadian Fund for Czechoslovak Refugees.¹⁴⁸

The communist coup brought to Canada many young people who, for their ideas and a need for freedom, could not live under the oppression of the communist regime. They came to Canada with a strong commitment to defeat communism in their homeland. Many of them soon established themselves as leaders and the most influential figures of the community.¹⁴⁹

The governing ideology of this ambitious group of young refugees were the ideas of democracy, initially articulated by the first democratic president of Czechoslovakia Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk. These individuals were determined to establish these ideas within the community and most of them devoted their lives to them. As Josef Čermák remarked, there was no better place in the world than Canada to do so.¹⁵⁰

Josef Čermák summed up the ideas, efforts, and achievements of the Association in the following sentences:

During the forty-years of the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia, the Association, together with other organizations such as the Sokol,¹⁵¹ the Czechoslovak Veterans, and the Masaryk Memorial Institute Incorporated, defended the democratic ideals of Masaryk's

Foreign Affairs of the Czechoslovak Government in Exile wrote: "By serving the Allies you are serving us and the loved ones at home."— Ibid, 178 – 193.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid, 209.

¹⁴⁹ Josef Čermák, Jan Waldauf, and Jiří Corn belonged among the most active in this group.

¹⁵⁰ Čermák Josef. Interview with the author (15 March 2019).

¹⁵¹ "A healthy spirit in a healthy body" is the motto of the gymnastics organisation Sokol (which translates as falcon), founded in Prague in 1862 by Dr. Miroslav Tyrš. Its ideas are based on cultivation of both the physical body and moral values. The strong emphasis on the intellectual teaching which promotes pure patriotism and desire for the Slavic culture have led Sokol to prohibition multiple times. Attempts were made to eliminate Sokol from the world during both WW2 as well as during the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia. Despite all the efforts of the oppressors, Sokol survived until today, largely thanks to its branches spread all around the world. Through both its ideas as well as an active participation in revolutions in its homeland and worldwide Sokol helped to restore the independence of Czechoslovakia.

In Canada, the Sokol organisation developed a few branches and became very active. Its work and dedication was appreciated among Canadians as well. As Donald C. MacDonald, the leader of the New Democratic Party of Ontario put it: "Sokol represents a splendid group of Canadians dedicated to the principles of physical fitness, democracy, and human brotherhood. The good work of the Sokol Gymnastic Association of Canada, carrying on the Sokol traditions of Czechoslovakia, is a matter of admiration, even envy, among all Canadians." – Čermák, 277.

Czechoslovakia. Its leaders and members spent countless hours trying to persuade the Canadian public and the Canadian government that Czechoslovakia deserved to be free. Most of the time it seemed a futile effort not only because nobody was prepared to challenge the might of the Soviet Union and China, but also because many saw Communism as a wonderful doctrine and the Soviet Union as a noble experiment. (...) But the efforts of the Association's leaders paid a dividend. When in the middle of the night of August 21, 1968, Czechoslovakia received a "protective" visit from the armies of the Warsaw Pact, the following morning a delegation of the Association was received by members of the Canadian Government. The delegation presented an appeal for help drafted by Josef Čermák. During the next six months, Canada admitted some twelve thousand Czechoslovak refugees. (...) The thousands of refugees who came to Canada after August 21, 1968, constitute a major wave of immigration by Czechs and Slovaks to Canada.¹⁵²

It is worth mentioning that the Association was not only active in the political field but also in education and cultural life. Apart from organizing cultural events, music concerts, and lectures promoting and educating about Czechoslovak culture, the Association was influential in introduction of a Czech and Slovak Languages and Literatures Program at the University of Toronto.¹⁵³

After the Velvet Revolution took place in 1989 in Czechoslovakia, the Association remained active in maintaining a bilateral relationship between Czechoslovakia, later on the Czech Republic, and the Czech and Slovak community in Canada.

The Masaryk Award.

In 1985 the Association established the Masaryk Award to be given to

Canadians of Czech or Slovak origin recognized in some field of endeavour for outstanding achievement, as well as to Canadians of any origin who made a significant contribution to the cause of free Czechoslovakia, or who have enriched the life of Czechs and Slovaks in Canada.¹⁵⁴

Among the recipients of the award are individuals as well as various groups and organizations. Walter Koerner, Tomáš Baťa, Miloš Krajný, Josef Čermák, Josef and Zdena Škvorecký, Oskar Morawetz, Gordon Skilling, and Nové Divadlo v Torontě are among its recipients, just to name a few.

¹⁵² Čermák, 210 – 211.

¹⁵³ Čermák, 212.

¹⁵⁴ Čermák, 211.

Masaryk Hall and the establishment of the Masaryk Memorial Institute

The decision that the community needed a permanent home came from the Association's initiative in 1944. The idea also reflects the change of focus of the community at the time: from the political and international field to the social and local one. This very cause gave origin to a new association called the Masaryk Memorial Institute Incorporated.

Initially, Masaryk Hall was a building on Cowan Avenue in Toronto. Named in honour of the first Czechoslovak president and treasuring his democratic ideas, Masaryk Hall became a cultural and educational centre for Czechs and Slovaks which for about thirty years served its purpose well. The Masaryk Hall hosted Czech and Slovak language classes as well as the gymnastic organization Sokol. There was also a restaurant serving Czech cuisine and a stage for theatre and music performances. Masaryk Hall was sold in 1960 and the activities were moved to Masaryktown in Scarborough.¹⁵⁵

As the Institute prospered, it purchased a farm surrounded by 63 acres in Scarborough in 1948 which was gradually transformed into a complex which now includes parks, library, restaurant, and residential buildings. Known ever since as Masaryktown, it has been a centre for the community's diverse cultural, educational, and other social activities. It is also a home to the Czech and Slovak newspaper *Nový Domov*, with its first issue dating to 1950.

There was a large number of other organizations in Canada created by the Czechoslovak community and serving various purposes. Besides the already mentioned most significant ones, which were the Czech and Slovak Society in Canada, Masaryk Memorial Institute, and the gymnastic group Sokol, there are a few others that should be mentioned: The Czechoslovak Society for Arts and Science, The Czechoslovak Veterans in Canada, The Comenius Institute, The Esterhazy Czech Club, The Milada Horáková Club, as well as the Czechoslovak Canadian Cultural Society of Southern Alberta.

Again and again, I met greatness in the actions of people no one ever writes about. In the actions of thousands of men and women who divided their love between the country of their origin and

¹⁵⁵ Retrieved from: <http://www.masaryktown.ca> (13 May 2019).

the magnificent harsh country where they found their second home. They served well the country of their origin, this lovely little land, visited by much tragedy yet also often reaching for the stars. They deserve our thanks and gratitude.

2.2 Czech music in Canada

Music has always been a vital component in Czech culture. As we have seen in the previous chapter, music was a part of everyday lives of people in both the cities and the rural areas. The centres of music in the Czech lands were mainly schools, churches, theatres, and concert halls.

It was only natural that as soon as the first Czech immigrants settled in Canada by the end of the nineteenth century, Czech music took roots. The tradition of Czech folksongs and dances passed from one generation to another, initially in homes and secondary schools and was also supported by the church.¹⁵⁶ As the community grew larger throughout the twentieth century, the establishment of the Czechoslovakian institutions such as the Czech and Slovak Association of Canada, Sokol, and Masaryk Memorial Institute took place. These organizations became principal organizers and sponsors of the cultural and musical life of the community.¹⁵⁷

Over the course of the twentieth century Czech classical music achieved a high standing in Canada. Besides Antonín Dvořák, who has been arguably the best known and most frequently performed Czech composer globally, the works by other composers such as Bedřich Smetana, Leoš Janáček, and Bohuslav Martinů have lately been gradually earning respect. Besides the large symphonic works, chamber music, and vocal repertoire, Czech opera became standard repertoire in Canada.

2.2.1 Visiting Czech musical ensembles, conductors, and interpreters in Canada

Many prominent Czech ensembles, conductors, and interpreters visited Canada. Ever since Karel Ančerl first toured Canada and North America with the Czech Philharmonic in 1965, the Canadian musical scene has seen Czech conductors such as Rafael Kubelík, Václav Neumann, Václav Smetáček, Jiří Bělohlávek, Zdeněk Mácal, and Jakub Hrůša, some of them returning

¹⁵⁶ Mráček, Jaroslav: "Czech music in Canada," *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, 7 Feb. 2006 (retrieved 8 May 2019).

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

repeatedly. The list of solo artists includes pianists Rudolf Firkušný, Ivan Moravec, Boris Krajný, and Slávka Pěchočová; violinists Josef Suk, Jan Kubelík, Bohuslav Matoušek, and Ivan Ženaty; the singers Naděžda Kniplová and Eva Urbanová. The great Czech chamber music tradition has been displayed by ensembles such as the Janáček Quartet, Smetana Quartet, Pražák Quartet, Talich Quartet, Zemlinský Quartet, and the Suk Trio. After their North American debut in 1965 the Czech Philharmonic reappeared multiple times in Canada.¹⁵⁸

2.2.2 Composers of the Czech origin in Canada.

Beside Oskar Morawetz there were perhaps only two other composers of Czech origin who have made a significant contribution to Canadian music: Rudolf Komorous and Milan Kymlička.¹⁵⁹

Rudolf Komorous (b. 1931 in Prague, Czechoslovakia).

Since his arrival in Canada in 1969 Rudolf Komorous has developed into one of the most influential composers and music educators in Canada.

In Prague he studied bassoon at both the Prague Conservatory and the Academy of Performing Arts. At the latter, he also studied composition under Pavel Bořkovec. Always being an adherent of the avant-garde music, he co-founded Musica Viva Pragensis in 1961, one of the leading groups in Czechoslovakia that specialized in new music. He was also a member of an interdisciplinary avant-garde group called the Šmidra group, while in Czechoslovakia.

In Canada, he settled in in Victoria in British Columbia in 1971 where he joined the School of Music at the University of Victoria, where he later became a director. In 1989 Komorous took a position as the Director of the Contemporary Arts at the Simon Fraser University in Vancouver. His strong influence on the young generation of Canadian composers has earned him admiration,

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ In our conversation Luboš Sluka revealed that Karel Ančerl composed high quality music as well: “Not many people know about this fact, but Ančerl was a very good composer as well. Unfortunately, his compositions are lost now. Before he died, he told me that he had passed on everything to Milan Kymlička.” - Sluka, Luboš. Interview with the author (5 January 2019).

After Kymlička’s death the location of these compositions became unknown. I tried to track them down, so far unsuccessfully. However, it may be a subject of future research, since these compositions would represent an invaluable merit for both Canadian and Czech music.

praise, and the title “The Victoria Mafia.”¹⁶⁰ He is now retired from teaching and lives in Victoria.

Komorous has an extensive output for orchestra, solo instruments, voice, chamber ensembles, and electronic music. His musical language reflects many avant-garde and multi-disciplinary art movements of the 20th century: Surrealism, Dadaism, minimalism, and exotism, beside others. He wrote two works concerning texts from the Tang Dynasty poet Li-Po: the woodwind quintet *Fumon Manga* and *23 Poems About Horses*. Komorous is also known for his operatic works: *Lady Whiterose*, *No no miya*, and *The Mute Canary*. One of the composer’s most recent compositions, *The Mute Canary* was heard in 2018 in the Czech Republic at the new music festival Ostrava Days in Ostrava.

Milan Kymlička (1936 in Louny, Czechoslovakia – 2008 in Toronto, Canada).

The composer, arranger and conductor Milan Kymlička was educated at the Prague Conservatory and at the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague.

Soon after his emigration to Toronto, Canada in 1968, Kymlička established himself as one of Canada’s leading arrangers and conductors. His work for various CBC radio shows and programs as both conductor and composer as well as his recordings for many popular artists of his day are well documented.

Perhaps the greatest recognition for Kymlička has been from his output for the film industry. Among the featured films Kymlička has completed a score for are *The Reincarnate* (1971), *Wedding in White* (1972), *Babar, the Movie* (1989), *Matusalem* (1993), *La vie d’uno Heros* (1994). He also received numerous awards and nominations for his music.

Beside his output for the television, radio, and film productions Kymlička’s list of works includes numerous classical compositions as well. Among his solo piano works are *Sonatina*,

¹⁶⁰ Keillor, John. “Rudolf Komorous.” Retrieved from: <http://www.allmusic.com/artist/rudolf-komorous-mn0001727405/biography> (28 September 2019).

Four Pieces, Four Valtzes, and Five Preludes,¹⁶¹ along with chamber music for various instruments. He had completed a ballet and a cello concerto, prior to his emigration to Canada.¹⁶²

2.2.3 Music and the Czechoslovak community in Toronto

The Czechoslovak community in Toronto was, musically speaking, very strong. Besides Morawetz, who established himself as a leading Canadian composer shortly after he immigrated to the country, there were figures of the highest artistic caliber such as Karel Ančerl, Jan Rubeš. Antonín Kubálek, Walter Susskind, Charles Dobiáš, Milan Kymlička, Nicholas Goldschmidt, and Arnold Walter, beside others.

The Czechs were significantly important in the development and enrichment of the musical life of the city and were leading forces behind establishing some of the major music institutions in Toronto. They were involved in performing arts such as opera and symphony productions, chamber concerts, and composition, as well as in various music organizations, and music education. Through their efforts, they were not only promoting music by Czech composers, but they also strived to bridge the two cultures, often championing both Canadian and Czech music.

The scope and the main purpose of this study unfortunately does not permit a more in-depth analysis of the life and legacy of the Czech musical emigrants in Canada. Therefore, I will just mention the examples whose impact on the music in Canada proved the most significant. One has to bear in mind, that it is just a very small sample in comparison to the large contribution they and their compatriots have made during their lives.

The pianist Antonín Kubálek recorded and performed works by Canadian composers such as Buczynski, Morawetz, Somers, Papineau-Couture, Kymlička, and Coulthard, beside others. As music editor, administrator and critic, Jan Matějček was known for promoting both Czech and Canadian music worldwide.¹⁶³ Karel Ančerl and Walter Susskind both served as principal

¹⁶¹ *Four Pieces, Four Valtzes, and Five Preludes* were recorded by Antonín Kubálek.

¹⁶² Edwards, Barry J. "Milan Kymlicka." *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. Dec.3. 2012 (retrieved 28 September 2019).

¹⁶³ Jan Matějček (1926 – 2017) was known for his diverse engagements as a promoter of Canadian and Czech composers. He held various administrative positions in both Canada and Czechoslovakia throughout his life. In Canada he was known especially for his engagements with the performing right organizations such as PROCAN and CAPAC both of which merged in 1992 into SOCAN. Matějček was a leading force behind the process. In

conductors of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. In 1960, while still with the TSO, Susskind founded the National Youth Orchestra of Canada, which is among the world's longest operating youth orchestras. The Moravian-born Nicholas Goldschmidt became known as Canada's leading festival organizer, and a conductor, singer, and pedagogue.¹⁶⁴ Along with Arnold Walter and Herman Geiger-Torel, he co-founded the Canadian Opera Company.

Both the Canadian and the Czech-Canadian press were attentive and appreciative toward the Czech contribution to the musical life in Canada.¹⁶⁵ There were two major Czech newspapers, one called *Naše Hlasy* [Our Voices], and the other *Nový Domov* [New Home]. In Toronto the majority of the cultural events organized by the Czechoslovakian community took place in its centre, Masaryktown.

2.3 The Morawetz family and the Czechoslovak community in Toronto

There were multiple reasons behind the prominent position the Morawetz family enjoyed not only within the Czech community in Toronto but far beyond. The family was appreciated for their high reputation in Europe, which Richard earned for his engagements in business, political, and cultural circles. The cult of the first president, Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, was a prevalent establishing idea of the Czechoslovak community in Toronto. The Morawetz family was close to both Tomáš and his son Jan Masaryk. Upon their arrival in Toronto, Richard immediately

Czechoslovakia Matějček served as a chief editor of Panton publishing house (1965 – 1968) and he was also a member of the Arts Council of the Prague Spring Festival (1999 – 2002).

¹⁶⁴ His list of students includes names such as Jon Vickers and Maureen Forrester, among others.

¹⁶⁵ The Canadian press spoke of “Czechs making conspicuous contribution to Canada’s music life.” – Thompson, Amy. “Czechoslovakian Contribute Fierce Love of Freedom.” *Toronto Daily Star* 11 Apr. 1959.

Another example of a great appreciation of the Czech musical contribution is an excerpt from a review of a major Czech event organized by the Czech community in Toronto on the occasion of Antonín Dvořák’s anniversary: “Last Saturday’s concert of Dvorak’s music at the Eaton Auditorium was an unqualified triumph – a triumph of Dvorak’s music, a triumph of the performers and – in a sense – a triumph of the Czechoslovak community in Toronto. Never, on this continent, has Dvorak’s music, now gay, now melancholy, now full of spiritual yearning, spoken to us more eloquently than last Saturday. During the years we have heard many distinguished performances by Walter Susskind, Ilona Kombrink, Jan Rubes, Dr. Oskar Morawetz and Charles Dobias. Last Saturday they have outdone themselves. (...) We are proud of them and we are grateful. The enthusiastic and large audience has proved that the Czechoslovak community in Toronto is large enough to support a major cultural event and that cooperation between the various Czechoslovak organizations pays a handsome dividend. We hope that the last Saturday was only a beginning of a richer cultural life in our community.” – Editorial. “We are Proud and Grateful.” *Toronto Daily Star* 8 Jan. 1962.

bought a company, which provided a living for the family.¹⁶⁶ The family shared their wealth by donating money to support various causes in the community, for which they also earned appreciation and gratitude.

Richard and his wife Frida always emphasized the importance of the family and that was magnificently reflected in their four children. They all made highly successful careers in various fields, but perhaps most importantly, they developed into the highest quality of human beings.

2.3.1 Czech Patriarch Hero to Fellow Newcomers: Richard Morawetz.¹⁶⁷

Throughout his life on both continents, Europe and Canada, Richard Morawetz was considered a great Czech patriot. Sonja Morawetz Sinclair recollects the family background and possible influences behind her father's love for Czech culture:

My father was a great Czech patriot all his life. He was born to a family where both parents spoke German. But he learned Czech. After he enrolled in the lyceum in Olomouc, nobody wanted to talk to him there because of his Czech language and patriotism. Even his landlord was advising him to speak German and to give up his patriotic ideals, just to make his life easier. He refused. He loved Masaryk's philosophy, ideals and democracy. We often asked where the patriotism had come from, and he always answered, that it had been the influence of his dear friend from Úpice, Antonín Čapek.¹⁶⁸

This is a very interesting thread. Antonín Čapek (1855 – 1929) was a doctor in Úpice. He served not only as a family physician to the Morawetz family, he was also a doctor in Richard's cotton factory in Úpice.¹⁶⁹ The first house in which the Richard Morawetz's family lived in Úpice in between the years 1920 – 1924 was originally purchased from Antonín.¹⁷⁰ In 1924 the family moved to another house, known nowadays as “Morawetzova vila” [The Morawetz's Villa].¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁶ The company name was Hamilton Carhartt Co., operating at 535 Queen Street East (the building still stands but has been converted into loft apartments).

¹⁶⁷ Title of an article about Richard Morawetz in *Globe and Mail*, 1961. Retrieved from <http://www.oskarmorawetz.com/Tabs/TabPerson/Articles/1961GlobeRichard.php> (4 April 2019).

¹⁶⁸ Sinclair, Sonja. Conversation with the author (16 March 2019).

¹⁶⁹ “Antonín Čapek.” *Wikipedia*. Retrieved from https://cs.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anton%C3%ADn_%C4%8Capek (19 September 2019).

¹⁷⁰ Retrieved from: <http://www.oskarmorawetz.com/Tabs/TabPerson/Upice.php> (2 September 2018).

¹⁷¹ The Morawetz Villa was built in 1900 by Ludvík Morawetz and it is highly valued for its luxury architectonic and artistic features of both the interior and exterior. For a photo of the Villa, please see Appendix D.

Antonín was known as a very animated person. Besides his medical activities in Úpice he co-founded the local Ethnographic Museum and was a member of the town council. His wife Božena Čapková was a collector of Czech folklore such as stories, songs, and fables.¹⁷² Antonín was the father of the greatly successful painter Josef Čapek and the famous writer Karel Čapek.¹⁷³ Despite having opposing philosophies in life, Karel loved and admired his father very much. And at least one thing they had in common: Czech patriotism. Karel called his father “a good example ... of the national awakeners.”¹⁷⁴

Having such information to hand makes it possible to trace a common vision and shared philosophies of the Morawetz – Čapek – Masaryk circle. The ideas of true humanity, democratic values, social justice, and love for the Czechoslovak nation with its cultural heritage governed Richard’s life and his diverse activities throughout his time in both of his homelands: the Czech lands and Canada. He passed his vision on to all his children whose lives and values were governed by the same ideas. They all spoke Czech throughout their lives.

Soon after the family had made Toronto its new home and residence, Richard bought the Toronto operations of the US-based Hamilton Carhartt Co. – a company manufacturing pants and overalls.¹⁷⁵ He continued his engagements with the Czechoslovakian government and served as an employer’s delegate of Czechoslovakia to the World Labour Organization, the first time

¹⁷² Ládyová, Jana. “Božena Čapková, sběratelka, maminka slavných potomků.” 2016. Retrieved from: <http://www.zena-in.cz/clanek/bozena-capkova-sberatelka-maminka-slavnych-potomku> (5 September 2019).

¹⁷³ Karel Čapek (1890 – 1938), a seven-time Nobel Prize nominee, was a Czech patriot, writer, playwright, journalist, and critic. A life-long advocate of freedom and democratic values, he was best known for his science fiction plays dealing with the pre-war turmoil in society as well as with the rise and threat of Nazism. In his play *R.U.R.* he invented the word robot. He developed a close friendship with Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk and his son Jan Masaryk. Čapek collected their frequent talks in the book *The Talks with T.G.M.* Despite the fact, that he was named by the Gestapo “public enemy number two.” Čapek refused to leave the country and to accept an exile in England, which had been offered to him. He died of pneumonia shortly before the Gestapo came to arrest him.

¹⁷⁴ Ort, Thomas. *Art and Life in Modernist Prague: Karel Čapek and His Generation, 1911-1938*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.

¹⁷⁵ The company was sold in 1974. – Retrieved from: <http://www.oskarmorawetz.com/Tabs/TabPerson/Parentage.php> (20 March 2019).

while still in Czechoslovakia in 1937, and the second time in 1941.¹⁷⁶ In 1944 he was elected a permanent governing member of the International Labour Organization in Philadelphia.¹⁷⁷

He was a highly respected person not only in the Czech community, but in the community in Toronto in general. In 1958 he was invited to give a speech to the newly naturalized citizens in the Toronto's City Hall. In that speech Richard urged the people to become "every inch Canadian". He emphasized the duty to learn English to the best of one's ability and above all to appreciate and preserve the privilege of freedom and democracy that Canada provides for its residents. "Never stop appreciating the freedom which we are privileged to enjoy here and preserve it always."¹⁷⁸

To the Czechs in Toronto, Richard was a respected and loved personality. The article in *Globe and Mail* from 1961 celebrating his 80th birthday, called him "Czech patriarch hero," and "adviser and friend to the community." It observed qualities which had brought Richard this admiration:

In Canada Mr. Morawetz has given time and money to countless community projects, has helped numerous immigrants take root, and has helped settle minor disputes and misunderstandings of immigrants.

Richard Morawetz was one of the best-known persons in pre-war Prague. One of the country's leading textile manufacturers, he was a close friend of former president Thomas Masaryk and of his son Jan Masaryk.¹⁷⁹

As one of the most respectable members of the community he was invited to give a speech during the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the first establishment of Czechoslovakia on October 28th, 1918. In this speech Richard expressed his affection for his native land as well as gratitude to Canada for providing a safe home to him and his family:

You will believe me when I say that on this occasion I remember not only the great day of liberation on the 28th day of October 1918, when I was in Prague, but I remember also the sad events which followed and which forced many of us to leave the country. No words

¹⁷⁶ At the 1941 conference, Richard emphasised the importance of material help which needed to be delivered to the European countries affected by the War. – Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ *The Toronto Star*. 1958. Retrieved from: <http://www.oskarmorawetz.com/Tabs/TabPerson/Parentage.php> (16 April 2019).

¹⁷⁹ "Czech Patriarch Hero to the Fellow Newcomers." *Globe and Mail*. 1961. Retrieved from: <http://www.oskarmorawetz.com/Tabs/TabPerson/Parentage.php> (16 April 2019).

can describe the sorrow of our hearts when we came to this decision, but we also have not forgotten what every kind word, every smile, and every handshake meant to us under these conditions. We are deeply indebted for all the kind-heartedness and understanding expressed by many of you to encourage us as we stood on the threshold of a new life. And now we are happy to say that we are Canadians, loyal and reliable citizens of this country. We have admired the democracy of this country, the democracy which we were taught by our great Thomas Masaryk. We have found here a new home, and many good friends. I cannot express my feelings in any other words so well as “God save Canada!”

Now you will understand that we didn't forget the country of our birth. How could we forget this paradise on earth, this country where we were born, where we lived through all the happy years of our youth, and where our ancestors are buried. We also cherish our old language.¹⁸⁰

According to the already mentioned article in the *Globe and Mail*, Richard was “one of the best-known persons in pre-war Prague.”¹⁸¹ He visited Europe almost every year during his life in Canada, but he never returned to his homeland. “It would break my heart to see how my country has changed since the Communists have taken over.”¹⁸²

Family was always of the highest importance to Richard and he passed on the same values to his children. In a letter which was found after his death he urges them to preserve the love and unity within the family.¹⁸³ He concluded his letter with a short and simple, yet telling statement, which somehow summons Richard's own life philosophy: “I am confident that you will lead honourable lives, worthy of the excellent example given by your ancestors. Always be truthful in your professional and private lives and remember kindly your ever-loving father.”¹⁸⁴

And they did, indeed. Herbert Morawetz (1915 – 2017) was a greatly accomplished person in the field of chemistry, John Morawetz (1919 – 2015) also succeeded in business. Sonja Morawetz Sinclair (b. 1921), a remarkable woman who excelled, as one of the very few women in the

¹⁸⁰ *Nový Domov*, Nov. 16, 1957. retrieved from: <http://www.oskarmorawetz.com/Tabs/TabPerson/Parentage.php> (20 May 2019).

¹⁸¹ “Czech Patriarch Hero to Fellow Newcomers.” *Globe and Mail*. 1961. – Retrieved from: <http://www.oskarmorawetz.com/Tabs/TabPerson/Articles/1961GlobeRichard.php> (20 June 2019).

¹⁸² *Ibid.*

¹⁸³ The family kept their annual meetings until the death of Herbert Morawetz in 2017. – Čermák, Josef. Interview with the author (15 March 2019).

¹⁸⁴ Retrieved from: <http://www.oskarmorawetz.com/Tabs/TabPerson/Parentage.php> (20 May 2019).

middle of the twentieth century, to have a career as a journalist, writer and a codebreaker during WW2.¹⁸⁵ And Oskar Morawetz (1917 – 2007) became one of Canada’s leading composers.

2.4 Oskar Morawetz and the Czechoslovak community in Canada

“I do have a sincere joy from your success as a composer and I am so happy that you found such an appreciative and auspicious environment for your talent.” (Hoffmeister)

Morawetz was very happy to call Canada home. After the horrors that he experienced escaping the threat of almost certain death in a German concentration camp, Canada provided a secure home for him and his family. He was finally allowed to pursue his musical talent on a professional level and that was a great relief. He never felt the desire to return to live in his native Czechoslovakia. The question arises: To what extent did he relate to the mentality of Czech composers?

Coming from a highly established and wealthy family Morawetz certainly did not conform to the traditional picture of the modest Czech “musikant” or the “modest Czech man”. As mentioned above, his family background was radically different from that of Smetana, Dvořák, Janáček, Novák, Martinů and many others. His father Richard was a well-travelled man and even though he was a great Czech patriot, his cosmopolitan thinking must have shaped Oskar’s views from a very young age.

This fact to some extent explains why Morawetz perhaps never felt either the connection with the country of his origin as deeply as many others, nor a desire to awaken a national-awareness through the music he composed for the Czech people. Unlike Dvořák, who was very unhappy and home sick during his stay in America in the years 1892 – 1895, Morawetz “gladly tore up his roots with his homeland.” In the same interview for the *Toronto Star* in 1956, he admitted that

¹⁸⁵ For her knowledge of the French language Sonja was chosen at the University to work as a codebreaker for an Ottawa extension of Bletchley Park Signals Intelligence in between the years 1943 – 1945. She had to swear secrecy and she could not tell anybody for seventy years. For her service she was awarded a Bletchley Park Commemorative Badge in 2017. Later she continued her career as a very successful independent journalist (*Time*, *CBC*, *Maclean’s*, *Chatelaine*, *Canadian Business*, *Financial Post*), and as a writer (*I Presume You Can Type: The Mature Guide to Women’s Second Careers*; *Bata: Shoemaker to the World*; beside others). – Sinclair, Sonja. Conversation with the author (16 March 2019).

the only time he becomes a Czech again is when he writes happy music. Then he cannot resist being exuberant “the old Bohemian folk-dance way.”¹⁸⁶

The other fact in support of the “torn roots” between the composer and his homeland is, that he responded to the events which took place in America in works such as *Memorial to Martin Luther King* or *Passacaglia on a Bach Chorale* (which was written in response to the assassination of President John F. Kennedy), but he remained silent when any nation – related event in Czechoslovakia took place.¹⁸⁷ Since his entire career took place in Canada, Morawetz was not composing music for a Czech audience.¹⁸⁸

This perspective alone may seem to provide a legitimate ground for the assumption that Morawetz did not feel strongly his Czech connection. But upon a closer examination from within the Czechoslovak community, the accounts of Morawetz’s Czech friends as well as his sister Sonja Sinclair shed another light on the topic and help to create a more complete picture.

The reality that Morawetz never felt the desire to go back to live in his homeland can be attributed to many factors. One, his entire family came together and settled in Canada. As Sonja Sinclair remarked: “How could we have felt homesick when everybody was here. We were surrounded by each other.”¹⁸⁹

He was surrounded by his Czech family during his first years. In one interview Morawetz admitted that he did not know any English upon his arrival to Canada and that proved to be a challenge during the first years in Canada.¹⁹⁰ Even though the family quickly attained

¹⁸⁶ Thompson, Hugh. “His First Symphony.” *Star Weekly* 3. March. 1956.

¹⁸⁷ Michael Beckerman found a clear tendency and tradition of Czech composers to identify themselves with contemporary events. The year 1968 and the invasion of Czechoslovakia by the Soviet Bloc may serve as a good example. A prominent Czech composer in exile Karel Husa (1921 – 2016) wrote *Music for Prague* in 1968 in memory of this tragic event of Czech history. – Beckerman, 68.

¹⁸⁸ There is a letter from Morawetz’s brother Herbert dated 3.1. 1947, in which Herbert suggests that Morawetz consider writing something for the Czech audience: “(...) I am of the opinion, that you should take seriously the fact that you have become a famous Czech composer. Are you aware of how much the Czech patriots with all their enthusiasm could do for you? Much more than the Canadians, I think. How about you write something with the relationship to the Czech land? Let me know what you think about it! (...)” Herbert Morawetz, Files 2004 – 2018, Oskar Morawetz Collection, National Library of Canada.

¹⁸⁹ Sinclair, Sonja. Conversation with the author (16 March 2019).

¹⁹⁰ *Prof. Oskar Morawetz.*

relationships and connections with Canadians, they maintained close friendships within the Czechoslovak community.

Unlike his father, who never returned to his homeland, Oskar visited Czechoslovakia quite frequently. But very naturally, the communist regime with its ideology, prisons, closed borders, and secret police, which lasted from 1945 – 1989 could not provide the freedom of thought, work, and travel which he needed and was used to.

Even though Morawetz never expressed any political opinions publicly, either through his music or verbally, he was very well informed and aware of what was happening in Czechoslovakia politically. His passion for collecting anecdotes led him to record a whole CD of “anti-communist anecdotes” in the Czech language, which he shared with his Czech friends and family. The record reveals not only his understanding and familiarity with the absurdities specific to the regime in Czechoslovakia, but also a knowledge of the individual political representatives of the time. According to Morawetz himself, he exchanged these anecdotes with his friends during his visits in Czechoslovakia. Apparently, he was not the only Czech composer in exile having this diversion. There is one anecdote on the record that Morawetz learned from Bohuslav Martinů when the two composers met in New York.¹⁹¹

Morawetz’s good relationship with the Czech community in Toronto as well as his artistically prolific engagements and activities within the community are very well documented. Morawetz was involved vigorously in the musical life of the Czech community as a composer and pianist.¹⁹² He maintained cordial relationships with some of the prominent Czech musicians who lived in Toronto such as the conductor of the TSO Karel Ančerl (1908 – 1973) and his wife Hana,¹⁹³ bass opera singer Jan Rubeš (1920 – 2009), and pianist Antonín Kubálek (1935 – 2011), among many others. He helped many Czech emigrants to establish their careers in Canada. Morawetz also maintained a friendship with Czech musicians who stayed in Czechoslovakia or lived in another country. Morawetz himself visited Czechoslovakia regularly,

¹⁹¹ Morawetz, Oskar. “Morawetz vypráví antikomunistické anekdoty.” [Morawetz Tells Anti-communist Anecdotes]. From a private source.

¹⁹² For more information please refer to the interview with Josef Čermák, pages 79 – 83.

¹⁹³ Morawetz dedicated the piece *When I am Laid to Earth* to Karel and Hana Ančerl after Hana’s death.

the last visit taking place in 1995.¹⁹⁴

Musically, he loved music of Czech composers such as Antonín Dvořák, Leoš Janáček, Bohuslav Martinů, Vítězslav Novák, Bohuslav Foerster and Josef Suk. Throughout his life as both a composer and a pianist, he was an ambassador for Czech music. He often played and performed Czech compositions on the piano, some of them were even premiered in Canada by him.¹⁹⁵ The occasions he played for were usually activities of either the Czechoslovakian or the Jewish community in Toronto. As a composer, he paid tribute to Dvořák by transcribing his *Humoresque*, the *Slavonic Dance in E Minor*, and *Five Biblical Songs*.

According to Morawetz's Czech friends in Toronto, Morawetz was very "Czech" at heart. As did all the other members of his family, he spoke Czech excellently until his death. His sister Sonja, who is now ninety-seven, and has lived in Canada for almost seventy years, not only speaks Czech fluently, but she recites Czech poems and knows Czech songs by heart. "I have this gift after my mom. She loved poetry and she could recite the complete sets by heart. She had such a fantastic memory!"¹⁹⁶

In a conversation with his Czech compatriot and friend Josef Čermák, Morawetz expressed his visceral connection with, affection for, and appreciation of Czech culture: "I speak the language, I read lots of the Czech books and of course I love the Czech music. It always flatters me when during my visits in Czechoslovakia my friends who have not seen me since high school tell me, that my Czech has not changed at all. Musically speaking, my musical friends often laugh that I know probably more about the Czech music than any other person in the country."¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁴ Retrieved from: <http://www.oskarmorawetz.com/Tabs/TabPerson/Aging.php> (22 April 2019).

¹⁹⁵ "It is of a particular importance to highlight Morawetz's contribution to the promotion of Czech music as it was he, who performed some works of Vítězslav Novák for the first time in Canada. (...) There is no doubt that Dr. Oskar Morawetz is, along with Bohuslav Martinů, the most prominent Czechoslovakian composer in exile." – Štenbera, Jiří. "Dr. Oskar Morawetz." *Naše Hlasy* 30 June. 1955. (From the Czech original translated by the author.)

¹⁹⁶ Sinclair, Sonja. Interview with the author (10 March 2019). Morawetz also revered this gift of an impeccable memory and love for the Czech language Frida preserved throughout her life. In 1990 he took a note (in the Czech language) saying, that "Of all my Czechoslovak friends in both Czechoslovakia and Canada my 96 years-old mother was the only one who remembered by heart the text of the second verse of the Czech anthem *Kde domov můj?* She dictated the text to me in June 1990." – Oskar Morawetz, Files 2004 – 2018, Oskar Morawetz Collection, National Library of Canada.

¹⁹⁷ *Prof. Oskar Morawetz.*

2.4.1 Performances of Morawetz's works by Czech performers and ensembles

Initially, almost all of the musicians of Czech origin who performed Morawetz's music were also emigrants, most of them based in Toronto. This is understandable when both the geographical and political aspects are considered.

The Czech musical "family" in Toronto was not large in number but some of its members were musicians of the highest artistic merit who engaged in musical life vigorously. Therefore it does not come as a surprise, that among the conductors who presented Morawetz's works most frequently were Karel Ančerl and Walter Susskind during their years with Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Rafael Kubelík performed the *Carnival Overture* when he was a principal conductor with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Among the other Czech émigrés who performed Morawetz's music frequently are the conductor and singer Nicholas Goldschmidt and the pianists Antonín Kubálek and Rudolf Firkušný.

The detachment of the two cultures has been prevalent until today and the number of Czech composers who are active in Canada is scarce. Morawetz's oeuvre is unusual in that way and his works provide a rare opportunity to bridge the two musical entities. As such, Morawetz's works have often been programmed when Czech conductors visited the Toronto Symphony Orchestra or when a performance of a Canadian ensemble took place in the Czech Republic.¹⁹⁸ Jiří Bělohávek made several appearances with the TSO conducting Morawetz's music and his protégé Jakub Hrůša chose the *Carnival Overture* for his debut with TSO in 2014.

For many years, there have been very few and rather isolated instances of Morawetz's music being performed in Czechoslovakia/Czech Republic. An analysis of the reasons behind this limited exposure as well as the circumstances under which these performances were realized will

¹⁹⁸The *Carnival Overture* was featured on program of TSO during their debut performance at the Prague Spring Festival in Smetana Hall in Prague in 2017.

be elaborated in more detail in the next chapter, which deals with the perception of Morawetz's oeuvre in Czechoslovakia/Czech Republic.

List of performances of Morawetz's music by Czech performers and ensembles.¹⁹⁹

Carnival Overture:

Rafael Kubelík, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Chicago, 1952.

Walter Susskind, Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, Calgary, 1971.

Charles Olivieri-Munroe, Brno Philharmonic Orchestra, Brno, 1996.

Jakub Hruša, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Toronto, 2014.

Overture to a Fairytale:

Walter Susskind, CBC Symphony Orchestra, Stratford, 1957.

Nicolas Goldschmidt, CBC Symphony Orchestra, Toronto, 1957.

Nicolas Goldschmidt, Oslo Philharmonic, Oslo, 1957.

Charles Mackerras, Brno Philharmonic, Brno, 1963.

Walter Susskind, Toronto Symphonic Orchestra, Toronto, 1963.

Jiří Bělohlávek, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Toronto, 2005.

Passacaglia on a Bach Chorale:

Walter Susskind, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Toronto, 1964.

Vladimír Jelínek, Montreal Symphony Orchestra, Montreal, 1978.

¹⁹⁹ The list is retrieved from the Morawetz's website <http://www.oskarmorawetz.com> and may not be complete. The numerous solo piano performances of the works such as *Scherzo*, *Scherzino*, or of the piano parts of songs played by Morawetz himself are also omitted. (21 May 2019.)

Symphony No. 1:

Walter Kaufmann, Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, Winnipeg, 1956. (*Fantasy* only)

Walter Susskind, Chilean National Orchestra, Santiago, 1962. (*Dirge* only)

Walter Susskind, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Toronto, 1962. (*Dirge* only)

Walter Susskind, Prague Symphony Orchestra, Prague, 1964. (*Dirge*

only)²⁰⁰

Otakar Trhlík, Ostrava Symphony Orchestra, Ostrava, 1970. (*Dirge* only)

Sinfonietta:

Karel Ančerl, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Toronto, 1969.

Tomáš Koutník, The Teplice National Philharmonic, Prague, 1992.

Jiří Bělohlávek, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Toronto, 1997.

Clarinet Concerto:

Leoš Svárovský - conductor, Julian Milkis – clarinet, Brno National Philharmonic, Brno, 1992.

Memorial to Martin Luther King:

Henryk Czyz – conductor, Josef Chuchro – cello, Czech Philharmonic, Prague, 1980.

Slavonic Dance in E Minor (transcription after Dvořák):

Jan Kučera – conductor, Josef Špaček – violin, Petr Špaček – cello, The Pardubice Chamber Orchestra, Pardubice, Česká Třebová, and Chrudim, 2015.

Humoresque in G-flat Major (transcription after Dvořák):

²⁰⁰ Prague Spring Festival.

Jan Kučera – conductor, Josef Špaček – violin, Petr Špaček – cello, The Pardubice Chamber Orchestra, Pardubice, Česká Třebová, and Chrudim, 2015.

From the Diary of Anne Frank:

Karel Ančerl – conductor, Lois Marshall – soprano, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, New York and Toronto, 1972.

František Vajnar – conductor, Eva Děpoltová – soprano, Czech Philharmonic, Prague, 1977.

Piano Concerto No. 1:

Walter Susskind – conductor, Anton Kuerti – piano, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Toronto, 1965.

Walter Susskind – conductor, Anton Kuerti – piano, St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, St. Louis, 1969.

String Quartet No. 2:

Czech String Quartet, Hamilton, 1974.

Pražák Quartet, Prague, 1988.

Scherzo:

Rudolf Firkušný, Toronto, 1950.

Oskar Morawetz, Toronto/New York, 1954/1955.

Suite for piano:

Antonín Kubálek, Toronto, n.d.

Fantasy in D:

Radka Hanáková, Toronto, 2017, 2018.

Radka Hanáková, Prague and Pardubice, 2018.

Crucifixion:

Pavel Kuhn, Prague Philharmonic Choir, Toronto/Montreal, 1993.

Chimney Sweeper; Grenadier; Mad Song; Piping Down the Valleys Wild:

Nicholas Goldschmidt, baritone, numerous performances in Canada, usually with Oskar Morawetz at the piano.

2.4.2 Interviews with Morawetz's Czech compatriots in Toronto

An abundance of evidence including newspaper articles, radio documentaries, and testimonies proves that Morawetz was a very well known, active, and respected person within the Czech community. However, his introvert-inclined temperament led him to create few close friendships. Since the generation of his contemporaries is either gone or in their late eighties/nineties, I consider it a great fortune and a unique opportunity to have met and interviewed four people from the Czech community, each of whom had a special and meaningful connection to Morawetz which they were willing to share.

Morawetz's sister Sonja Sinclair is the last of the four siblings and the only living person who experienced the whole family history the way Oskar did. She welcomed me very warmly at her home in Toronto and generously shared some of her memories, all spoken in wonderful Czech. In her presence and telling, there was a certain feeling of kindness, humbleness, and nobility. She spoke beautifully and with love not only about her parents Frida and Richard as well as her siblings, but also about Canada and the many people who have helped them in difficult situations. When I asked about the extraordinary life she had, a life which would easily fill an engaging book, she would just note modestly: "I do not think that my life was remarkable. I was just being very lucky."

A cellist and a member of the Czech String Quartet (which later became McMaster Quartet) Zdeněk Koníček (7.10. 1918 – 28.9. 2019) who, by the time of our meeting in his Prague apartment was one hundred years old and fully alert, remembered Morawetz fondly from the times he visited Toronto as a member of the Prague Quartet, and from the many years he lived in Hamilton, Canada since his emigration in 1968. According to a thesis "The String Quartet in

Canada” by Robert William Andrew Elliott²⁰¹ the Czech String Quartet performed Morawetz’s work(s), but Mr. Koníček could not remember more details about the performances.

There are two accounts I decided to quote in their entirety: the interviews with Morawetz’s Czech friends and compatriots Josef Čermák and Dagmar Rydlová. Josef Čermák, who is 95 now and still active in his various writing endeavors, has been arguably one of the most influential and active people in the community. He was the brains and organizer behind the majority of the Czech cultural events in Toronto, and therefore his contact with Morawetz was frequent and on both professional and personal levels. He wrote articles regularly for the Czech papers about Morawetz’s achievements. There is also a rare video documentary of Cermak interviewing Morawetz in his home that I was able to view, thanks to the generosity of Morawetz’s daughter Claudia, who provided access. The account of a pianist and piano professor at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto, Dagmar Rydlová, contributes immensely by giving an impeccable insight of a musician and a close friend.

The reflections of these two personalities who both have made a significant impact and contribution within the community and beyond, displays their own relationship with Oskar Morawetz, their perception of his personality, identity, career, and music. It is a successful portrait of an authentic experience of emigration and life in an adopted country. The interviews constitute a climax of the present chapter, the purpose of which was to unveil Morawetz’s interaction with the Czech community in Toronto and Morawetz’s Czech identity as a person and musician. It provides a link to the chapter which follows and examines the reception of Morawetz’s music in his homeland.

Interview with Josef Čermák²⁰²

How would you describe the Morawetz family?

²⁰¹ Elliott, Robert William Andrew. ”The String Quartet in Canada.” Diss. University of Toronto, 1990.

²⁰² Josef Čermák (b.1924) is a lawyer, writer, journalist, activist, and a cultural organizer. As one of the most active and influential personalities in the Czech community in Toronto, Josef Čermák was the guiding force behind many projects of the community. His young years back in Czechoslovakia were full of precipitous events. He spent the last two years of the Second World War in a forced labour camp. Later, as a student of the Faculty of Law at Charles University in Prague, he participated in demonstrations against the communist coup d’état. He was also arrested and jailed. Since his emigration to Canada in 1948, Cermak’s diverse engagements involved: organizing major cultural and educational events; independent journalism (Naše hlasy, Nový domov, Satellite, Kanadské listy); membership in the institutions and cultural organizations such as: Sixty-eight Publishers, Pro Arte Orchestra, Canadian Ethnic

The family was very highly established in Czechoslovakia in social, political, and business circles, not only in Czechoslovakia but also abroad. They were very well known, wealthy, and extremely accomplished, like Tomáš Baťa, for instance. Richard Morawetz was a friend with Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk and his son Jan Masaryk, and he was appreciated for that here in Canada. I met Richard twice and I remember his grand and very respectable personality.

Richard's main concern was to keep the family together and I believe they kept that in mind. Until recently, they were hosting annual gatherings of family and friends around Christmas time, where most people spoke in Czech and about Czech topics.²⁰³ The whole family was very patriotic and they preserved and cultivated their Czech heritage.

How was Oskar's relationship with the Czech circles?

Oskar was strongly inclined towards the Czech environment. He was not a "nationalist" in the common way, I have never heard him saying that he would like to go back to live in Czechoslovakia, for example. But inwardly he felt in the "Czech" way. He loved Czech music, Dvořák particularly, and the Czech literature.

He knew about what was going on in Czechoslovakia politically and culturally, and he was in touch with his Czech friends during his visits to Czechoslovakia. Here in Canada I do not think that he was in frequent contact with many people. He was in touch with his music, that was his love and his world. He was completely lost in it!

Heritage Foundation, Canadian Fund for Czechoslovak Refugees, Association for the Czechoslovak Arts and Science, Czechoslovak Association in Canada, and others; theatre activity with the New Theatre in Toronto, and establishment of the department of Czech and Slovak languages at the University of Toronto. As an author he published a book about the history of the Czech community in Canada titled *It All Began with Prince Rupert: The Story of Czechs and Slovaks in Canada*. For his achievements he has been awarded many awards in both Canada and the Czech Republic: Queen's Counsel (Province of Ontario), The Masaryk Award, Commemorative Medal of the President of the Czech Republic, the Jan Masaryk Award, and The Ontario Province Award, among others.

²⁰³ Claudia Morawetz's memory differs from that of Josef Čermák, as seen from this comment: "Oskar's brother John hosted an annual Christmas party on Dec. 25 where all the extended family were invited, as well as friends. It may be that some of the Czech friends spoke in Czech and on Czech topics, but I would say that on the whole the party was mostly in English (out of politeness, the Czech-natives would speak in English around us non-Czech speaking family), and would chat about many other things besides Czech topics - the majority of the guests were NOT Czech nationals." – Morawetz, Claudia. Conversation with the author (14 September 2019). Note from the author: In my opinion, the discrepancies between Josef Čermák and Claudia Morawetz may have been caused by the differences in perception between an English and a Czech-speaking person attending the same occasion.

The Czech people in Toronto were aware of the very successful career Oskar had. But, at the same time, I sensed that they could not figure him out. His background was not a “village,” he was a nobleman. Perhaps it was his ancestry which impeded them to fully comprehend Oskar. But he had such a good heart. I was a lawyer so I could see his tax returns. It was unbelievable how many organizations he used to support financially!

Did you have a chance to get to know his compositions?

Absolutely! I used to go to concerts a lot and I knew his music quite well. I liked his compositions very much, *From the Diary of Anne Frank* and the *Memorial for Martin Luther King* especially. He was tremendously talented.

It was a very disciplined music, one could say. He was not flying up in the clouds. But his style seemed to me different than just Czech. It contained different elements, different sounds. I would not hear Dvořák in his music. Perhaps Janáček. But he created his own personal language.

I also heard him play the piano. He played the Czech music a lot. I often organized various Czech events here in Toronto and so I used to ask Oskar to play the piano. He not only always agreed, but he would never accept any money for it. I remember one special occasion in 1978 for which I was the main organizer. It was a concert to celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of the establishment of Czechoslovakia and Oskar played the piano. Professors from twenty-five universities from around the world attended the event, and for one week the CBC radio broadcasted programs about Czechoslovakia. It was grand!

Did you talk about religion with Oskar Morawetz?

That was a topic we never talked about. Their family was divided between Jewish and Christian traditions. There certainly was something Jewish in Oskar’s thinking and feeling. One of his best works is *Anne Frank*. But I was very surprised when he had requested his own memorial service to be held in a synagogue.

How would you characterize your friendship with Oskar?

I would not characterize it as an intimate friendship since neither him nor myself responded to such a friendship. We used to see each other quite often. I think that he looked upon me as

somebody, whom he could trust, and who had empathy. I am an optimist by nature, I like to make jokes and make people feel good, and it was something Oskar needed.

He needed to be “elevated” sometimes. I got to see him a couple of times when he was down. He suffered depression, and also in his private life he was not very happy. He was not a happy person. His unsuccessful marriage and a problematic relationship with his son were very painful for him.²⁰⁴ I felt that apart from music, he did not have much in his life. But he had great support from his daughter Claudia. I believe that he had a strong will and power to survive.

He would call frequently and just wanted to talk. He invited me into his house and he talked, mostly about music and about other composers. He really liked Bedřich Smetana, not only for his music, but Smetana suffered a lot in his life. I think Oskar could relate to that. Also, he had such a scattered mind and so he would jump from one topic to another frequently. Music was always going on in your mind!

What would you say about your generation of Czech emigrants in Toronto?

My generation, which came to Canada in the late forties and fifties, was very patriotic. I believe that all of us preserved the Czechness inside of ourselves throughout our lives.

I left Czechoslovakia when I was twenty-four. By the time I had been in both a labour camp and in a communist prison. I attended the funeral by the late president of Czechoslovakia Edvard Beneš. That was an impulse to emigrate to Canada. I knew I could not conform to the regime.

We were all welcomed here in a very friendly manner and that helped tremendously. To experience the freedom here was such a great enthusiasm! Canada enabled us to keep our Czech identity and so we were able to support Czechoslovakia and the people there in many ways. Everything was based on the Masaryk’s ideals.

²⁰⁴ According to both Larysa Kuzmenko and Josef Čermák, Morawetz and his son did not talk for many years. But Claudia Morawetz rebutted this theory in this comment: “It is not at all true that my father did not speak with my brother for many years. There was a lot of strain in the family when my parents separated in 1982, and my brother went to live with my mother who negatively influenced his relationship with Oskar. But Oskar, just like his father, placed the utmost importance on keeping good relations with his children, and even while my mother was trying to brainwash my brother against Oskar, he patiently kept contact and supported my brother throughout his life.” Morawetz, Claudia. Conversation with the author (14 September 2019).

Personally, I have never cared whether somebody would appreciate what we were doing and what effect it was going to have. To act – that was what mattered and what was important. To send out the deed, the thought. And so we did.²⁰⁵

Interview with Dagmar Rydlová²⁰⁶

How did you meet Oskar Morawetz?

It was in 1984 when we moved from Montreal to Toronto and some of my friends referred me to Oskar. He introduced me to the musical situation here and told me about the Royal Conservatory. Later on, I got to know the whole Morawetz family at the parties they were organizing annually during Christmas time. I met their mother, Frida, and I became a friend with Sonja. Ever since we became friends, our families were exchanging news about music and musical events. He was already retired by the time, so he was very much interested to know what was going on in music. Another such occasions were the Czech concerts organized by Josef Čermák, would always allow us to have a long chat after the concert!

He tremendously appreciated a close friendship. We got to know him, when he was divorced already, and I remember him always being alone. He was not very sociable either. His life was in his music, I believe. But he loved to laugh, so much...

Before you came to Toronto you had lived in Montreal for sixteen years. Had you heard of Oskar Morawetz there?

It is interesting but the collaboration between McGill and the University of Toronto was not developed very much. No, I had not heard of Oskar in Montreal.

²⁰⁵ Čermák, Josef. Interview with the author (15 March 2018).

²⁰⁶ Dagmar Rydlová, a pianist and piano professor. During the communist years in Czechoslovakia she was prohibited from enrolling in the Conservatory because of her family's "business" background. However, she studied the piano privately with one of the best Czech pianists and piano professors, Ilona Štěpánová-Kurzová (whose pupils include the pianist Ivan Moravec). After her emigration to Canada in 1968, Dagmar first settled in Montreal, where she graduated from the Faculty of Music at McGill University. She was appointed a piano teacher at McGill Conservatory of Music and Faculty of Music. After she moved to finally settle in Toronto twenty years later, she joined the Royal Conservatory of Music. She also adjudicated various music festivals across Canada and served as an RCM exam adjudicator. Her engagements include a collaboration with the Canadian Opera Company, where she worked as a language coach for the Czech opera productions.

You are an accomplished pianist yourself. Have you ever played some of Oskar's compositions?

Unfortunately, by that time I did not perform solo piano anymore. I had to divide my time between teaching and family. I also did not have many opportunities to perform so motivation was not there.

Are you familiar with his music?

Of course, we used to go to concerts often and we got to know his works. I have always liked his *Carnival Overture*. It has such colour, vitality, and energy! Also, the *Memorial to Martin Luther King* and *From the Diary of Anne Frank*. I think that was his peak period as a composer. With these two topics he felt a great injustice and he had an enormous sense for justice! In *Anne Frank*, there was also his connection to the Jewish community. He had also the great fortune of having the world class artists such as Maureen Forester and Yo-Yo Ma performing his works.

What do you think brought his music to world-class performers?

I believe that he was excellent in choosing the right people and in maintaining contacts with them. He used to write to these people and meet them in person whenever there was an occasion. He knew so many! In his house in Toronto he had a wall full of photos of the great artists: Hindemith, Suk, Janáček, Britten, and so on.

Yo-Yo Ma appreciated Oskar tremendously. I shall never forget the way Yo-Yo Ma greeted Oskar after his performance of the Dvořák's *Cello Concerto* here in Toronto. By that time Oskar was dependent on others already so we brought him to Yo-Yo Ma's green room. Yo-Yo Ma opened his arms, embraced Oskar and expressed how much he liked him. We were there at least twenty minutes! Later on, as the members of the orchestra were passing by, everyone was greeting Oskar. They all knew him.

After Oskar's passing I got to meet Yo-Yo Ma once more after one of his concerts. We sat down for a chat. And he spoke so beautifully about Oskar and his music!

How would you classify the musical language of Oskar Morawetz? Do you find some Czech influence?

Oskar tremendously appreciated Dvořák and Tchaikovsky. I remember him saying: “The music of Tchaikovsky is wonderful, there is so much melodic invention!” In that sense, he aligns with the Czech tradition since an emphasis on a melodic invention has always been of a tremendous importance there – Dvořák is the best example. But of course, he was a twentieth-century composer, he knew the new styles and directions in music. But ultimately, he composed the way he felt and the way he believed his music should be made. He was very honest in that way. He was not a show-off person. His personality was down to earth, very modest, and extremely humble towards his music.

What can you say about Oskar’s Czech connection?

The whole Morawetz family was known to be very patriotic and Czech oriented. They all spoke Czech language until the last day! By the way, Oskar’s English was very “Czech”, he never lost his accent. Anyway, the affiliation with the Czech nation was very deeply rooted in the family. They knew and understood very well what was going on there politically.

Did Oskar speak about his first musical experiences in Czechoslovakia?

Not so much, because it had been a long time ago. But I do remember him talking very favourably about his teacher Karel Hoffmeister.

Did he maintain any friendships in Czechoslovakia?

As far as I know, his very good friend was a composer, Otmar Mácha. I also believe that Oskar kept his connection with Panton publishing house in Prague and that he knew Jan Matějček from there. Oskar was also a member of the Association of the Czech Composers and the Concert Artists.²⁰⁷

Do you think that the communist regime prevented Morawetz music and his success in the “West” to be more exposed in front of Czech public?

²⁰⁷ Svaz českoských skladatelů a koncertních umělců, years active: 1970 – 1989.

I think that they did not like to accept him because he was living in the West and therefore he was an emigrant. Since the family emigrated before the War, the communists had to respect them as citizens of another country. But in Czechoslovakia everyone had been protecting his or her own career. Also, people were afraid of helping somebody from the West. I am convinced that Oskar wanted his music to be played and known in Czechoslovakia but he did not have enough means to have any continuous influence upon it.

Did you know what was being composed in Czechoslovakia in those years?

We have always had friends there and so they would send me scores. I got to know music by Slavický, Martinů, Hurník. Otmar Mácha used to send me his music too!

Did Oskar speak about religion?

He would not speak about it but belonging to the Jewish community was obvious. The inner spirituality was eminent as much as his patriotism. Everything was internal.

What he talked about was Holocaust. That affected him a lot and it had a tremendous effect on his output as well. He felt it as a great injustice on innocent people and that was something he was extremely sensitive about. But he would never complain about anything. He put everything in his music.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁸ Rydlová, Dagmar. Interview with the author (25 February 2019).

Chapter 3

The Full Circle: Morawetz in Czechoslovakia/the Czech Republic

“I was the first composer of Canada to have received the Order of Ontario. I am writing a ‘composer of Canada’ and not a ‘Canadian composer,’ because I still feel like a ‘Czech composer,’ despite the fact that I have been living in Canada since 1940.” (O. Morawetz, Letter to Jiří Pauer)

This study is neither a biography nor a musical analysis; its prime ambition is to unveil the Czech identity of a Czech émigré to Canada, Oskar Morawetz. It contains some elements of both. Hence, geographically it followed the composer’s life: youthful years in Czechoslovakia and the professional career, life, and interaction with the Czech community in his adopted country, Canada. We have remained silent about the relationship between the successful Canadian composer and his native land. In order to complete the full circle of the “Czech prism,” the last chapter returns Morawetz back to his roots in the Czech lands.

3 Historical evidence; Czech contemporary musical environment

This chapter is divided into two parts: historical and contemporary.

Since no academic research has been done on this specific topic yet, my goal was to gather and display as much available evidence of any activity between Morawetz and Czechoslovakia as I was able to access. The list of performances as well as a number of various primary sources such as contemporary reviews, letters and testimonies from the Czech interpreters, composers, and presenters provided a solid ground for legitimate answers on the subject in its historical section.

The final segment of this study is a documentation of a multi-faceted, and practical project I developed and carried out in the Czech Republic in an attempt to critically address a question that had initiated this research: How is it possible that I had not heard about Oskar Morawetz during my life including twelve years of musical studies in the Czech Republic?

During that time I did not encounter his name in any textbook and I never heard his music performed. In 2016 I began to search into Czech music thesauruses and other academic resources

such as archives in the Prague Conservatory and various libraries. I discovered an absolute void of research on Oskar Morawetz, with the exception of a Bachelor's thesis from 2015 titled *Exil a hudba. Oscar Moravec, Karel Husa a Jan Novák* [Exile and Music. Oscar Morawec (sic), Karel Husa and Jan Novák] by Martin Čechovič, (which by its scope and relevance is of little significance). There is no major paper written on the composer. As to my knowledge, the libraries of only four institutions in the Czech Republic have holdings of some of Morawetz's sheet music, all of them located in Prague: Český hudební fond [Czech Music Fund], Hudební fakulta Akademie múzických umění [Faculty of Music at the Academy of Performing Arts], Národní knihovna České Republiky [National Library of the Czech Republic], and Pražská konzervatoř [Prague Conservatory].²⁰⁹ I further discovered that Morawetz's music is not included as a part of the standard repertoire on Czech concert stages.

I was totally surprised to realize, that it was only in Canada that I could discover the highly successful story and music of a composer of the same origin as me. The disparity between the acclaim and appreciation in Canada and almost total obscurity in the Czech Republic seemed revealing. Yes, there are grounds behind this negligence: the political situation in Czechoslovakia during Morawetz's active years; geographical distance between the two countries; Morawetz's embeddedness in North America, and general lack of recognition of Canadian music in the Czech Republic.

The practical project and its documentation became central in many ways to this study and as such it constitutes its culmination. In an attempt to address the critical gap in information about Morawetz in Czech musicology, I carried out conversations with some of the foremost Czech

²⁰⁹ The list of Morawetz's sheet music available in the Czech libraries:

Český hudební fond: *Crucifixion; Fantasy for Violin and Piano; Prayer for Freedom; Young's Whale Lament.*

Hudební fakulta Akademie múzických umění: *Sonata for Basson and Piano; Sonata for Clarinet and Piano; Sonata for Flute and Piano; Sonata for Oboe and Piano.*

Národní knihovna České Republiky: *Duo for Violin and Piano; Fantasy, Elegy and Toccata; Sonata for Clarinet and Piano; Overture to a Fairytale.*

Pražská konzervatoř: *Dirge; Sonata for Violin and Piano No.1; Divertimento for Strings.*

music experts,²¹⁰ and a series of lecture-recitals in three selected conservatories of music in the Czech Republic.²¹¹

One must remember that when a subject displays a standpoint towards another subject, anchored in the very essence of the prism offered, concomitantly its own clear image will appear. As though in a mirror.

3.1 Czech music after World War II: historical overview of the period between 1945 and 1989; Oskar Morawetz and his Czechoslovak connection

A conspicuous development of musical life and infrastructure took place in Czechoslovakia during the first years after WW2. New music institutions such as opera theatres and symphony orchestras were established all over the country. The year 1946 marked a remarkable opening season of the Prague Spring music festival – an occasion that brought Leonard Bernstein to conduct the Czech Philharmonic.²¹² The music of Shostakovich, Prokofiev, Hindemith, Stravinsky, Messiaen, Bartók, Honegger, and Britten, beside others was being played. World-class interpreters were visiting. On the other hand, Czech music was being played at music festivals abroad.

The communist coup in February 1948 brought an abrupt end to this positive evolution, accompanied by the many changes which were fast to follow. The official aesthetic doctrine governed by the ideology of Stalin's "propagandist-in-chief" Andrei Zhdanov took over cultural and musical life in Czechoslovakia and controlled the directions of the emerging new music. The ideological code known as *zhdanovshchina* was manifested against anything that was either defined as or could have been associated with so called formalism, cosmopolitanism, subjectivism, or western modernism. Even composers such as Janáček and Martinů were put on the black list.

²¹⁰ Particularly with composers Jiří Gemrot, Luboš Sluka and musicologist Jan Kachlík. These conversations contributed to my understanding of the topic in the context of the development of the Czech music in the 20th century immensely. The interviews with Luboš Sluka and Jan Kachlík are included in the Appendix 5.

²¹¹ The selected conservatories were: Jaroslav Ježek Conservatory; Prague Conservatory, Pardubice Conservatory.

²¹² Rafael Kubelík, Rudolf Firkušný, and Leonard Bernstein swore not to return to the festival until the communist regime was over. They all reunited at the occasion of the first Prague Spring Festival in the democratic Czechoslovakia in 1990. Morawetz was present at the concert. – *Prof. Oskar Morawetz.*

The call was to return music to the national tradition, to the works of Smetana especially, and to compose new music which would not only conform to the doctrine of the “correct art” aesthetically, but which would be “engaging” with topics of communist propaganda. Spiritual music as well as any other art which contained spiritual or religious symbols was strictly censored and often prohibited. The prominent and favored musical genres became cantatas and the mass song. This style and aesthetics was represented and consolidated by musicologists and critics such as Antonín Sychra, Zdeněk Nejedlý, Miroslav Barvík, and the composers Josef Stanislav (1897 – 1971), Jan Seidel (1908 – 1998), and Václav Dobiáš (1909 – 1978), as well as many others.

There was a lineage of composers whose works were independent of this official mainstream production. Composers such as Alois Hába (1893 – 1973) and his microtonal style, Miloslav Kabeláč (1908 – 1979), Klement Slavický (1910 – 1999), and Jan Hanuš (1915 – 2004) were among the most distinctive personalities. From the younger generation, there was Vladimír Sommer (1921 – 1997), Ilja Hurník (1922 – 2013), Petr Eben (1929 – 2007), and Viktor Kalabis (1923 – 2006).

During the period of relative political calm which dated from the late 1950s until the Soviet invasion in 1968, Czechoslovakia became open to the new musical styles and tendencies which had emerged in the Western countries. Ensembles who specialized in new music such as Novák Quartet, *Musica viva Pragensis*, *Sonatori di Praga* as well as creative groups and studios such as the Group A, and the Prague New Music Group were established. International communication and travel was also reintroduced. Czech composers travelled to festivals abroad (e.g. Warsaw Autumn, International Summer Courses for New Music in Darmstadt), and composers such as Olivier Messiaen, Pierre Schaeffer, Luigi Nono, and Karlheinz Stockhausen visited Czechoslovakia.

The influences of the New Music and electronic music were assimilated to various degrees in the works of Czech composers. Just a handful of composers changed their musical language radically, such as Zbyněk Vostřák (1920 – 1985) and Marek Kopelent (b. 1932), but the greater majority adopted some aspects of the New Music into their musical language and never completely abandoned the tradition. The traditional lineage was reflected in composers such as

Otmar Mácha (1922 – 2006), Luboš Sluka (b. 1928), and Luboš Fišer (1935 – 1999), along with the already mentioned Petr Eben and Klement Slavický.

The Soviet invasion in 1968 followed by the “normalisation” affected the musical life of Czechoslovakia. Many musical personalities left the country, and the works of those who stayed and yet were not in compliance with the communist ideology were eliminated from public exposure. Nevertheless, despite the political pressure, the oeuvres of composers such as Kabeláč, Slavický, Eben, Mácha, and Fišer culminated in 1970s and 1980s.

A new group called Agon was established by the young generation of composers in the 1980s. Even though the activities of the organization were significantly repressed by the regime and its activities were limited to a minor operation in the periphery of musical life, nevertheless the fact that the collective was displaying otherwise prohibited music of the American avant-garde as well as the works of Czech and European New Music was an important achievement.

A leading and the most influential organization to support, promote, and govern classical music (and its institutions) in Czechoslovakia/the Czech Republic has been Asociace hudebních umělců a vědců [Association of the Musical Artists and Scholars]. However, the Association as such undertook few transformations throughout its history.

The first and direct ancestor of the Association was established in 1946 as Syndikát českých skladatelů [Syndicate of Czech Composers]. In 1949 the original organization was altered into Svaz československých skladatelů [Association of Czechoslovak Composers], and as such remained active until yet another transformation in 1970. Svaz českých skladatelů a hudebních umělců [Association of Czech Composers and Musical Artists] emerged and was in effect until its last and so far final modification in 1989 into Asociace hudebních umělců a vědců [Association of Musical Artists and Scholars].

In the communist Czechoslovakia there were three major state-owned publishing houses: Supraphon, Panton, and Opus. Supraphon is the oldest publishing house in Czechoslovakia and it is still active.²¹³ While it published the majority of Czechoslovakian music production during the

²¹³ Established 1932.

communist era, Panton's ²¹⁴ chief mission was to promote and publish the works of the Czechoslovakian contemporary composers living in Czechoslovakia and abroad, which were suppressed by Supraphon. Panton published works by Bohuslav Martinů, Miroslav Kabeláč, Peter Eben, Jaroslav Ježek, Ilja Hurník, Marek Kopelent, Alois Hába, and others. The editor-in-chief was the Czech composer Luboš Sluka. The Opus label was established in 1971 as a Slovak division of Supraphon.

The music performance activities on both national and international levels were subjected to strict supervision of the communist officers during the era. The domain for international appearances by touring performing artists belonged exclusively to the Pragokonzert agency that was endorsed by the regime. It was desirable to show off the high quality of cultural production “behind the wall” to the West, and so the authorized artists were being sent abroad to serve as a “show-window” of socialism.

3.1.1 Morawetz and his Czechoslovak connection

Two sections constitute this subchapter: the history of performances that have taken place in Czechoslovakia/the Czech Republic along with the circumstances behind them; the correspondence between Morawetz and Czechoslovakia.

3.1.1.1 The history of performances of Morawetz's music in Czechoslovakia/Czech Republic

To this date, only a handful of performances of Morawetz's music has taken place in Czechoslovakia/Czech Republic. The few and rather isolated cases when the music was heard in his native land are displayed in the list below.

²¹⁴ Established 1968.

List of performances of Morawetz's music in Czechoslovakia/the Czech Republic.²¹⁵

String Quartet No. 1:

Moravian Quartet, Brno, 1946.

Overture to a Fairytale:

Charles Mackerras, Brno Philharmonic, Brno, 1963.

Kerry Stratton, Chamber Orchestra of Pardubice, Hradec Králové, 1997.

Symphony No. 1 (Dirge only):

Walter Susskind, Prague Symphony Orchestra FOK, Prague,
1964.²¹⁶

Otakar Trhlík, Ostrava Symphony, Ostrava, 1970.

From the Diary of Anne Frank:

František Vajnar – conductor, Eva Děpoltová – soprano, Czech Philharmonic, Prague, 1977.

Memorial to Martin Luther King:

Henryk Czyz – conductor, Josef Chuchro – cello, Czech Philharmonic, Prague, 1980.

Victor Feldbrill – conductor, Shauna Rolston – cello, Czech Philharmonic, Prague, 2002.

String Quartet No. 2:

Pražák Quartet, Prague, 1988.

²¹⁵ The list has been obtained from Morawetz's website. While the large orchestra productions are in all probability complete, the chamber, vocal or solo keyboard performances may have not been completely tracked. For example, pianists such as Rudolf Firkušný or Antonín Kubálek would present some of Morawetz's piano compositions during their visits in Czechoslovakia/Czech Republic.

²¹⁶ Prague Spring Festival.

Sinfonietta:

Tomáš Koutník, Teplice National Philharmonic, Prague, 1992.

Harp Concerto:

Róbert Stankovský – conductor, Gianetta Baril – harp, Czech Chamber Orchestra, Prague, 1994.

Clarinet Concerto:

Leoš Svárovský - conductor, Julian Milkis – clarinet, Brno National Philharmonic, Brno, 1992.

Slavonic Dance in E Minor (transcription after Dvořák):

Seiji Ozawa – conductor, Itzhak Perlman – violin, Yo-Yo Ma – cello, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Prague, 1993.

Jan Kučera – conductor, Josef Špaček – violin, Petr Špaček – cello, Pardubice Chamber Orchestra, Pardubice, Česká Třebová, and Chrudim, 2015.

Humoresque in G-flat Major (transcription after Dvořák):

Seiji Ozawa – conductor, Itzhak Perlman – violin, Yo-Yo Ma – cello, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Prague, 1993.

Jan Kučera – conductor, Josef Špaček – violin, Petr Špaček – cello, Pardubice Chamber Orchestra, Pardubice, Česká Třebová, and Chrudim, 2015.

Carnival Overture:

Charles Olivieri-Munroe, Brno Philharmonic, Brno, 1996.

Peter Oundjian, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Prague,

2017.²¹⁷

²¹⁷ Prague Spring Festival.

Five Biblical Songs (transcription for choir a capella after Dvořák; *God the Lord is My Shepherd, By the Rivers of Babylon* only):

Gerald Fagan – choir conductor, Gerald Fagan Singers, Prague, Pilsner, 2007.

Duo for Violin and Piano:

Nora Grumlíková - violin, Marie Marešová - piano, Prague, 1961.

Manuela Milani – violin, Jiřina Kolmanová – piano, Brno, 1992.

Fantasy in D:

Radka Hanáková – piano, Prague, Pardubice, 2018.

To what extent Morawetz tried and succeeded in presenting his compositions in Czechoslovakia himself in order to have his works performed or published there posed an intriguing question to me. I was afraid that, for the lack of extant evidence, I would not be able to find a reliable, well-founded answer.

Arguably the very first performance of Morawetz's music in Czechoslovakia was a performance of the *String Quartet No. 1* by the Moravian Quartet in 1946. Assumptions arise on the ways the work received its performance in Czechoslovakia shortly after the War, but it seems likely that Morawetz himself would be the liaison between Canada and Czechoslovakia.²¹⁸

Morawetz was officially respected and accommodated by the communist government as a citizen of a foreign country since he had emigrated before WW2. For that reason, he could visit Czechoslovakia and his works were not entirely banned from performance. One must assume that they were not in favour either and that travelling to a communist country, although not prohibited, was not easy and without hindrances. In the eyes of communists, Morawetz was still an emigrant living in a western capitalist country.

²¹⁸ As his available correspondence revealed, Morawetz corresponded with Czechoslovakia frequently since 1946 (if not sooner).

There is a letter from Morawetz to his parents written after he met Czechoslovak composers at the Stratford Festival in 1960. This letter provides a unique testimony about the first meeting of the composer with his colleagues from Czechoslovakia. It also reflects on the situation in Czechoslovakia by the time.

I very much enjoyed getting to know the composers from around the world, from Czechoslovakia especially. We became friends. They promised to send me anything, scores or recordings, from Czechoslovakia for free. They also gave me many books and LP's before they left. They asked me to send them anything I composed and promised to take care of getting it performed there. (I played a couple of records of my music to them and I think they liked it.) We had a fantastic conversation together. (...) They want to organize a concert of Canadian music next year and they want to invite me there.²¹⁹ I would like to go to Czechoslovakia very much, but I do not have the same courage as Herbert does. Even though I admit that the possibility of getting into trouble is not huge, especially if I got an official invitation. (...) They were so happy to hear so many Czech elements in my *Divertimento* and could not understand how well I speak Czech.²²⁰

This event represented a landmark of a highest importance for Morawetz, since it was the first time after his emigration to Canada, when he met and connected with Czechoslovak composers. Václav Dobiáš, a composer, and one of the most politically involved and influential people of the time, is documented to have been among the Czechoslovaks who attended the Stratford Festival in 1960.²²¹ Since Dobiáš served as a chairman of the Association of the Czechoslovak Composers in the years 1952 – 1963 (along with his involvements with the Ministry of Culture), it cannot be a mere coincidence that Morawetz received an invitation from the Prague Spring Festival to attend as a guest observer in 1961. That marked Morawetz's first visit to Czechoslovakia since his escape in 1938. The first performance of his music at the Prague Spring Festival followed only three years later.

²¹⁹ The concert came to a realization on December 9, 1961 in the Smetana Museum in Prague. Besides Morawetz's Duo for *Violin and Piano* performed by Nora Grumlíková and Marie Marečková, the other featured works were Harry Somers's *Sonata for Violin and Piano* and John Weinzweig's *String Quartet No. 2*. Morawetz did not attend the concert. – Oskar Morawetz, Files 2004 – 2018, Oskar Morawetz Collection, National Library of Canada.

²²⁰ A letter from Morawetz to his parents, 20.8. 1960. – Oskar Morawetz, Files 2004 – 2018, Oskar Morawetz Collection, National Library of Canada. For Morawetz's mother's reply to this letter as well as for more letters between Morawetz and his parents, please see Appendix C.

²²¹ Viz letter to Jiří Dvořáček.

In the case of the two Brno performances of the *Overture to a Fairytale* in 1963, presented by Charles Mackerras and the Brno Philharmonic, according to a review from the periodical *Rovnost* by Miloš Štědroň, the British conductor was the person behind the choice of the program:

Apart from the technical qualities of his conducting, Maestro Charles Mackerras primarily gained favour from the Czech audiences by his honest relationship to the Czech music. He is one of the very few artists abroad who honor and respect the musical culture of the hosting country, as in most cases it is on the contrary. A lot could be written about Mackerras's profound connection to Janáček. (...) For this particular occasion our British guest chose once again a work from the Czech musical province. It was the *Overture to a Fairy tale* by Oskar Morawetz, a Czech composer currently living in Toronto. Upon listening to this witty, calm, and rather shy composition we came to realize how important it is for us to study incessantly the works of some of the Czech composers living abroad. The beginning of this undertaking has been set by researching the works by Bohuslav Martinů, but it is necessary not to stop there and to go forward in evaluating works by some other composers in the context of the Czech and European musical tradition.²²²

This review is a rare testimony of the time from a critic and composer that sheds light on a few aspects regarding the musical tastes and musicological interests, beyond the political situation. The fact that the performance took place in 1963, which was the time of relative political ease in Czechoslovakia, explains the invitation of a British conductor. In his review Štědroň praises Mackerras for his affinity to Czech music, for Leoš Janáček especially,²²³ which stipulates how much the appreciation and validation of Czech music from performers abroad mattered to Czech audiences. After assessing Morawetz's composition, he points out the necessity of studying the works of Czech composers living abroad. We can conclude that he found the work interesting enough to be accepted within the Czech musical tradition, and also that he acknowledged the existence of gaps in Czech musicology in regards to the Czech composers living abroad.

A significant exposure of Morawetz's music in his homeland was the first presentation of his music at the Prague Spring Festival in 1964. The work presented was *Dirge* from the *Symphony No. 1*, with the Prague Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Walter Susskind. The Canadian newspaper *Globe and Mail* highlighted the occasion of a Canadian conductor conducting a Canadian work in such an important festival in Europe:

²²² Štědroň, Miloš. "Dirigoval Charles Mackerras" [Charles Mackerras Conducted], *Rovnost*. Brno, 18 Oct. 1963.

²²³ Due to the composer's close relationship to the city, Brno has always been very protective and proud of Janáček.

Walter Susskind, conductor of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, this week conducted for the first time the number one orchestra in his homeland, the Philharmonic, in Prague. He played *Dirge* by Oskar Morawetz, an expatriate Czech composer who has lived in Toronto for 24 years. Dr. Morawetz's *Dirge* was written in memory of Elie Spivak, who was concertmaster of the TSO for 17 years and, subsequently, a colleague of Dr. Morawetz' at the Royal Conservatory of Music. (...) "I hope the Czech audience liked my work," Dr. Morawetz said. "It certainly came from the heart because Elie Spivak was one of my first friends in Canada, and we remained close friends until his untimely death."²²⁴

The composer Otmar Mácha was one of the closest ones according to testimonies of both Dagmar Rydlová and Morawetz himself. Mácha was the liaison between Morawetz and the Czech Radio when Morawetz tried to have *From the Diary of Anne Frank* performed by the Radio and it is very likely that Mácha may have been behind other such cases as well.²²⁵

The spiritual content of Morawetz's works was a reason for the rejection of the vocal work *Psalm 22*: "I have tried to offer this work a couple of times in Prague. The work had had very successful reviews after Maureen Forester's performance here in Canada. But it was turned down by the censorship for the religious content of the work. They did not want to hear about it."²²⁶

The performance of *From the Diary of Anne Frank* in Prague suffered major obstacles for very similar reasons. In the interview with Josef Čermák, Morawetz recalls the whole story behind the rejection at first and the successful agreement at last, which led to a performance of *Anne Frank* by the Czech Philharmonic in 1977. It provides a rare and extremely valuable testimony to what the process behind realizing performances in Czechoslovakia for Morawetz looked like:

I sent the manuscript of *Anne Frank* to Prague to Otmar Mácha, who is a very good friend of mine and he presented it to the Czech Radio. Later on, when I was in Prague myself, they said that the Radio had decided to perform the work. My reaction to it was: "Well, it needs to be translated then." But they replied that the translation had already taken place. Of course, I wanted to see the translation. After reading it I was totally dismayed. To put it shortly. Every time when Anne says "Oh God, have mercy on me", they changed it to "Oh fate, have mercy on me". It was absolutely not acceptable for me so I turned the performance down.

A year later the Czech Philharmonic decided to program *Anne Frank*. The person who helped behind this exercise was the program director of the orchestra Vladimír Šefl. I told him the

²²⁴ "Susskind Conducts." *Globe and Mail*, June 13, 1964.

²²⁵ *Prof. Oskar Morawetz*, 1991.

²²⁶ *Prof. Oskar Morawetz*.

story with the Radio and he said: “Oskar, translate it yourself and use the original meaning of the text.” I expressed a concern that the censorship would ban such a translation. But he said: “Look, the Czech Philharmonic is a state on its own. We are not like them. We even perform such genres as masses which the Radio would never dare to do.”²²⁷

Šefl was still program director when *Memorial for Martin Luther King* received a performance by the Czech Philharmonic in 1980. Morawetz was present at the Czech performances of both *From the Diary of Anne Frank* in 1977 and *Memorial for Martin Luther King*. He spoke very favourably of the high merit of both the orchestra and the soloists in both performances.²²⁸

Another authentic testimony of these rare performances comes from a member of the Pražák Quartet, Josef Klusoň, who performed *String Quartet No. 2* in 1988 in Prague. This is what he recalled about the experience with Morawetz’s music: “I do not remember details about this particular performance since it was a long time ago. But I do remember that it was a very good music, and also that it took a great deal of work to learn it. The performance was a part of the Philharmonic Series,²²⁹ if I remember well. We also met Oskar then and we had a lot of fun together.”²³⁰

What were the ways Pražák Quartet’s managed to perform the Morawetz’s piece? The answer can be found along with the others in the following chapter.

3.1.1.2 Correspondence between Morawetz and Czechoslovakia²³¹

“My contacts with the Czech musicians have always represented the most joyful moments in my life.” (O. Morawetz)

When researching the collage of different origins, nationalities, places, and times that all related to Oskar Morawetz in an ultimate goal to create the most accurate image of identity of the composer and person, there was one source I thought for the most part irreversibly lost: the voice

²²⁷ Ibid.

²²⁸ Ibid.

²²⁹ Respectively, Český spolek pro komorní hudbu [Czech Society for the Chamber Music]. An association at the Czech Philharmonic.

²³⁰ Klusoň, Josef. Conversation with the author (10 March 2019).

²³¹ All letters in this subchapter are sourced from the Oskar Morawetz Collection, Files 2004 – 2018, National Library of Canada.

of his contemporary Czechoslovak environment in his native land. The question even was, whether Morawetz tried to stay connected in a more consistent way with his homeland after he had emigrated to Canada or whether the quote about “torn roots” was true. How deeply did he feel his Czech connection and to what extent and how consistently was he able to follow with the cultural, historical, and political events in Czechoslovakia?

Even though the mosaic, if we call it that way, was beginning to have clear contours in the previous section already, it was still missing too many tiles. The absolute revelation came after I discovered a large amount of correspondence between Morawetz and his Czechoslovak environment, correspondence which was circulating frequently between America and Europe ever since his escape in 1939. The correspondence is almost exclusively written in the Czech language. To my knowledge this is the first time these unique and authentic documents have been examined, translated and incorporated into a research document.

Unfortunately, the limited scope of this paper allows me to display just a mere fraction of the actual size of the correspondence. Hence, I would like to share some points and impressions that came to my mind perhaps only because I have accessed the correspondence in its entirety, and that may be difficult to draw from the excerpts only, although carefully selected.

1. The Czech correspondence contains both personal and professional letters. The two very often merged since Morawetz also had a personal relationship with most of the people he dealt with on a professional level.
2. There are many family letters. First of all the letters Morawetz and his parents exchanged during his escape from Czechoslovakia in 1939.²³² After they all settled in Canada they still maintained their written communication frequently. The letters between Sonja Sinclair, Herbert Morawetz as well as both of Morawetz’ parents reflecting on their personal and professional life provide an intimate insight into their close relationships.
3. Morawetz maintained continuous correspondence with some of the greatest personalities from the Czechoslovak music world. First of all, he corresponded frequently with both of his Prague teachers Karel Hoffmeister and Jaroslav Křička. This exchange is particularly

²³² Please, see Appendix 3.

meaningful to this research as it reveals how much Morawetz revered his Czech musical roots. These conversations throughout embrace mutual respect, personal sentiment, and appreciation.

4. Apart from Hoffmeister and Křička, Morawetz corresponded with composers such as Vítězslav Novák, Karel Husa, the librettist Jaroslav Kvapil, violinists Josef Suk and Ivan Ženatý, pianist Karel Firkušný, conductors Rafael Kubelík, František Vajnar, and the singer Eva Děpoltová, among others.
5. Morawetz systematically maintained connections with influential people at the major musical institutions in Czechoslovakia such as Association of Czech Composers, Czech Music Fond, Czech Philharmonic, National Theatre, and others.
6. Morawetz informed the Czechoslovaks about his music activities. He sent samples of his music (in the form of sheet music and tapes) to his teachers/musicians/musical institutions in Czechoslovakia and received their feedback. In turn, the Czech composers such as Křička and Novák sent their own music to Morawetz. As documented in many sources Morawetz was a passionate promoter of Czech music throughout his life, and it is to his credit, that some Czech music was introduced on the Canadian concert stage for the first time ever.
7. The political and social context contained in some of the letters provide another significant contribution to the “Czech prism.” That way Morawetz was able to be continuously up-to-date about what was happening culturally and politically in Czechoslovakia in between his visits.
8. Apart from his music circles Morawetz maintained written communication with Jan Masaryk, his friend from Úpice Karel Rejsek, some of his teachers from the lyceum on Truhlářská Street in Prague as well as with some of his classmates, with his governesses from Světlá and many others.
9. There is a warm and reciprocal personal sentiment contained in most of these letters. Morawetz was supplying many of his Czechoslovak friends with food and other packaged goods throughout his life.

10. The amount of letters pertaining to at least the major performances of his work in Czechoslovakia is astonishing. Morawetz was often closely involved with the pre-performance arrangements such as choices of interpreters, venues, etc. After the performance he usually reconnected with the interpreters of the performed work and reflected on the performance/personal connection/exchanged reviews and recordings when available.
11. After a complete overview of the correspondence it is possible to trace the frequency of Morawetz's visit to Czechoslovakia. Before the Velvet Revolution in 1989 Morawetz travelled to Czechoslovakia almost exclusively upon an invitation from institutions such as Prague Spring Festival, Czech Philharmonic, etc. The documented occasions were either performances of his music (1964, 1977, 1980, 1993) or visits upon official invitation from the Prague Spring Festival to come as an observer (1961, 1967, 1988). Morawetz's last visit to the Czech Republic took place in 1995. Also it provides a better insight into the difficulties behind Morawetz's travels to a communist country.

Rather than offering further analysis of the correspondence, I believe that a simple display of the selected letters represents the most valuable and authentic testimony in itself.

1. Letters from/to Jaroslav and Marie Křička.

Dear Oskar! You made me SO happy with your last letter! (...) Some sentences moved me to tears. Your parents' memories of us trying to help them out in their terrible situation especially. But it was nothing to our merits and our sympathies were natural! (...) We are genuinely happy that you are all safe and in a good health. (...) Yours sincerely, Jaroslav Křička.

Dear Oskar, my husband already expressed how happy we were to have received your letter! It was the first letter from overseas and it recalled the far-away times which we remember so fondly. Often, very often we have been thinking of you. Whether all your family reunited to survive the terrible years together. God saved us, and so we got out of the horrors quite well. Our health is only half-broken, not broken. There were some very bad times for us and even now we have some troubles here and there, but we should not complain. Many others were, and still are, in much worse situation than us – not even

mentioning Jews. I can imagine how the number of your relatives got smaller and how the sad news has been reaching you. Today it all seems like a terrible dream. We are looking forward to seeing you soon in Prague very, very much! Your silverware is waiting for you here. Unfortunately, we would not be able to fill it with such tasty and fine meals that you used to serve us in them. We were remembering them just today at a lunch (potatoes with carrots). Stay healthy, sincerely and warmly pass our greetings to your parents and write soon! Yours Marie Kříčková. - Kříčka to Morawetz. 16.9. 1945. Volšovy u Sušice, Czechoslovakia.

Write me, dear Oskar, little more about your conducting and composing! - Kříčka to Morawetz. 1946, Volšovy u Sušice, Czechoslovakia.

Dear Oskar, (...) your news saddened us both very deeply. I cried and my wife is still talking about the deceased. We had so much affinity for him. We were pleased to hear that he was aware of that and that he thought of us. A precious man full of wise kindness, gracious inside and out. Oskar, we are bound forever by this sincere reverence and love, which is not to be expressed that way among the living ones. Please, give our condolences to your family. We are mourning and we will be remembering together. Yours, Jaroslav Kříčka.

Dear Mrs. Morawetz, Please, accept my sincere condolences and a deep presence at the loss of your good and kind husband. There are very few people in this world I would love so much as him. We often felt warmth in our hearts knowing, that such a beautiful marriage full of mutual respect, as yours was, does exist. Your loss is even heavier for that, but I believe that you will find consolation in your dear children. Yours devoted, Marie Kříčková. - Condolences from Jaroslav and Marie Kříčka to Morawetz after Richard Morawetz's death. 1.11. 1965. Volšovy u Sušice. Czechoslovakia.

Dear Professor, I just received your letter, and the fact that you do not feel physically well saddened me very much. I think of you often but I have to apologize for not writing you more often. After all the work at the University I get home so exhausted, that even for composing I do not have as much time as I would wish to have. After receiving your letter I went to the local pharmacy but they informed me, that the medication you indicated in your letter is only being distributed in Europe. I wrote right away to one of

my uncles to England, who is an expert in chemistry and in the medical matters, to send you the medication as soon as possible. (...) Please, let me know if you need anything else I could help with. Also, let me know when I should send you another dosage of this medication, so the cure shall not be interrupted. I'm sorry to hear that you do not compose as much as you used to. I often play on the piano your songs, the ones you sent me right after the War. I also performed them few times in Toronto and Montreal at the Czechoslovak events. As for myself, I try to compose in my past time but unfortunately I compose very slowly. It takes so long before I feel satisfied with every single detail. Sometimes I feel embarrassed thinking how many beautiful works you have composed at my age. (...) Your devoted pupil, Oskar. – Morawetz to Kříčka. 14.1. 1961. Toronto, Canada.

2. Letters from Karel Hoffmeister.

Dear and esteemed friend, The first letter got probably lost, the second one made me happy on multiple levels. Firstly by the fact that it assured me that you and your family survived luckily the horrible years and also that you do so well in the New World. And then also your decision for your musical career and those great, beautiful achievements that have been accompanying your musical journey! I had no opportunity to get to know your work yet. I was notified about a performance of your Sonata Tragica on the radio, but my radio did not work. In the meanwhile I am happy for your high recognition and appreciation coming from the large scales of the more lucky listeners. I am looking forward to something from your work will reach us soon. Yours truly, Karel Hoffmeister. – 17.4. 1945. Prague, Czechoslovakia.

Dear and esteemed friend, I was notified about the radio broadcast of your string quartet. I listened to it. Despite some major technical problems in my radio connection I was able to get the overall impression and I was very pleased. It is a noble, comprehensive work full of lively and heartfelt lyricism. There is a light touch of melancholy, so characteristic to the youth. In your case it is particularly understandable. It was articulated in an utterly skillful and captivating manner. The sound colour was bright and truly very beautiful. I was sincerely and truly happy from this very first work of yours I had the chance to get to know. (...) Yours, Karel Hoffmeister. – 26.2. 1946. Prague, Czechoslovakia.

(...) With your deep contemplation about your art along with your sense for the tradition and a reasonable, logical evolution, I am convinced that you will find your true path. I wish you good luck to your work along with a good spirit and artistic satisfaction. Yours, Karel Hoffmeister. – Undated.

Highly esteemed Sir, I just received a large parcel with the things we used to have on a common basis, but for the last couple of years they almost completely disappeared from our world and we miss them terribly. I would like to sincerely thank you from my heart not only for the precious gift, but also for the fact that you have been remembering me so fondly for all the years. I am sincerely happy that your studies with me were of such a help to you and that it provided a foundation which, together with your own strength and hard work, helped to develop your talent so successfully. I listened to your quartet and I liked it very much. I appreciate especially the warmth of its lyrical content and the fine musical work. I wish you on this new and I think a very understanding soil many other such beautiful achievements. I am also very happy from your sincere efforts to help to promote Czech music in America. Thank you once again and I wish to you and all your family all the best. Yours truly, Karel Hoffmeister. – Hoffmeister to Morawetz. 15.3. 1948. Prague, Czechoslovakia.

I am thinking of you, my dear friend, at the end of my summer stay in Hluboká. I do have a sincere joy from your success as a composer and I am so happy that you found such an appreciative and auspicious environment for your talent. Please, give me some more news about your work on piano and composition. Yours truly, Karel Hoffmeister. – Hoffmeister to Morawetz. 26. 10. 1949. Hluboká nad Vltavou, Czechoslovakia.

3. Letters from Vítězslav Novák to Morawetz.

My dear, young admirer, Your utterly unexpected letter made me very happy. I received it after our exemption from the Germans. (...) Thank you for promoting my *Sonata* and the *Slovak Suite*. Also, thank you for the package with the goods you sent me. I shall be very happy to meet you in person in case you will come back here sometimes. With friendly greetings, Vítězslav Novák. – Novák to Morawetz. 30.5. 1946. Prague, Czechoslovakia.

My dear, Thank you sincerely for the fine cigarettes I received from you here in the country just today. It will be a joyful surprise for my son Jaroslav and his wife. They are both painters and they say they cannot paint anything good without cigarettes.

I am very pleased that my photography I had sent you made you so happy. It is a shame that I cannot send you something more valuable such as the piano cycle *The Songs of the Winter Nights*. Unfortunately, none of my compositions that has been published abroad is available here yet. (...) - Novák to Morawetz. 15.8. 1946. Skuteč, Czechoslovakia.

4. Letters from Karel Rejsek, Morawetz's life-long friend from Úpice.

Dear Oskar, I was so happy to have received two letters at the same time, from you and Herbert. It was with a great joy, reading about your success of which I had known they were to come, and of which Herbert wrote to me as well. You shall play for us when you will either visit or move back to Czechoslovakia. I will write something of your interest which is what was happening here in the musical and theatre field during the German occupation and, most importantly, the present development of things. When the Germans strived to suppress the intelligence, the art and culture was the main source of nurture for us. But they found out that there is a root and source of belief of the Czech nation. That was the reason, why they took the Estates Theatre right away in the fall in 1939. After that we had only one national stage left. The Germans had both the Estates and the German Theatre, but they did not present anything at either of the theatres, or just very scarcely. They did not have any strength left for that so both theatres served mainly for hosting the Nazi parades. (...) When Heydrich took over the power, they closed all theatres altogether. Even exhibitions and concerts were prohibited. Although about two months later they gracefully allowed culture again, many works were severely censored or completely prohibited. But the more they tried to repress us the more the spirit and interest of people was rising. The Czech Philharmonic must have doubled their performances, the theatre productions were sold out long time beforehand. Umělecká Beseda presented some beautiful concerts and they had to move from a small hall at the Lesser Town into the City Library. They programmed mostly new music, always beautifully performed. New artists emerged: Páleníček, a pianist; Švihlíková, a pianist; Lala Bertlová, the wife of Rafael Kubelík, a violinist. Rafael became the chief of the

Philharmonic and has grown sky high. He is a man with a gift from God and also a hard worker. The Czech Philharmonic finally returned to Rudolfinum. (...) You are asking about your library. When Gestapo went after your family, Jenda Kábrt said “we have to save everything possible from the art works.” My job was to take care of the sheet music and the library. I took out of your apartment three full suitcases of sheet music and when I wanted to return for the fourth one, he called me not to go back because Gestapo was already there. (...) I did save something though, and you will be happy about it. From the scores I have the big one of *Don Giovanni*, Haydn’s *The Seasons*, Verdi’s *Requiem*, the *Autumn Symphony* by Novák. Lots of piano and chamber works: Chopin, Grieg, Bach. Beethoven’s *Trios* and *Violin Sonatas*. *Violin Sonatas* by Mozart. Lots of Suk and Novák. From the piano reductions the Strauss operas and the Liszt *Rhapsody*. I do have the sheet music with me and I will give it to you once you will be in Prague. Unfortunately, I was not able to save the library. Also, when sending packages will be permitted here, send me some of your own works. I shall pass them over to Kubelík or to someone, whoever you like, and they would find a performer for you. (...) You know Oskar, it was terrible here. Anybody, who has not experienced the occupation, cannot imagine, that the German – an occupant was much worse than the German – a fighting soldier. I am looking forward to your next news. Yours, Karel. – 18.10. 1945. Prague, Czechoslovakia.

Dear Oskar, I got a message from Mr. Kozderka, a member of the Moravian Quartet, that 3.12. at 5pm the Brno Radio Station will be broadcasting your quartet. I was in Brno and I listened there, ours did listen in Prague. The commentator announced: “We are broadcasting a quartet, and so on, by Oskar Morawetz, a professor at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto, Canada. He was born in Světlá nad Sázavou, and he is one of the few Czechs to have become famous in the field of the world culture.” We listened then and it was very beautiful, I have no words to express how much we liked it. We are so happy that among our friends we can count such an artist as you are. – 6.12. 1946. Prague, Czechoslovakia.

5. Letters from Josef Suk, violinist.

Dear Oskar, Let me write a few lines to you as well, finally. Firstly, I would like to sincerely greet you and your dear wife. I sincerely thank you for everything you have

done for me. Right now I am closing the season with two concerts in Prague and Salzburg and I am looking forward to taking some rest. Also I'm looking forward to look over your *Duo for Violin and Piano* as I would like to play it. We talk about you often and we remember your kindness and I am very grateful for that. I hope and I am looking forward to seeing you in America. Yours devoted, Pepula. 22.7. 1963. Prague, Czechoslovakia.

Dear Oskar, your kind letter made me very happy and I thank you sincerely. I am looking forward to be back in Toronto again, I will be there twice next year in May. (...) But I am looking forward to mostly that we will have the opportunity to talk again. Thank you so much also for sending your *Preludes*. I would like to study it right away but I do not think that I will be ready before the next summer. Unfortunately, or fortunately I do have so much work that my head is whirling. The grand-grandfather's letter²³³ is fabulous! I am sure the University²³⁴ is thrilled to have obtained it. (...) Dear Oskar, Marie and myself are sending to you and to your dear family many sincere greetings and we are looking forward to our reunion in the next year. Yours devoted, Pepula. – Suk to Morawetz. June 1969. Prague, Czechoslovakia.

6. Letters to Karel Husa.²³⁵

Dear Karel, I hope you will forgive me that I call you by your first name and I hope that you will call me likewise when we will meet or write next. (...) You made me SO happy with your last letter. My words fail to express how much I appreciate the fact, that you appraised so highly my work on the words of Anne Frank. First of all there are very few composers nowadays, who would say anything positive about the other composers. And it makes a man especially happy and it brings a new courage to his future composing activities, when these words are spoken by a composer who is as famous and appreciated as you are. The words of Anne Frank captured my feelings immensely, more than the

²³³ Antonín Dvořák.

²³⁴ The University of Toronto.

²³⁵ I included this letter although Karel Husa did not live in Czechoslovakia but he emigrated to the USA. It still reflects on how important the Czech connections were for Morawetz.

words of the most accomplished poets, since I was living through its every word during World War 2. So many friends and relatives died in the concentration camps. (...) I hope to see you sometime soon. With a sincere thank you for your kind and heartfelt letter. Yours devoted, Oskar Morawetz. – Morawetz to Husa. 11. 12. 1988. Toronto, Canada.

7. Letters to Rafael Kubelík.²³⁶

Dear Rafiček, I think of you and your work at the Metropolitan Opera often. It must be so interesting to be involved once again with the opera stage after so many years. I wish you all the best in this new environment, for the premier of the Berlioz opera especially; I have never heard *Les Troyens* myself: I know that it is a huge void in my music education, and I would be thrilled to hear it providing I will be able to free myself from the University work for a bit. After your advice I sent my composition *From the Diary of Anne Frank* to Dr. Goslich. I do not know when you are going to see him again, but I think it would be a good idea if you could look over the score briefly, in case he will contact you. (...) I do not think I have to emphasize, Rafiček, how much it would mean to me, if you would be the conductor, in case the composition will get the performance in Munich with Bayerischer Rundfunk. I know it is a wish of hundreds of composers, and let me tell you, that if it were not for Karel Ančerl, who said on many occasions, that this composition is one of the best and the most heartfelt ones he had seen in the last decade, I would have never dared to ask you. He conducted it himself in Carnegie Hall and in Kennedy Centre in Washington and he planned further performances during his tour in Israel and Pittsburgh. He was also discussing the possibility of an LP record with the Canadian branch of Deutsche Grammophon. Although I do not usually follow the reviews of my compositions, I have to admit that I was very pleased with a great review for the *New Yorker* by Winthrop Sargeant. He is highly regarded among musicians, and, in contrast with so many other critics, he has always had a sharp wit that never got affected by any personal prejudice. In case it would be of any interest of yours, I am

²³⁶ The letters below deal mainly about the possibility of a performance of *From the Diary of Anne Frank* by Bayerischer Rundfunk in Munich during their 1976 – 1977 season. Even though the performance was likely close to its realization, since Morawetz even translated the work into German, there are no records of this performance.

attaching this review after its USA debut with Karel Ančerl conducting. (...) Morawetz to Kubelík. 30.9. 1973. Toronto, Canada.

(Written on a type-writer in English): Dear Rafael, I hope you do not mind I am writing you in English, but as I do not have a Czech type-writer I find it much easier. Since the time I saw you in Chicago I finished the translation of my composition *From the Diary of Anne Frank* into German. I worked very hard on it. (...) I am quite sure that for a German audience the text sang in German has much more meaning especially as the music follows so closely the meaning of Anne Frank's words. (...) I surely would get a leave from the University teaching to fly to Munich to hear your performance. (...) I would like to thank you and Elise for your kind hospitality during our stay in Chicago. I am glad that I could hear finally with you in a live performance as I have known the work only from the score. Very sincerely yours, Oskar. (A closing note written in hand-writing Czech): I cannot finish a letter without saluting you in Czech. Ahoj! I hope to see you again somewhere soon! – Morawetz to Kubelík. 22.1. 1976. Toronto, Canada.

8. Letters from/to Rudolf Firkušný.

Dear Oskar, thank you for your kind letter and let me sincerely congratulate you on all your fully deserved achievements. I am looking forward so much to your new *Suite for Piano* which you must play for me in Toronto. If it is as good as the last piano compositions, I will have a really hard decisions to make. I am looking forward to the party after the Tuesday recital, which I shall gladly attend. It is very nice of you that you offered to your Radio, that I would say something about Janáček. Since I have a great aversion against talking “in general” and also very little time to have anything prepared, I have to ask you to repeal that. I am looking forward to seeing you. With my sincere wishes, your devoted, Ruda. – Firkušný to Morawetz. 9.4. 1957.

Dear Ruda, I was so happy to have seen you in New York again. Only it is pity that the talk flew by way too quickly! (...) Thank you for your interest in my two *Fantasies for Cello and Piano*. I am sending them along with this letter. I wrote them in 1960 but I revised them significantly in the recent years. (...) The *Fantasies* do not require to be played together (although that was my original intention). They have often been played separately, to great avail. I am well aware that “duration” is essentially important when

creating a program. After our meeting in New York I saw Zubin Mehta. He was incredibly kind and he was keenly interested in my Psalm 22, which was premiered with a great success by Maureen Forrester and Andrew Davis a year ago. He told me he would like to program it during the next season in Israel and Montreal. I hope it will come off! He premiered two other compositions of mine in the last two decades and the performance was superb. (...) I hope that you shall come to Toronto soon. It has been many years since your last visit. With sincere wishes to you and to your family. Yours devoted, Oskar. – Morawetz to Firkušný. 16.2. 1985. Toronto, Canada.

9. A letter to Antonín Kohout, a cellist and a founding member of the Smetana Quartet.

Dear Tonda, I was very sad that I could not see you during my last visit in Czechoslovakia. I hope that you are doing well again! I have to tell you how very happy I was getting to know that we share the same memories of our young years since we both attended Truhlárna.²³⁷ Since you have been remembering as fondly as I have some of our professors, I am including a copy of a letter I received from Professor Doucha when he was 93. He sent me the letter shortly after I visited him in Prague. It was very interesting, he was as alert and animated as he was 40 years ago. He said that his retirement years have been the finest years of his life. After he turned 60 he learned English, Russian, Italian, Spanish, and still played both violin and piano. He was also a self-taught composer, as you know. (...) He was one of the most educated people I have ever met, but we were completely oblivious to that fact, when we were in high school!! He was also the only teacher, next to Prof. Hrubý, who had an understanding for my enthusiasm for music. The others were either indifferent or they were even mocking it, like Mašín. I am also including two letters from Professor Hrubý. I am so happy that I was able to financially support both these good teachers in their last years of life, when they were not doing so well. When I will visit next time, I will show you very interesting letters from Novák, Hoffmeister, Křička, and Kvapil. I used to send them food supplies after the War. (...) As for my Quartet, please let me know if the copy got lost. I will be very happy to send you a new one, in case you would be interested to look at it. I was very happy to

²³⁷ The lyceum on Truhlářská Street in Prague.

have met your wife at the concert of my composition *From the Diary of Anne Frank*. Also, please give my best to the other members of the Smetana Quartet and tell them how happy I was to see them at the concert. With warm wishes and the hope that you are feeling well, your musical and Truhlářovský colleague, Oskar. – Morawetz to Kohout. 10.8. 1977. Toronto, Canada.

10. A letter from František Doucha, Morawetz's Professor at the lyceum on Truhlářská Street, Prague.

(In English, sic:) Dear Maestro, I thank you very much for your beautiful, cordial, large, and comprising letter. You remember the times of your studies at the gymnasium on Truhlářská where I had the happiness to get to know you – a musician and a future genius, composer. A thing strange and curious: I, your teacher of Latin and a musician dilettante, I learned from you. From the conversations with you and from the letters you sent me and where you analysed with much sagacity my *Waltzer in G major*, which I have dedicated to you and I am happy to read this analysis still today. (Continues in Czech:) But let's forget the English now, it is the language I command least. With my greatest interest I read all the attachment in English you sent me along with your letter. Particularly the appreciative, yet enthusiastic review in the article "Tragic Inspiration" about your symphonic poem *Anne Frank*. (...) Now you are getting ready to compose an opera. (...) I would only wish to you that you find a less tragic theme, but rather something that shines with joys and brightness of life. "Erst ist das Leben, heiter ist die Kunst," as Schiller said. (...) I am sending you a few compositions of mine as well as the Waltz I have dedicated to you once. I am sending you this music only as a reminiscence of the beautiful years filled with a hopeful and kind future. The future that was so feloniously destroyed by Hitler's madness. With cordial greetings and the wishes of lots of success in the making of the "divine music", as Smetana used to call it. Yours, František Doucha. – 6.12. 1973, Prague, Czechoslovakia.

11. Letters from Vladimír Šefl, a program director of the Czech Philharmonic, member of the Czech Society for Czech Music, musicologist and music publicist.

Dear Oskar, (...) I read through your Czech translation of *Anne Frank* with a deep interest and I got to realize all the difficulties this task must have represented for you.

However, I think that you achieved it greatly. There is nothing left now but to look forward to the performance. (...) Gabriela Beňačková accepted the solo part and that is wonderful. It will be necessary for the conductor Vajnar to make sure that she will keep her promise.²³⁸ (...) – 10.11. 1976, Prague, Czechoslovakia.

Esteemed friend, I have kept silent for a while but I think that the most important is the fact, that the *Memorial to Martin Luther King* will have its debut performance in Prague. I listened to the piece with Josef Chuchro and I have to say that I enjoyed it tremendously, also because of the excellent interpretation by Zara Nelsová. However, I am convinced that Josef will not stay behind that level. Right now an official letter from the director of the Czech Philharmonic is on the way to you with a request to send the score to a Polish conductor Henryk Czyz. (He is an extraordinary conductor, if you have not heard from him yet.) (...) I am looking for the news from you and I am greeting you cordially, Vladimír Šefl. – 30.5. 1979, Prague, Czechoslovakia.

Dear Oskar, (...) I read with a great joy about your success, or to be more specific, about the success of your compositions in the world. They are children that make their parents happy. You mentioned a few new sonatas – for horn, flute, and oboe with piano. Send me the sheet music when you have a minute. I will gladly offer it to some of our foremost players. There is never enough good literature for the wind instruments. The guys from the Czech Philharmonic remember you fondly. Both *Anne Frank* and *Martin Luther King* have made a great impression on them. It would be wise to make use of that interest. (...) – 28.12. 1980, Prague, Czechoslovakia.

Dear Oskar, I received the recording of your quartet yesterday and I listened to it with great interest and joy. I am looking forward to the performance by the Pražák Quartet already. I hope you have received my previous letters and so you know when the work is being played (7th and 8th of April). Do you know the members of the Pražák Quartet? As follows: Václav Remeš – 1st violin, Vlastimil Holeš – 2nd violin, Josef Klusoň – viola, Michal Kaňka – cello. The moving force of the Quartet is the violist, I advise you to

²³⁸ Finally, the soloist was Eva Děpoltová. As to my knowledge, Beňačková never sung the piece.

contact him and here is his address. (...) Yours Vladimír Šefl. – 2.2. 1988, Prague, Czechoslovakia.

12. A letter to František Vajnar, the conductor of the Prague performance of *From the Diary of Anne Frank* in 1997.

Dear Franta, I cannot believe it has been three months since we saw each other last. You have no idea how often I remember our meeting and all the thorough study of my score you have done. I also think of the rehearsals with you and Eva Děpoltová. The performance was superb, the only pity is that it was not on the Radio. How happy I would have been to be able to bring it to Canada with me on the record. To be able to hear again all the care you put into preparing every single detail of the work. (...) How were the reviews? (...) I wrote to Mr. Kozderka to Brno about having the option of you conducting the piece there; as you know he was keenly interested. I wrote to Dr. Mokřý to Bratislava a while ago as well, but I have not heard from him yet. (...) I also wanted to ask you whether you had a chance to talk to Mr. Herzog from Supraphon about the possibility of making a recording with them? I do not have to tell you how happy I would be if this idea of yours would come true. In that case, I would fly to Prague right away. (...) Franta, I cannot conclude this letter without saying once again thank you so very much for everything. I do not mean your conducting performance only, but also your unusually heartfelt and dear relationship towards me. One does not find such people often. In hopes of seeing you soon, Oskar. Morawetz to Vajnar. 6.9. 1977. Toronto, Canada.

13. Letters to/from Jiří Dvořáček, president of the Association of Czechoslovak Composers.

Dear Professor, even though I visited Český Hudební Fond every time I visited Prague I do not think that we ever met. I have heard of you often and I believe to have read somewhere that you used to be a pupil of Václav Dobiáš with whom I have maintained a frequent correspondence since his visit in Canada (1960) until his death. In the name of the Association of Czech Composers he invited me to the Prague Spring Festival twice in the years 1961 and 1967. Because I do not know whether you associate my name in the field of the Czech composers, I am attaching my CV along with the list of some of the most significant conductors and soloists who performed my compositions. I am also attaching the programs of performances from this year:

- 1) *The Memorial to Martin Luther King* with Kurt Masur and the Cleveland Orchestra
- 2) *From the Diary of Anne Frank* performed by the TSO under the baton of Andrew Davis in celebration of my 70th birthday.

Since it was the Association of Czech Composers who invited me to the Prague Spring Festival in the sixties, I am asking you with the wish and a question whether it would be possible to be invited as a guest in the next season in 1988. I have not been in Prague in the last six years and I would love to visit Prague Spring from the various reasons:

- 1) I would like to hear new Czech compositions as well as the classical ones I have not heard before.
- 2) I wish from the bottom of my heart to archive some of my chamber and orchestral compositions in the Czech Music Archives (Český Hudební Fond).

Although I am in a good health, I know that at my age anything can change quickly. Since I grew up in Czechoslovakia and almost everything I know about music I have learned in Prague, I care very much about the possibility for Czech musicians to have access to my music in the time when I will not be around anymore. Even though I live in Canada since 1940, one of the most joyful moments in my life is my contact with the Czech musicians. During that occasion I would like to donate some of my compositions to the Library at the Prague Conservatory, if they are interested. I can also bring many programs featuring the Czech music in Canada which I either organized or participated in. It may be of interest to some archival purposes. Dear Professor, I would be very pleased if you could help me to proceed with my invitation. I would appreciate this from you immensely. Thank you very much in advance and I am looking forward to the opportunity of meeting you in person, in case everything goes well. Yours truly, Oskar Morawetz. – Morawetz to Dvořáček. 1987. Toronto, Canada.

Dear Maestro, Thank you for your letter and attached documentation. I do remember well our personal meeting at the Vinohrady Theatre in Prague, when we met thanks to the colleagues Reiner and Mácha. I will try to do something positive towards the matter of your wish. With admiration, Jiří Dvořáček. 28.10. 1987. Prague, Czech Republic.

14. An official letter from a newly elected panel of the Association of Czech Composers and Concert Artists.

Dear and esteemed friend, On behalf of the democratically elected panel of the new organization of Czech musicians, let us send our greetings to you, a significant composer originally from our, free again, country. New conditions emerge nowadays and that will make it possible, that not only the professional circles, but most importantly the broad audiences will be finally granted the opportunity to get fully acquainted with the works that have been created by the contemporary artists of the Czech origin living abroad. We wish you many other creative accomplishments in the future and we have a hope that we will be granted the opportunity to welcome here not only your works, but you personally very soon. With a handshake Yours, Jan Hanuš, Ivan Klánský, Milan Slavický. 12.12. 1989, Prague 1989.

Subchapter summary

Examining and displaying available historical sources, testimonies of the living performers, and especially the extant correspondence between Morawetz and Czechoslovakia helped to form an astonishingly accurate image of both the circumstances under which the performances took place and the acceptance of Morawetz's music by the Czech authorities, performers, and audiences. It also revealed a character of this life-long heartfelt relationship between Morawetz and his country of origin.

Enough information is exposed to get an understanding of whether or not Morawetz strived to have his works performed in his homeland, and of the process to secure a performance.

Clearly, Morawetz's wish was to have his music performed in Czechoslovakia and to collaborate with Czech musicians as much as possible.

These people were often a key connection between the composer, who lived in such a distant country as Canada, and the option to present in Czechoslovakia. Even though the communist regime with its censorship did not put a ban on Morawetz's music, it was not keen to champion works by such a composer from "the West" either. Moreover, the strong spiritual content of

Morawetz's works represented yet another obstacle in presenting his music in the communist country.

Nevertheless, he succeeded in gaining some very important performances: the *Dirge* at the Prague Spring Festival in 1964, and the performances of *Memorial to Martin Luther King* and *From the Diary of Anne Frank* by the Czech Philharmonic certainly ranks amongst the finest. A very special occasion was a performance of Morawetz's transcription of Dvořák's *Humoresque* and the *Slavonic Dance in E Minor* by the world's finest artists: Seiji Ozawa, Itzhak Perlman, Yo-Yo Ma, and the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 1993.

3.2 Czech contemporary musical environment

At this point our virtual journey has reached the present time. Two major components constitute the last segment of this study: contemporary performer's analysis and a performance of Morawetz's music; documentation of the Czech conservatories lecture-recitals.

Being a Czech pianist and musician myself, I would like to share my own experience from studying and performing one of Morawetz's compositions, *Fantasy in D* (1948) for both Canadian and Czech audiences. This performer's analysis as well as a recorded performance of the piece represents yet another "Czech prism."

Being both an active performer and a researcher, I had two predominant objectives in mind when selecting music conservatories as the setting for the lecture recitals. For me – the performer – it provided a unique opportunity of familiarizing both young prospective professional musicians as well as the faculty members with Morawetz's music. I could make the strongest possible impact in this environment. In these recital programs, I introduced young Czech audiences to Morawetz's oeuvre by performing his composition *Fantasy in D* (1948) for piano solo, along with lecturing on his life, works and legacy. It was likely that the *Fantasy in D* was performed in the Czech Republic for the first time ever.

For research purposes, I obtained feedback from surveys, which helped to provide a critical insight into reactions of the young prospective Czech music professionals to Morawetz's music. This commentary giving the Czech audience's immediate impressions of Morawetz's music was

incorporated into this study, along with valuable insights by Czech music experts I had a chance to interview about the topic.

3.2.1 *Fantasy in D*: the performer's perspective

The *Fantasy in D*, an early opus composed in 1948, holds a special place within Morawetz's output for piano. Considering the fact that the *Fantasy in D* is only the second piece he wrote for the piano,²³⁹ it is fascinating how many superlatives could be attached to this work when assessing it within the framework of Morawetz's piano works: it is the most complex, the longest, the most technically demanding, and, in my opinion, it embodies the most extravagant invention. In this composition, he made a clear statement of being a young composer with a tremendous potential, invention, skills, and courage, complemented by a latitude to fly.

The *Fantasy* is granted a privileged place not only in Morawetz's output, but in the history of both Canadian and Czech music: it received recordings and numerous performances by Glenn Gould. In the Canadian context, Gould also recorded Istvan Anhalt's *Fantasia* (1954), and Jacques Hetu's *Variations* (1964), but it is the only work by a composer of Czech origin that was both recorded and performed by Gould.²⁴⁰

Gould admired *Fantasy in D* and championed it on many occasions:

There is one work which I recorded a number of years ago for the CBC and which I still play from time to time and I am going to play it again this season, and that's a terrific *Fantasy* by Oskar Morawetz. He has written several pieces with that title but this one is the first of them. It is one which most people for some reason ignore and I think it is a shame because I think it is his finest work for the piano. But I think it is one of the very finest things of its genre, which is, approximately, that of the East European School of Czech, even Russian influence. There is a lot of Prokofiev in this piece. He was a composer I admire but also I do have reservations. I think this is better than anything Prokofiev ever wrote for the piano. It has one quality which very little Canadian music has, that is coming to my head. He thinks big.²⁴¹

²³⁹ Morawetz had previously composed *Sonata Tragica* (1945), and *Scherzo* (1947). The former work has been withdrawn by Morawetz since he felt it contained flaws in his technique. – Gonder: 6. *Scherzo* became one of Morawetz's most popular pieces for piano. In comparison to *Fantasy in D* it is much shorter, and significantly less technically demanding work.

²⁴⁰ Unless the half-Czech origin of the Austro-American composer Ernst Křenek (1900 – 1991), whom Gould admired greatly and performed and recorded extensively, is considered.

²⁴¹ Tovell, Vincent. "At Home with Glenn Gould." *CBC*, Toronto: 4 Dec. 1959.

There is a story surrounding Glenn Gould's first recording of the *Fantasy in D*, not uncharacteristic to Gould and his very personal approach to any musical work he has studied. Here is Morawetz's account of the occasion:

Glenn Gould told me that he was going to record my *Fantasy in D minor* for the International Service. I was very happy, but I asked him if he could play it for me before recording it. At first he said "Absolutely not!" but I pleaded with him and finally he said "Okay, I'll come to you the day before the recording, but I'll tell you right now that I won't change anything." And so he came. He played the accompaniment so loud in places that the melody disappeared. At one spot I asked him to bring out the melody line instead of the accompaniment. He looked at me and said "All the voices are equally important – there are no main voices." But I insisted that I wanted the melody brought out. Finally he looked at me and he said "Look, Oskar, I like this work very much and that is why I want to play it and record it, but when you start to tell me which voice is important and which voice isn't, I have the feeling that you don't understand your own music."²⁴²

Upon a closer inspection of the piece, anyone who is acquainted a little bit with Gould's musical tastes, philosophies, and thinking will be quick to understand what specifically appealed to Gould in this work: its tremendous complexity; late-romantic idiom; heavily contrapuntal texture; constantly developing material; formal unity. All these aspects were utilized with great compositional technique and display the most daring attitude of a young composer, who was not to be tamed. As he proved many times throughout his career he firmly took a stand and defended his composing philosophy against the "avant-garde" fashion of the time.

In the aforementioned quote Gould stated, that the *Fantasy* is "the work most people for some reason ignore". According to the list of performances drawn from Morawetz's website, which may or may be not complete,²⁴³ indeed, not many pianists have ever attempted to present the work publicly. Apart from Gould, the only contemporary pianist who performed the work was Margaret Ann Ireland. There is only one another performance in 1984, by John MacKay. In 2017, on the occasion of the Centenary Celebration concerts for Morawetz organized by his daughter Claudia, the *Fantasy* was performed by Mark Anderson in Vancouver, and by me in Toronto. A year later in 2018 I programmed the piece on my second doctoral recital and, as a vital part of this research, I brought it with me to the Czech Republic to perform at selected

²⁴² Elliott, Robin. "Glenn Gould and the Canadian Composer." *CMC Notations*. Sept. 1992. I thank Prof. Robin Elliott for his permission to reprint this excerpt.

²⁴³ Most likely the omissions are not significant, if any at all. (Especially in the pieces for a larger ensemble.)

conservatories of music. It was the first time the *Fantasy in D* was heard in Morawetz's homeland.

Margaret Ann Ireland had a special connection to the piece which is worth mentioning: it bears a dedication to her. According to Morawetz's website, Morawetz dated Margaret for some time but since "he did not make a move", she eventually married somebody else.²⁴⁴ But she performed the work extensively in both Canada and Europe. She brought it with her on two European tours in 1951 and 1955 and so the *Fantasy* got to be heard in England, France, West Germany, Denmark, Sweden, and the Netherlands.²⁴⁵ The European press noticed the work by the young Czech-Canadian composer:

The *Fantasy* by the Czech-Canadian composer Oskar Morawetz which is dedicated to her,²⁴⁶ was surprising for the excellent workmanship with which it is written. The rather long work displays a strict unity, in spite of its great freedom of form. The melodious topics are not his strongest side, but his interesting musical language certainly is. Morawetz must know the artistic and technical capacities of his interpreter very well, indeed. Miss Ireland capably managed this far from easy work.²⁴⁷

In another European review of Margaret Ann Ireland the *Fantasy* was praised as a "splendid and sonorously well-sounding work which gave a convincing impression of the young pianist to whom it was dedicated."²⁴⁸

The Gould performances of the *Fantasy* in Canada have been also documented in the press:

The Morawetz *Fantasy* is a long (...) piece. But it has a character and ideas and is true composition and not just a string of fugues put together for effect. It also sounds extremely difficult but that hardly counted with Gould. The idiom, by the way, is a fine blend of what is traditional and what has come into music more recently. (...) The *Fantasy* by Oskar Morawetz I would dare to class among the really important compositions to come from a Canadian.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁴ Retrieved from: <http://www.oskarmorawetz.com/Tabs/TabPerson/NewWorld.php> (20 April 2019).

²⁴⁵ Ibid.

²⁴⁶ Margaret Ann Ireland.

²⁴⁷ *Het Vrije Volk*. Amsterdam. March 28. 1951 (retrieved from <http://www.oskarmorawetz.com/Tabs/TabMusic/display.php?page=reviews&Webcode=FantasyD> 21 April. 2019).

²⁴⁸ *Berlingske Tidende*. Copenhagen. Apr. 5. 1951 (retrieved from: *ibid.* 21 April 2019).

²⁴⁹ Archer, Thomas: "The Man from Toronto." *The Gazette*. Montreal. Nov. 5, 1954 (*ibid.* 21 April. 2019).

Both the critical acclaim of the *Fantasy* and the appreciation by Glenn Gould especially poses the ultimate question about the fact that already Gould talked about: Why the piece has been largely ignored by pianists?

After having studied and performed the piece over a span of a few years in both Canada and the Czech Republic, my main personal observation and experience suggest that the key to understanding this phenomena resides in two main challenges the *Fantasy* represents not only for the pianist, but also for the listener, namely: its extreme technical difficulty, its length, and a complex polyphonic texture.

I find *Fantasy in D* a much more rewarding piece for the performer than for the listener. Being an accomplished pianist himself, Morawetz's piano writing is fluent and idiomatic. It employs the full range of the keyboard and similarly, as in his later piano works, he uses up to four staves at a time. The toccata-like passages provide an opportunity for the pianist to display a dazzling virtuosic technique. Its complex polyphonic texture, filled with inexhaustible invention, passion, and vigorous energy, yield an exciting chance for the pianist to constantly explore the sonority of the various individual voices. Understanding it only by hearing the piece can be a very challenging task even for an experienced listener.

I had a chance to perform a part of the *Fantasy* for the Czech composer Luboš Sluka whom I interviewed for this very research at his home in Prague. His spontaneous reaction was: "I hear a very intelligent, honest, and inventive composer. But it seems to me, that there is a little too much of everything. Music sometimes needs to rest, to breathe out. I like his writing, I see very clean lines in his manuscript and I appreciate that. I can see that his musical thinking is extremely intelligent, complex, and full of invention. Just for my taste there is a little too much of everything. My feeling is that if he had allowed music to breathe out and relax a bit more, the music would benefit from it."²⁵⁰

A piano professor at the Jaroslav Ježek Conservatory in Prague, Irina Parker, had a point as a piano teacher: "The piece would be a perfect choice for a student of piano performance for many reasons, especially since it would provide him or her with a fantastic opportunity to learn how to

²⁵⁰ Sluka, Luboš. Interview with the author, 5 January 2019.

listen to individual voices. But the difficulty is so great, that it does not make it possible, at least not at the conservatory level.”²⁵¹

This observation is supported by the fact that Morawetz’s shorter and much easier pieces, such as *Scherzo* or *Scherzino*, can be heard quite frequently at Toronto’s musical educational institutions such as the Royal Conservatory of Music or the University of Toronto. Not so with the *Fantasy in D*, despite its extraordinary history.

Morawetz himself considered *Fantasy in D* representative of his early style in composition.²⁵² It was perhaps his first important piece where he made a bold and clear statement as a contemporary modern composer who knew masterfully his craft and whose invention was inspired and extraordinary. This was a composition in which he had a strong personal voice. The piece represents a fusion of a European tradition and contemporary styles, a style which would be inaccurate to categorize simply as “Czech” or “romantic” tradition.

The work already contains trademarks of his mature compositional technique and style utilizing such a concept as organic development, avoidance of exact repetition, irregular phrase structures, frequent tempo changes, and variable rhythmic eccentricity. But as his compositional style matured, the tendency towards a greater economy of means, less polyphonic textures, and shorter lengths of his compositions becomes obvious. It resulted in a music with a more transparent language and it became more accessible to both the performer and listener without losing the complexity of its original design.

Recording of *Fantasy in D* (1948) by Oskar Morawetz. Radka Hanáková, Piano. Recorded in Prague, 2018.



Fantasy in D (1948)

²⁵¹ Lecture recital, KJJ, Prague, Czech Republic. 17 June 2018.

²⁵² Gonder, 7.

3.2.2 Lecture – recitals at Czech conservatories of music

In the framework of the Czech educational system, the conservatories of music can be ranked among secondary and post-secondary institutions. Study is six years long, as opposed to the usual four years of a high school, and upon graduation a student is awarded a non-academic title DiS [Qualified Specialist]. The purpose of conservatories is to train students for a career as professional musicians or music teachers.²⁵³ As such, the learning consists of a comprehensive and thorough musical and pedagogical training with a major focus on performance. After graduating from a conservatory, students can opt to enter the world of professional musicians right away, but the majority pursue further education either at one of the Academies of Music,²⁵⁴ or at one of the many Faculties of Pedagogy in the Czech Republic.

Currently, there are twelve conservatories of music in the Czech Republic. The Prague Conservatory, which was established in 1808, holds the status of being the oldest conservatory of music in central Europe and the second oldest in Europe, after the Paris Conservatory (est. 1795).

As I already stated in the introduction to this chapter, I chose the conservatory environment for the lecture-recitals as most potentially fruitful regarding my purpose: acquainting young music professionals and teachers with Morawetz's life and music, and in turn to obtain a feedback about their spontaneous response to the exposure. The three selected conservatories where I carried out this project were: Prague Conservatory, Jaroslav Ježek Conservatory, and Pardubice Conservatory.

Although my initial intention was to perform this program for the students of various instruments, and I communicated my vision to the school's representatives when first reaching out to them, in all three cases it was the keyboard department that took charge in organizing and participating in the project. Sixty students of piano performance (with a very few exceptions) of the age between fifteen and twenty-one attended the program and I received surveys from all of them.

²⁵³ Usually, students begin the study at the age of fifteen and graduate at twenty-one.

²⁵⁴ There are two academies of music in the Czech Republic: The Academy of Performing Arts in Prague, and the Janáček Music Academy in Brno.

The structure of the programs consisted of a live performance of *Fantasy in D*, followed by an hour-long lecture about Morawetz's life, career, and music. At the end of each program there was a discussion with the students. For the lecture I used a power-point presentation and all students were given a pamphlet displaying major data about Oskar Morawetz and internet links for additional study, home listening, and score purchase.

When selecting *Fantasy in D* as a representative piece to introduce the students, I considered several points: the history of the piece, complexity, emotional impact, distinctiveness of Morawetz's musical language, and specifics of his compositional technique.

The credit given to the *Fantasy in D* by Glenn Gould's performances, recordings, and words of acclaim in both spoken and written language is an extremely valuable facet, especially if we consider the fact that Gould is one of the very few Canadian musicians widely known by Czechs. Despite the *Fantasy* being an early work, it is an extraordinary and substantial piece that embodies distinctive elements of Morawetz's compositional style as mentioned above, namely: organic development of musical ideas, polyphonic texture and voice leading, expanded tonality, employment of the whole range of the keyboard and usage of three or four musical staves at a time, rhythmical vitality, and idiomatic piano writing.

Given the extreme complexity of the piece, I was aware that the *Fantasy in D* is a challenging piece to comprehend after only one hearing. Therefore, I preceded the actual performance with a brief introduction and analysis of the piece, which gave me the opportunity to point out its structure along with all the above-mentioned features and specifics of Morawetz's musical thinking and writing.

My objective behind this program was to expose the young generation of musicians, who were born and have lived in a free, open country, to Morawetz. Thanks to modern technologies, they have an instant access to any information worldwide, to the unusually contrasting reality: a truly fascinating and successful story of Oskar Morawetz and his music in Canada, and almost total obscurity in the Czech Republic.

Surveys

Keynote questions in surveys disseminated to the students were of two main categories: general musical, and specific to Morawetz and the *Fantasy in D*.

General musical questions.

The general questions were particularly centred on: student's musical taste; knowledge, experience and relationship to contemporary music; awareness of Czech composers who have lived and composed abroad; Canadian composers and musical performing artists.

My first question was directed towards the musical style preferences of the students. The majority – fifty-two students out of sixty – put the Romantic period of the nineteenth century as their number one choice, followed by the first half of the twentieth century, and the Classical and the Baroque period. Only five students mentioned the twentieth century music as their number one choice. Contemporary music only appeared as a second or a third choice in five cases.

A knowledge of Czech émigré composers was the second question. Bohuslav Martinů was by far the most frequently mentioned name (25), followed by Antonín Dvořák (10), and Jaroslav Ježek (8). Leoš Janáček, who only lived abroad shortly in his youth during his studies in Leipzig, was mentioned in four cases and Jan Novák in three. Both Oskar Morawetz and Karel Husa got two. Other names that appeared were Jiří Traxler, J.B. Foerster, Ervín Schulhoff, and Vítězslava Kaprálová. Eighteen students left this question completely unanswered.²⁵⁵

In the next question the students were asked to define “Czechness” in music. Inspiration from folk music with its melodies and dance rhythms especially was a choice for the majority (24) followed by the “sense for a melodic cantabile line” (9). Four students found important a love for the Czech country and nature while two stated that “Czechness” as such does not exist in music and therefore it is impossible to define. Sixteen students left this question unanswered.

The three following questions examined a student's interest in contemporary music. When describing contemporary music and their attitude to it, they used words such as: too experimental, hard to grasp, a desperate pursuit to find something “new,” sceptical approach, but

²⁵⁵ Interestingly, none of the students mentioned any of the many significant Czech composers of the eighteenth century who lived and composed abroad. These include composers of such calibre as Jan Dismas Zelenka, Jan Václav Stamitz, Frantisek Xaver Richtér, František and Jiří Antonín Benda, Jan Ladislav Dusík, Josef Mysliveček, and Jan Křtitel Vaňhal, beside others. Since these composers are commonly known to Czech students it only means that they do not perceive them as “émigrés.”

also open, positive providing there is some kind of melody line, positive unless it is too experimental, inspiring, and fresh.

I assigned students to put down three names of contemporary composers. Interestingly, only thirteen students were able to write all three, some left it blank (10), and only seventeen mentioned a contemporary composer from abroad.²⁵⁶ There was a variety in the names of the Czech composers but most of them were mentioned just once. The exceptions were Jiří Gemrot (8), Petr Eben (3), Milan Slavický (2), Ilja Hurník (2), and Petr Skoumal (2).

The last question involving contemporary music asked about the student's own experience in interpreting a contemporary piece. Only twenty-four students had had an opportunity to study/perform a contemporary piece of music while thirty-six had not.

An awareness of Canadian music was the focus of examination in the next two questions. The first one targeted a knowledge of Canadian composers, the other Canadian music ensembles and interpreters.

Fifty-two students left the "Canadian composer" answer blank, two mentioned Glenn Gould, and two Oskar Morawetz. The other single-mentioned names were Oscar Peterson, John Oswald, David Foster, and Erik Mongrain.

The "Canadian interpreter" question scored a bit higher than the "Canadian composer" one. Although far most frequent were once again blank answers (35), Glenn Gould received thirteen points, TSO four, Jan Lisiecki two, and Charles Olivieri-Munroe, Marc-André Hamelin along with the Montreal Symphony one.

Questions specific to Oskar Morawetz and *Fantasy in D*.

The questions about Morawetz targeted immediate impressions; classification of style and possible influences; association with the Czech musical tradition; possible reasons behind the

²⁵⁶ Arvo Part, Steve Reich, John Williams, Nikolai Kapustin, Hans Zimmer, and Philip Glass were among those mentioned. However, a film and minimalistic music composer Ludovico Einaudi received most attention (9).

obscurity in the Czech Republic; interest in pursuing further study on Morawetz, and his place on the Czech concert stage.

In the very first question regarding the *Fantasy* I asked the students to express their immediate impressions that came up in their mind after hearing the piece. While some students described their own feelings such as surprised, cheerful, and contentious, others grasped the question rather by describing the piece as such: they found it: captivating, interesting, difficult to grasp, maniac, urgent, joyful, emotional, depressive, unpredictable, giant and complex, emotional, diverse, a bad copy of Prokofiev, full, modern, beautiful melodies, rhythmical, polyphonic, a very interesting discovery, ever changing, brooding, rhythmical, stormy, uncompromising.

The second question dealt with the musical style of the piece. I was interested in seeing what influences the students heard behind the composition and whether or not they could associate it with Czech musical tradition. Most students found equally both late-romantic and modern elements, but principally they classified it as a fusion of many styles: “It feels as if all musical styles have met in one composition.” Some answers were more specific and described the style as impressionistic, Czech contemporary, avant-garde, neo-expressionistic, dissonant yet beautiful, contrasting, narrative, mysterious, energetic, captivating and accessible for a modern composition.

Most students found Morawetz’s style influenced by Prokofiev, Martinů, Dvořák, Berg, Debussy, Bartók, Scriabin, Rachmaninov, Bach, and Liszt. In classifying it within the Czech tradition, they associated it with the music by Bohuslav Martinů, Klement Slavický, Antonín Dvořák, Leoš Janáček, and Luboš Fišer.

In the next question, the students were asked to describe the best features of the piece. The students appreciated: drama, emotionality, fullness, clarity, polyphony, character, tension, atmosphere, musical ideas, invention, strong dynamic contrasts, extraordinary imagination, lyrics, colourful texture, work with time; distinctly personal and original language; fast forward-moving direction, romantic elements, voice-leading, cantabile quality of the melodies.

The weaknesses the students found were as follows: restlessness, too high demands on both the listeners and the pianist, too many styles merged together, lack of longer sections without a change of character, too dissonant, too chopped, too long, forgettable themes, intangible.

In a more general sense, all students with only one exception found the composition to be interesting and they expressed an interest to pursue further study on Morawetz.

In one of the last questions I asked the students to consider the possible reasons behind the obscurity of Morawetz's oeuvre and music in the Czech Republic. The most important explanations of this situation were concentrated on three facts: emigration into such a distant country at a very young age; general appreciation of older and more conservative styles in Czech audience; an absolute void of information about Canadian music as such in Czech musicology and educational institutions. Some students were more specific in their answers, finding that: the Czech composers who live in the country are being promoted more than the ones living abroad; we have no information about Canadian music whatsoever; Canadian music is not a part of the curriculum at schools; music from over the ocean is hardly known here; general lack of awareness about contemporary composers; even modern composers such as Berg are hardly appreciated; despite the beauty of the music the style is very complex and difficult; since Morawetz has not written anything "patriotic," he is perceived more as a Canadian composer, not Czech; he did not study music in Czechoslovakia and he did not have enough opportunity to promote his music there. According to a few students Morawetz "did not bring anything new into music," they found his style "difficult to classify" and that is, in their opinion, why he remained unrecognized.

With only one exception, all students who participated in the surveys agreed that Morawetz absolutely has a rightful place in the context of the Czech music tradition and that his music belongs on Czech concert stages.

At the end of the questionnaire I left a space for the students to share their own additional feelings and thoughts about what they just learned. I decided to quote one of them, that I found exceptionally thoughtful and mature, especially when considering the young age of the responder, who was only sixteen years old:

"His work captivated me immensely. I am fascinated by the thorough elaboration of his music, by its complexity and colourfulness. I also really enjoyed the interpretation of the Fantasy in D, which contributed to my positive opinion. The story of his life I consider very interesting. His perception of music seems extraordinary to me and I am very grateful to have had this opportunity of getting to know him!"

The Czech conservatory lecture-recital experience summary.

The interviews revealed some crucial factors about: the conservatory environment and school's curriculum; young people's perception of contemporary music; awareness of Canadian music in the Czech music circles; reactions to Morawetz's story and music and its association with the Czech musical tradition.

The Czech conservatory environment proved to be rather conservative in focusing on the older styles of music. The sceptical attitude towards contemporary music is still prevalent and it was reflected in the students' answers as reflected in both their musical tastes and lack of knowledge of contemporary music in general. Most of them did not have any experience performing or studying a piece of contemporary music.

An awareness of Canadian music is close to zero, as most students could not remember either a Canadian composer or interpreter. Even such a personality as Glenn Gould was only mentioned in thirteen answers. As many students admitted, "Canadian music is not a part of the school curriculum."

However, the students expressed their openness towards contemporary music, providing that it is not "too dissonant" and that it has "some kind of melody line." In other words, not too avant-garde or experimental. In many ways it conforms not only with the Czech musical tradition that is "rather conservative" as Michael Beckerman put it, but also with the composing philosophy of Oskar Morawetz.

This was clearly reflected in their feedback on *Fantasy in D*. Despite its length and complexity, the students enjoyed the piece for its emotional impact, invention, melody lines, rhythmic vitality, and original language. By all means they appreciated Morawetz's complex musical thinking and the exquisite quality of his compositional craft, but they also found it a great challenge for both the performer and the listener. They generally classified the music as "modern", but they also happily found it late-romantic, and even found Czech influences in it. As one student wrote: "considering that this is a modern music, it is very listenable."

From the live experience of playing and lecturing for the students as well as getting feedback from their surveys, I found that they welcomed the new information about Oskar Morawetz, his successful story, and his music in a very enthusiastic way. They were happy to have learned of

the Czech composer who was so successful in Canada and in the world, and also very surprised that they had not heard of him before. Fifty-nine out of sixty agreed, that his legacy belongs in the Czech music tradition and that his music should be played on the Czech concert stages.

In the discussion, they showed curiosity not only about Morawetz, but about musical life and music education in Canada in general. They were very interested to hear my own personal experience as somebody who came from the same background as them and had an experience of such an unknown environment as Canada. For me it was a joyful and very positive experience to play and talk with those young people and I feel it was a privilege that I could be the “messenger” and a bridge between the two countries and musical environments which I had the life-opportunity to experience: the Czech Republic and Canada. Oskar Morawetz did likewise.

Bibliography

Allenard, Jean. "Memorable Premiere of the Piano Concerto by Oskar Morawetz." *La Presse* 24 April. 1963.

"Antonín Čapek." *Wikipedia*. (Web.) 19 September. 2019.

Archer, Thomas: "The Man from Toronto." *The Gazette*. Montreal. 5 November. 1954.

Beckerman, Michael. "In Search of Czechness in Music." *19th – Century Music* 10: (1986) 61 – 73.

Beckwith, John. *Music at Toronto: A Personal Account*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995.

_____. *Unheard Of: Memoirs of a Canadian Composer*. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier UP, 2012.

"Brief History and Activities." *Czech and Slovak Association of Canada*. Retrieved 9 May. 2019.

CLC Scrapbooks, Canadian League of Composers Constitution (1951): 1.

Cobb, David, "This Winning Composer Prefers to be Different." *Toronto Daily Star* 18 September. 1962.

Cornfield, Eitan. "Morawetz Documentary." *Oskar Morawetz: Canadian Composers Portraits*. Centrediscs CMCCD 8702. 2002.

Čermák, Josef. "Czech and Slovak Americans on Behalf of Their Homeland." *The 21st SVU World Congress*, Pilsner, 2002. <https://www.svu2000.org/whatwedo/onbehalf.htm>

_____. *It all Began with Prince Rupert: The Story of Czechs and Slovaks in Canada*. Luhačovice: Atelier IM Pub. Co. 2018.

Editorial. "We are Proud and Grateful." *Toronto Daily Star* 8 January. 1962.

Edwards, Barry J. "Milan Kymlicka." *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. 3 December 2012. (Web.) Retrieved 28 September. 2019.

Elliott, Robert William Andrew. "The String Quartet in Canada." Ph.D. Diss. University of Toronto, 1990.

Elliott, Robin. "Glenn Gould and the Canadian Composer." *CMC Notations* 4.3 (Sept. 1992): 1, 4 – 5, 12.

Fusco, Maria. "Morawetz Still Pursues First Love." *Globe and Mail* 14 November. 1959.

Goltman, Frances. "Closing Program for MSO Scores as Unforgettable Musical Feast." *Gazette* 24 April. 1963.

Gonder, Jonathan Paul. "Style and Form in Selected Works of Oskar Morawetz." Diss. University of Western Ontario, 1979.

Graham, June. "Yes, I'm a Composer." *CBC Times* 11 December. 1959.

Henniger, Richard, ed. "Writings by John Weinzweig," *Les Cahiers canadiens de musique/The Canadian Music Book* 6 (1973).

Herben, Jan. "T. G. Masaryk: život a dílo prezidenta osvoboditele" [T.G. Masaryk: The Life and Work of the President the Liberator]. Prague: Sfinx B. Janda Praha, 1938.

Hildebrandt, Kimberly Enns. "The Songs of Oskar Morawetz." *Journal of Singing*. 64.2 (2007): 176 -178.

Hořejš, Miloš. "Arizace pozemkového majetku židovských elit v Protektorátu Čechy a Morava na příkladu rodiny Morawetzů" [Arization of the Land Estate of the Jewish Elite on the Example of the Morawetz Family] in *Šlechticův Žid Žid šlechticem* [A Nobleman's Jew a Jew – a Nobleman], Spyra, Janusz, "ed." Zářícký, Aleš "ed." Županič, Jan "ed." Ostrava/Czestochowa: Ostravská univerzita v Ostravě, Akademia im. Jana Długosza w Czestochowie, 2015. 183 - 199.

Kallmann, Helmut. "Music History." *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. 2.7. 2006. (Web.) Retrieved 14 April. 2018.

Kašparová, Alena – Kamp, Michal. *Židé na Havlíčkověbrodu* [Jews in Havlíčkův Brod]. Havlíčkův Brod: Muzeum Vysočiny. 2008, 266 – 277.

Keillor, Elaine. "Perspectives on the Late Piano Music of Oskar Morawetz and John Weinzweig." *Intersections: Canadian Journal of Music* 33.2 (2013): 35 – 52.

Keillor, John. "Rudolf Komorous." *Allmusic*. (Web.) 28 September. 2019.

Kidd, George. "Composer Morawetz: Need Good Book for My Opera." *Telegram* 6 October. 1962.

Kovařík, Vladimír. *Vývoj hudební výchovy na českých školách* [Evolution of the Music Education at the Czech Schools]. Prague: Státní pedagogické nakladatelství. 1960.

Ládyová, Jana. "Božena Čapková, sběratelka, maminka slavných potomků." *Zena-in*. 2016. (Web.) 5 September. 2019.

Maloney, Timothy. "Focus on Canadian Repertoire: Oskar Morawetz's 'Memorial to Martin Luther King' for Solo Cello, Winds, Percussion, and Piano," *Canadian Winds: The Journal of the Canadian Band Association* 1.2 (2003): 35 – 39.

Martin, Sandra. "Czech Wartime Refugee Became one of the Canada's Greatest Composers." *Globe and Mail* 20 June. 2007.

Masaryk Memorial Institute Inc. www.masaryktown.ca 13 May. 2019.

- McLean, Eric. *Montreal Star* 24 April. 1963.
- Miller, Joan Patricia. *Selected Piano Works by Oskar Morawetz: Stylistic Aspects*. Indiana, 1990.
- Morawetz, Claudia. *Oskar Morawetz*. 2013. (Web.) www.oskarorawetz.com
- Morawetz, Oskar. *Fantasy in D*. Canadian Music Centre, 1948.
- _____. "Oskar Morawetz: A Retrospective." *CJRT*, Toronto: 26 November. 1985.
- _____. "Oskar Morawetz's Birthday." *Two New Hours*. CBC, Toronto: 12 January. 1993.
- _____. *Morawetz vypráví antikomunistické anekdoty*. [Morawetz Tells Anti-communist Anecdotes], Private collection.
- Morris, Christopher; Morey, Carl. "Canadian Opera Company." *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. 30 January. 2011. (Web.) 11 February. 2019.
- Mráček, Jaroslav: "Czech music in Canada," *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. 7 February. 2006. (Web.) 8 May. 2019.
- Ort, Thomas. *Art and Life in Modernist Prague: Karel Čapek and His Generation, 1911-1938*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.
- Ostwald, Peter. *Glenn Gould: The Ecstasy and Tragedy of Genius*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1998.
- Page, Tim, ed. *The Glenn Gould Reader*. New York: Vintage Books, 1990.
- Potvin, Gilles. *Le Devoir* 27 April. 1963.
- Prof. Oskar Morawetz*. Dir. Josef Čermák. Československá televize Okno, Edice Profily, 1991.
- Rajewsky, V. I. Biographical sketch from the Canadian Music Centre file, "Morawetz – Biography and List of Works." Toronto: Canadian Music Centre, 1961.
- Raska, Jan. "Czech Canadians." *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. 18 February. 2010. (Web.) 10 February 2019.
- Sallis, Friedemann. "Deconstructing the Local: The Aesthetic Space and Geographic Place of Oskar Morawetz's String Quartet No. 5 'A Tribute to Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart' (1991)." *Canadian University Music Review* 24.1 (2003):7 – 29.
- Sedivy, Veronica, and Evan Ware. "Oskar Morawetz." *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. 11 February. 2007. (Web.) 13 October. 2015.
- "Susskind Conducts." *Globe and Mail* 13 June. 1964.

Štědroň, Miloš. "Dirigoval Charles Mackerras" *Rovnost* 18 October. 1963.

Štenbera, Jiří. "Dr. Oskar Morawetz." *Naše Hlasy* 30 June. 1955.

Thomas, Ralph, "Scorned but Successful." *Toronto Daily Star* 30 March. 1963.

Thompson, Amy. "Czechoslovakian Contribute Fierce Love of Freedom." *Toronto Daily Star* 11 April. 1959.

Thomson, Hugh. "TSO Commissions Oskar Morawetz." *Star Weekly* 1959.

Thompson, Hugh. "His First Symphony." *Star Weekly* 3. March. 1956.

Thorlakson, Paul Jeffrey. *A Performer's Guide to Selected Solo Piano Compositions of Oskar Morawetz*. UMI Dissertation Services, 1995.

Troper, Harold. "Immigration in Canada." *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. 22 April. 2013. (Web.) 19 May. 2019.

Tovell, Vincent. "At Home with Glenn Gould." Canadian Broadcasting Corporation: 4 December. 1959.

Wolters-Fredlund, Benita: "A 'League against Willan'? The Early Years of the Canadian League of Composers, 1951 – 1960," *Journal of the Society for American Music*, 5.4 (2011): 445 – 480.

Appendices

Appendix A: Reviews of the *Piano Concerto No. 1*

Morawetz's Concerto No. 1 for Piano and Orchestra is a splendid work, one of the best Canadian compositions heard by our orchestra for many years. (...) This work has a personality, a very strong personality, making it a work which should soon take its place in the repertoire of concert pianists. - Allenard, Jean. "Memorable Premiere of the Piano Concerto by Oskar Morawetz." *La Presse* 24 Apr. 1963.

Magnificent is the word that would describe last night's concert of the MSO in Plateau Hall. A world premiere is not always appreciated on first hearing but this year's commissioned work, a Concerto for Piano and Orchestra by Oskar Morawetz, received an ovation. (...) the electric effect it had on the audience is something to remember. (...) a convincing performance of the fascinating score. (...) The orchestra encompasses every aspect of emotional poetry and the combination of pianist and orchestra showed the truly great gifts of composer Morawetz. (...) Lets us hope that the MSO will keep this work on its permanent repertoire." - Goltman, Frances. "Closing Program for MSO Scores as Unforgettable Musical Feast." *Gazette* 24 Apr. 1963.

The composer makes use of orchestral colours with astonishing variety. The composition develops with a simplicity and spontaneity which are not usually the main characteristics of contemporary works. (..) It is an important addition to the Canadian concerto repertory, which is rather limited. (...) I have seldom seen a Canadian work being received with such spontaneity by the public. As soon as the last measures of the brilliant last movement were finished, the audience applauded frantically, and one heard comments of satisfaction and appreciation which spoke volumes. - Potvin, Gilles. *Le Devoir* 27 Apr. 1963.

There is imagination and purpose in his treatment of material. The skill with which he handled instrumental colours was impressive, but not really surprising since it has always been a striking feature of his music. McLean, Eric. *Montreal Star* 24 Apr. 1963.

Appendix B: A Letter from Larysa Kuzmenko to Robert Falck, the Associate Dean of the Faculty of Music at the University of Toronto.

Dear Prof. Falck, I know how busy you are at this time of the year, so I felt that I should not interrupt you during your work. I thought it might be better to write you a letter concerning my problems in regards to my studies for the Master Degree. As you already know that I have had many lectures as well as semi-private instructions in composition from most of the professors at this faculty. I honestly must say that I cannot think of anybody who has helped me as much in Analysis, Counterpoint, Orchestration, and my creative work as Dr. Oskar Morawetz. Not only was he very encouraging in my composition class, but being a superb pianist and excellent sight reader, he could immediately demonstrate how my work could be improved. He often improvised with the greatest facility showing me many possibilities of improving weak spots. I am well aware of the fact that the schedule of our professors is quite heavy, therefore I asked Dr. Morawetz if he could find time for instruction in composition in the graduate course. He said that he would be very glad to do so provided it would meet with your approval. I would like to ask you Prof. Falck if you could be so kind as to consider my request. I do not think I have to tell you that I would be most grateful to you if you could write me a positive answer. I am thanking you in advance for any consideration you may give to my letter. Yours sincerely, Larysa Kuzmenko. – 30.8. 1979. Toronto, Canada.²⁵⁷

²⁵⁷ Letter from Larysa Kuzmenko to Robert Falck from the Oskar Morawetz Collection, Files 2004 – 2018, National Library of Canada.

Appendix C: Correspondence between Oskar Morawetz and his parents

I am reading in the newspaper right now that Libuše, My Country (!!), Slavonic Dances (!!), and From the New World Symphony have been banned from performance in Prague. I did not want to believe that, but the son of doctor Kraus, who just arrived yesterday from Prague, has confirmed this to be true. I have ordered the postcards of Světlá from Pavlásek and I look at them every day. (...) I think that it would be a good idea for me having sent all my sheet music from Prague here. Because I think, that, from all the other things Gestapo may once confiscate from us, this would be the biggest tragedy. - Morawetz to his father. 1939. Paris, France.

I just received first package of sheet music from Urbánek Publishers from Prague. I would have preferred much more to have received my old sheet music than the new one, but it is better than nothing. I also received your picture of Masaryk, dad. - Morawetz to his parents. 10.8. 1939. Paris, France.

I have spent lots of time together with Firkušný recently. He always asks about the situation in Úpice and Světlá but he also never forgets to ask about you and your health. I always have to promise not to forget to give his best wishes to you in my letter. I think that he sincerely and genuinely likes us, since he tells everybody what lovely parents I have. - Morawetz to his parents. 16.8. 1939. Paris, France.

Dear Oskar, Your letter from 20.8. interested us immensely and we are happy that you got acquainted with so many interesting people and that the Czechoslovak composers liked your music. It would be nice if your music would be played in your homeland, although communist. I am sure that nothing bad could happen to you in case you would get invited to such an occasion. (...) Frida Morawetz to Oskar Morawetz, 27.8. 1960, Altausee, Austria.

Appendix D: Miscellaneous

1. The castle in Světlá nad Sázavou owned by the Morawetz family until it was confiscated by the communists after the war.



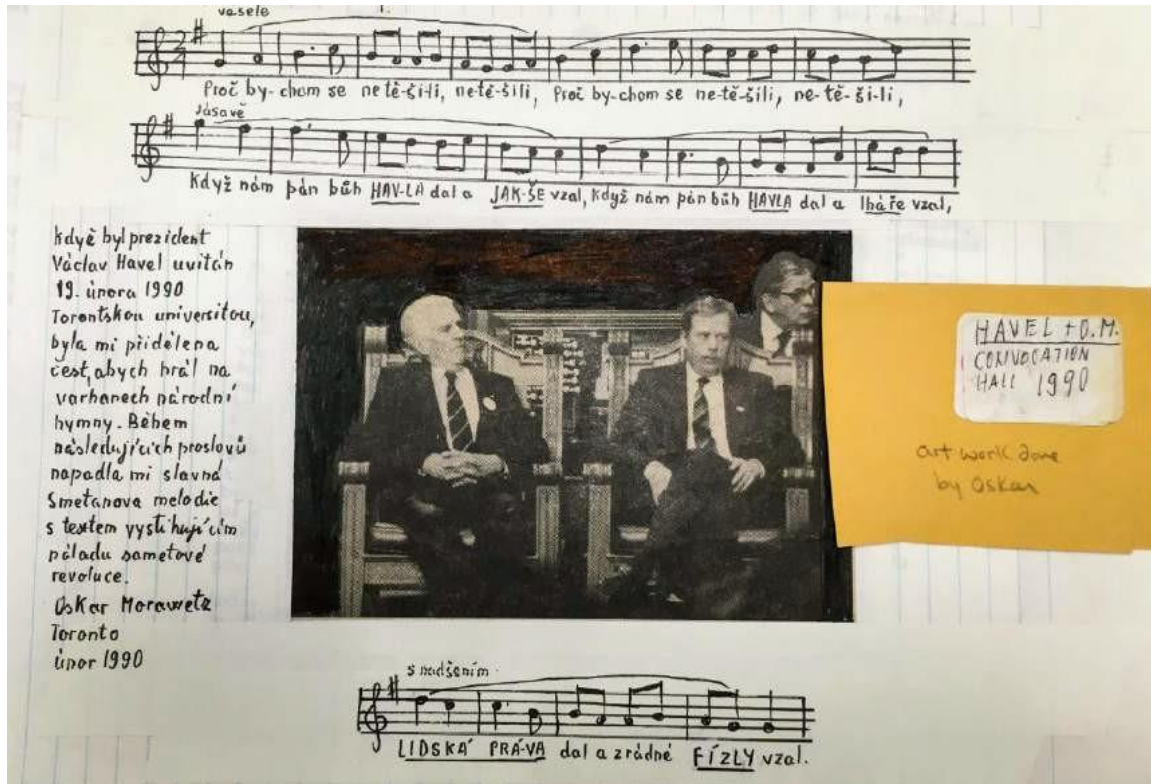
2. The exterior and interior of the Morawetz Villa in Úpice.



4. A drawing of Morawetz with the dedication from Rudolf Firkušný “In memory of the time we spent together in Paris.”



5. Art work created by Morawetz on the occasion of Václav Havel's visit in Toronto, Convocation Hall at the University of Toronto, 1990.



Translation of the text written by Morawetz: “When the University of Toronto welcomed the president Václav Havel on 19th February 1990, I had the honour to play the national anthems on the organ. During the speeches that followed, Smetana’s famous melody came to my mind along with the text that renders the mood of the Velvet Revolution:

Happily: *Why would we not rejoice, when Lord God granted us Havel and took away Jakeš.*²⁵⁸ With enthusiasm: *He granted us human rights and took away traitorous informers.*

²⁵⁸ Miloš Jakeš (b. 1922), General Secretary of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia in the years 1987 – 1989.

6. A greeting card created by Morawetz for Rudolf Firkušný for the occasion of his 80th Birthday in 1992.

ZÁZRACNÉ DÍTĚ
PIANISTA RUDOLF FIRKUŠNÝ
SLAVÍ SVÉ 80.É NAROZENINY

Mumlal.
(odpoví)
zázračný byl, jest a růstane, zázračný byl, jest a zůstane.

Milý Rudo! feb. 92.

Myslím, že tvou hudební kariéru nejlépe vystihl Hajný Mumlal ve Smetanově opeře "Dvě Vdovy".

Moc jsem na Tebe vepomínal v den narozenin, jakož i ma den, když jsem Ti jako 10-ti letý hoch poprvé slyšel ve Smetanově síni před 65ti lety. Ani jsem se netroufal tehdy doufat, že Ti jednou osobně poznám!! S přáním všeho nejlepšího se připojuji k Mumlalovi. Tvůj zcela oddaný Oskar Morawetz

Title: The Child Prodigy, the Pianist Rudolf Firkušný Celebrates His 80th Birthday.

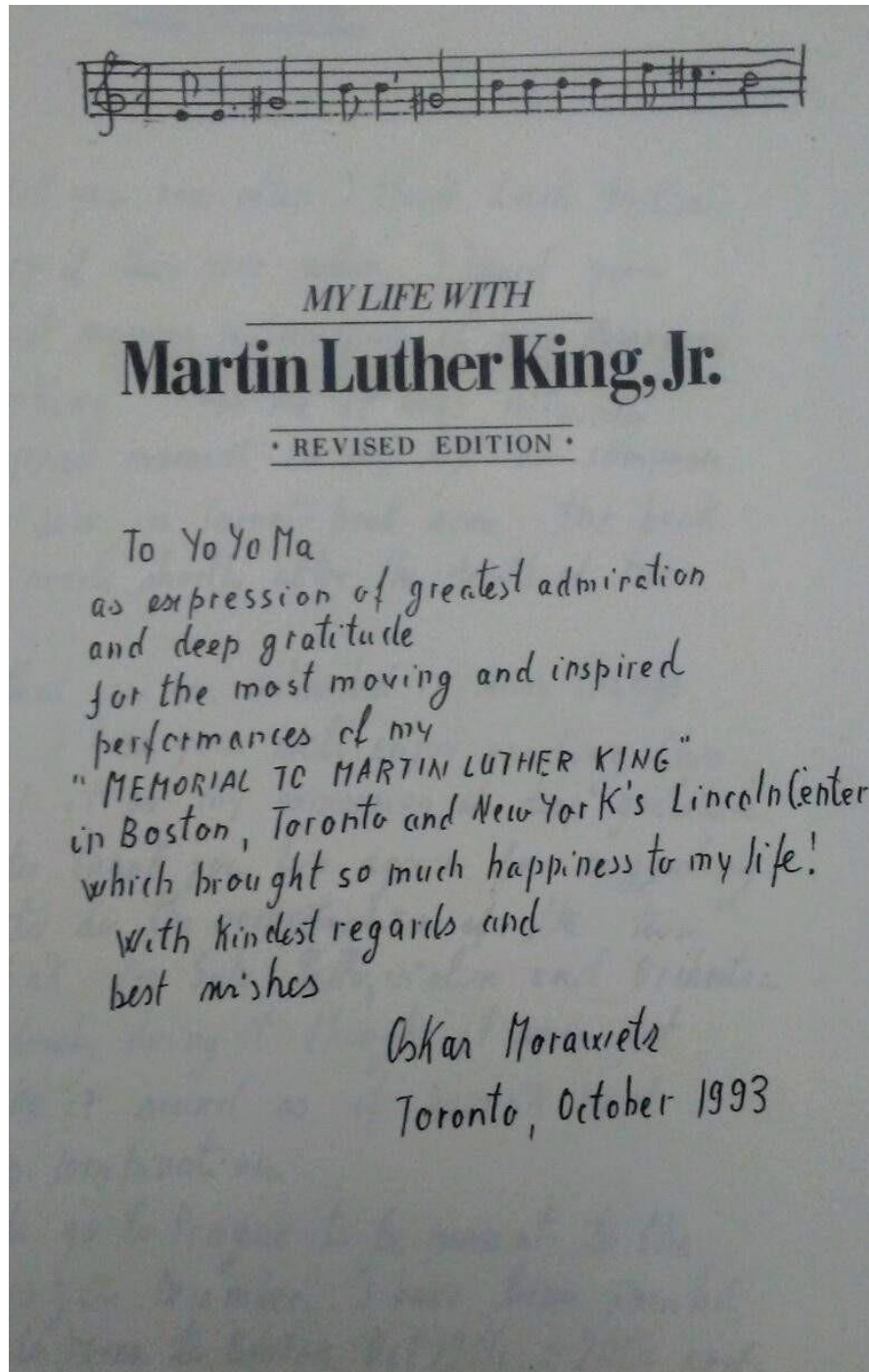
Music text: Mumlal [Mumbler]: He was prodigious, so he is now, and so he shall remain!

Dedication: Dear Ruda, I think that the Forester Mumbler in Smetana's opera "The Two Widows" captured your career best. I was thinking of you a lot on the day of your Birthday as well as of the day when I heard you play for the first time in Smetana Hall when I was 10 years old. I could not have dared to even hope then, that I shall get to know you personally one day!! With the wish of all the best I am joining Mumbler.

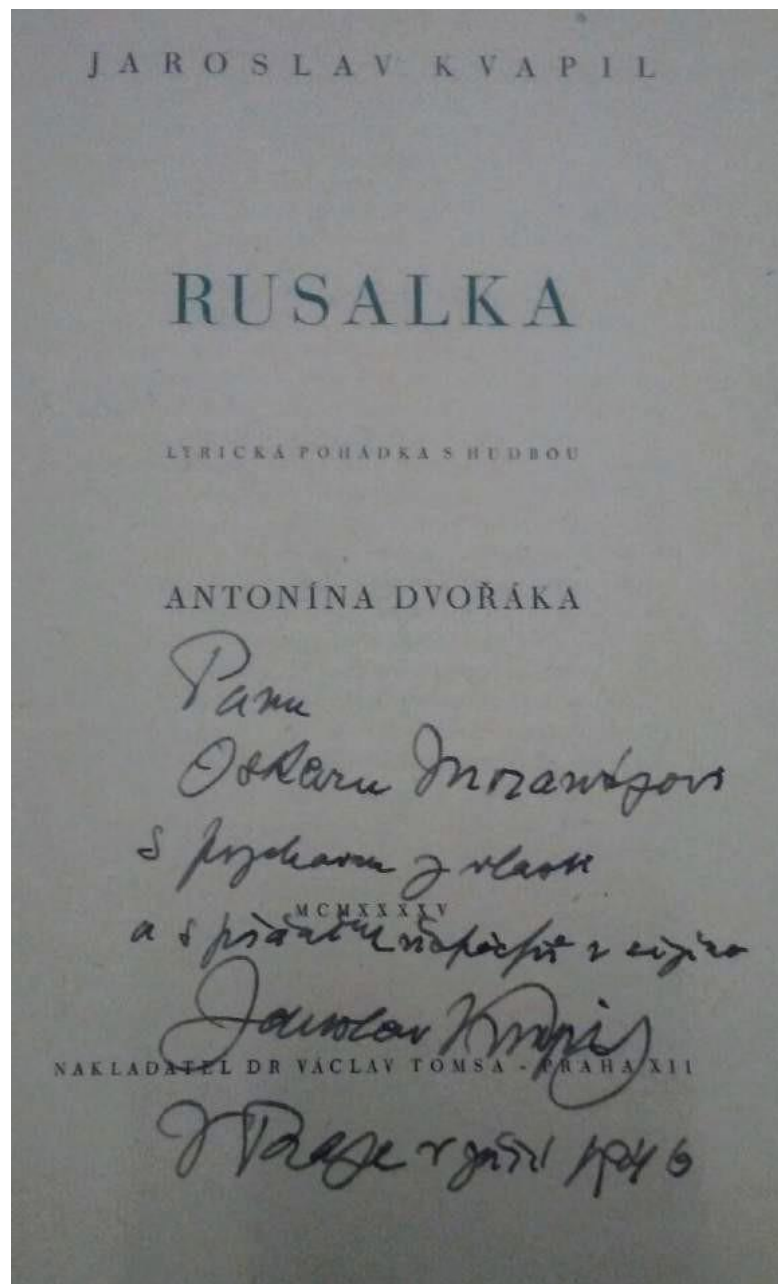
Yours utterly devoted,

Oskar Morawetz.

7. A card made by Oskar Morawetz for Yo-Yo Ma in 1993.



8. Libretto for Rusalka with a dedication from the librettist Jaroslav Kvapil.



Dedication: To Mr. Oskar Morawetz with greetings from motherland and with the wish of lots of success abroad, Jaroslav Kvapil. In Prague, September 1946.

9. A portrait of Oskar Morawetz made by his Czechoslovak compatriot in Toronto, the painter Maria Gabánková, in 1987.²⁵⁹



²⁵⁹ I thank Marie Gabánková for her kind permission to reprint this artwork.

10. Morawetz's class in 1935 at the lyceum on Truhlářská street in Prague.



Morawetz maintained contacts with two of his teachers from the lyceum, Prof. Doucha and Prof. Hrubý. Also, he was being invited to the class's annual meetings.

Appendix E: Interviews with Czech music experts

Interview with a musicologist Jan Kachlík.

Did you know Oskar Morawetz before?

No, I knew almost nothing of Oskar Morawetz. However, in relation to a research on Antonín Dvořák I came across the name of Oskar Morawetz's father Richard. He was not only a wealthy businessman, an owner of a few large estates and an influential personality of the business life in the First Czechoslovak Republic in general. Richard Morawetz was an outstanding patron and art collector. During his life he built an extensive collection of visual, literary and musical art. Among the musical artefacts there was Dvořák's manuscript of the *Romance for Violin and Piano*, a resource of exceptional value. The Morawetz family must have been a significant, art-oriented family.

What kind of awareness does Czech musicology have about Canadian music?

Czech musicologists do not focus in their research on Canadian music as such. To a considerable extent it is logical since we still owe so much to our greatest national composers. Even Smetana and Dvořák have not received the amount of attention they deserve. Not to mention Josef Suk, Vítězslav Novák and others. Novák taught extensively and he developed a prominent school in composition. Many of his pupils would certainly deserve attention in a form of a monography or a master thesis. The same reality applies to the many pupils of Jaroslav Křička, among which Oskar Morawetz belongs. However, one valuable and recent contribution in scholarship on Canadian music comes to my mind – a dissertation by Petr Kadlec about Karel Ančerl. The paper focuses on the last years of the former chief conductor of the Czech Philharmonic who, after the Soviet invasion in 1968, emigrated to Canada and served as chief conductor of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra for a few years. We are a country with a great and long tradition in music, Czech music along with our performers is being celebrated and appreciated around the world, but somehow it feels that we are not fully aware of this great richness we have.

To what extent has this tendency in the Czech musicology been formed by the political/social situation in the country? What are the determining factors in this process, in your opinion?

The consequences of the unfortunate political development after the Second World War are still very apparent. In 1989, luckily we started to breath freely, but the Czech society has been coping with the harmful consequences of the former state politic regime. I am convinced that people in Canada do not perceive the role of a government in such a negative way as we do with our historical experience. Ever since the time of Zdeněk Nejedlý, we have been aware perhaps too well of the fact, that the kind of a national culture policy which gives orders or bans is not right. That is one of the reasons why we do not have a national culture policy in its right sense now – the kind of a government concept that would focus on and pay appropriate attention to the national culture values. Besides, other factors such as our nation characteristic features play its roles.

How would you describe the attitude of the Czechs towards their cultural heritage and values?

In comparison to other nations, we Czechs are quite lax and indifferent towards our own culture. We seem to perceive our art values only as a granted part of our lives, but we do not feel the urge to be actively involved in its preservation, presentation and development. It is perhaps the most evident in music, because, in comparison to the architecture or the visual art, it is by nature unsubstantial. Look at the Poles or the Austrians, how much they care of their national composers! We have a lot to learn from them in that regard. If only for the fact, that it would be wise to valorise the potential of the cultural capital from the purely economic point of view. The capital is left largely unattended now despite the fact that it represents the most explicit values we can offer to the world.

You had the opportunity to listen to Morawetz's composition Fantasy in D recorded by Glenn Gould. Can you share your impressions from the work? What do you think of Morawetz's musical language?

I can only share the first impressions, obviously. In the Fantasy I can hear the type of modernism that is rooted in the tradition and that communicates with the listener. However, as I listened to the piece, I was becoming aware of its asymmetric, complex structure. There is one thread that meanders from the beginning to the end and develops incessantly. In this regard it reminds me of Alois Hába and his athematic style. There is a sense of a large proportion in the structure of the piece. I am sure that that is what both Oskar Morawetz and Glenn Gould appreciated and had in common.

How did Canada shape the career and music of Oskar Morawetz, in your opinion?

I believe that Oskar Morawetz rather gained than lost with the fact that he lived and composed in Canada. Had he stayed in Czechoslovakia, his composition would have never been performed by Glenn Gould. Canada gave him the opportunity to create and grow as a composer. Many Czech composers of his generation would have been grateful to have had so many articles written about their music and recordings from such accomplished performers. In Czechoslovakia, some of the music has been recorded by the Radio, but it happened in too many cases that these tapes have been deleted later. The unique records have disappeared forever. Therefore the stories of the composers living and composing in Czechoslovakia were mostly far more sorrowful. How much grateful would they have been had they had the opportunity to create and succeed in the environment of a free society.

Interview with a composer Luboš Sluka.²⁶⁰

Oskar Morawetz always emphasized that music has to grow from the tradition. He refused the avant-garde and experimental tendencies in music composition. He believed that there has to be a melody line, and that music should never lose contact with the listener. What do you think about this philosophy?

That is very appealing and it is something I have always been saying too. I did not know him nor his music personally. But it seems to me that Oskar Morawetz was a very honest composer,

²⁶⁰ The prominent Czech composer Luboš Sluka (b. 1928 in Opočno, Czechoslovakia) belongs to the generation of Czech composers who continued the great European and Czech musical tradition such as Klement Slavický, Petr Eben, Miroslav Kabeláč, Viktor Kalabis, and Ilja Hurník, among others. He resented the experimental and avant-garde styles which emerged in the 1950s. His musical language and esthetics claim common roots with the best tradition of 20th century composers. The Czech composers he drew his inspiration from were Josef Suk, Josef Bohuslav Foerster, Bohuslav Martinů, and particularly from Leoš Janáček whom he considered the greatest composer of the 20th century. His teachers of composition include Jaroslav Řídký, Miroslav Krejčí, Pavel Bořkovec, and Václav Trojan. In 1951 he was accepted in Paris by Arthur Honegger to be his student and also to become an assistant to Georges Auric. But political reasons in communist Czechoslovakia prevented Sluka from realizing this once in a life-time opportunity. His oeuvre is extensive and includes diverse genres. Besides vocal, choral, and solo piano works, it is dominated by chamber music for various ensembles. His cello works in particular earned international attention when Pablo Casals presented them in his masterclasses. Besides composing, Luboš Sluka was an appointed program editor in Czechoslovak Television as well as a chief editor at Panton (a Czech music publisher), Chairman of the Association of Czech Composers, and a Chairman of the Association of Music Artists and Scientists. His compositions have earned many national and international awards (Moscow, Warsaw, Vienna, Cannes, among others). In 2018 Sluka was awarded the Ministry of Culture Award for the Achievements in the Field of Music.

according to what you just told me. Perhaps because he refused the experimental styles he was less favoured: by theoreticians, of course! What I know is that his teacher here in Czechoslovakia was Jaroslav Křička and that must have had a great influence on him.

Křička was a magnificent composer. I knew him personally, we were friends. He used to visit us since 1941 and I was in touch with him until the last days of his life. I served as a chief – editor for fifteen years at Panton. That is where I got to know his compositions very well. I even published his book *Rozpomínky* (Spells). It is a memoir book where he writes, in a very captivating manner, about all his life. Unfortunately, it never reached its public since the Bolsheviks destroyed everything right before publishing, including its manuscript. The reason of the destruction was that he wrote truthfully and honestly against the communist regime, about the Soviet invasion in 1968, and so forth. Just one copy of the book survived and I am the one who has it. Unfortunately, there is a certain indifference in the society so the book remains unpublished until today. I tried to change it but nobody else cared.

Do you think that Jaroslav Křička could have been the connection between Oskar Morawetz and George Szell?

I do not know about that but Křička certainly knew Szell. Křička was a professor at the Prague Conservatory and Szell was a chief-conductor at the German Theatre in Prague. The odds are huge.

How would you describe the situation in Czech contemporary music?

My feeling is that there is a kind of disarray. The music is divided. The specific groups of people here who initiated the composition of the so-called “New Music” in the 1960s, turned to dodecaphony, invoked the new directions, and returned to Schoenberg. They got so fascinated and started attending the New Music festivals in Warsaw for example, and so forth. But fifty years later, it is becoming obvious now that it is not going anywhere and so they came up with the new styles such as neo-romantism, minimalism, punctualism, or any other –ism, just to be *à'jour*. Everyone desires to be modern, to be the best, to erase whatever was here before, and to bring something new. But already Janáček was saying that there is no revolution in music, only evolution. From something, something else emerges and takes on its own direction. And that is essential.

Some of the ‘modernists’ lack even the basic compositional skills which we had to study at school: form, harmony, instrumentation. They write symphonies, quartets right away! They somehow draw the music either with a ruler or a ruler circle. Very often they do not even play any instrument. And that is a huge mistake for a composer! Every composer should be able to play a few instruments.

So there is this chaos in contemporary music and it is quite difficult to find something you like. There is no uniform style right now.

Of course, everyone can write as one wishes. But in my opinion, the music reached a phase where there is a void of creative, inventive composers. Because what can save our music is once again good inventive music. Such music can be simple and only two-parted as water! Everything has been researched, everything has been thought through. Directions, harmonies – everything has been here already! What to do about it? Some think that if they put everything in there, if the chord will be as entangled as possible, that it will sound “modern.” It will not! It will sound ugly.

I separate the composers into two groups: the ones who mean it honestly and the other ones. Some say that invention does not exist, that it is nonsense. But we can only be saved only with a creative idea! Contemporary music is losing audiences, since it is mostly bad. I worked in Panton for fifteen years and, as a chief editor, I was examining and selecting contemporary music. That was a difficult experience!

Most of the music written is of bad quality and it has always been the case, as Honegger and also Britten said: 99 percent of music is not good enough to survive the test of time. We cannot change that.

It is impossible to find another composer such as Josef Suk or Leoš Janáček. The greatest Czech composers from the twentieth century certainly were Janáček, Foerster, Novák, Suk, perhaps Martinů.

Did they have anything in common? Was there a factor which helped them to excel and be unique?

There was the creativity, invention, and honesty. These composers were writing as they felt they should have been. Until the 1940s or 1950s, there is something that will remain. There is a high

level of dishonesty in people nowadays. They are competing, they want to be “as good as” someone else, be it Schoenberg or Stravinsky. Very few stayed themselves and unique. My teacher Miroslav Krejčík who was a student of Vítězslav Novák at the Master School of Music at the Prague Conservatory, used to say: write as your own voice tells you. That is the only way.

In Janáček’s case, he grew out of the old and very conservative German school. His teacher was František Skuherský who gave him all the basic rudiments in the best manner. He left for Leipzig afterwards where he wrote his early compositions. And that is not Janáček at all! Not yet. He found his own voice only in his fifties. I would recommend to every composer to read his short essays. He writes about music: Whoever wants to teach a composer to compose is equal to he who wants to teach a bird how to sing. The gift for composing either is in a man or it is not.

I knew Foerster very well, we are distant relatives. He used to say: whatever you write well, do not brag about it. It is not from you, it is from the God. Whatever you write badly, that is from you.

I believe that in the arts one cannot cheat. It is all about touching something higher than us. It is a lot about humility. It is not very easy, it is rather quite difficult. You have doubts. It will only get more difficult because it is more and more filled out. But there are those blank spots and they need to be filled with the musical invention.

My good friend and composer Ilja Hurník once remarked that in the older days people used to know music by heart. The Love Song by Suk, Humoresque by Dvořák, and so on ... nowadays, nobody knows the music. Even Martinů. Can you sing anything by Martinů? It is close to impossible. Why is that? Nobody had thought about it before.

Our music is also affected immensely by the era: the War, the communists. Many composers were banned from public performances. During the War this was the case for Jewish, Russian and American composers. After the war it loosened up a bit until Andrei Zhdanov²⁶¹ when social realism took over. Everything became formalistic and formalists were banned. After that we had the “New Music” movement. I used to attend the festival *Warszavska Jesien*. For them

²⁶¹ Andrei Zhdanov (1896 – 1948) was a Soviet Communist Party leader and cultural ideologist. His influence and reputation in the Soviet Union earned him the title “Propagandist-in-chief”.

Stravinsky was already an old-fashioned classic. Nobody was interested in his music anymore. I have heard some absurd music there. But the people were saying: that is magnificent! They were truly fascinated.

Who is in your opinion the greatest composer of the twentieth century?

To me it is Leoš Janáček. He was also a great innovator but he approached it so differently! His level of imagination, creativity, and honesty is terrific.

Among the Czech contemporary composers? That is very hard to define. Everyone likes and writes something else and I am tolerant. The best Czech composer of the second half of the twentieth century I consider to be Klement Slavický. An exceptionally imaginative, ingenious, and down-to-earth composer. What a giant personality! He had his roots in Leoš Janáček. Other composers to mention are Vaclav Trojan, Iša Krejčí, and Jaroslav Křička. Vítězslav Novák, Josef Suk, Josef Bohuslav Foerster remain unsurpassed. If you have a look at the New Music, what does remain? Close to nothing. Nothing has been repeated. But an interesting feature is that the orthodox innovators and radicals of the 1950s like Krzysztof Penderecki, for example, have changed their direction and now they are writing completely differently. They found out that it is a blind road not going anywhere. If there is nothing but calculation, it is utterly wrong.

I used to have close connections with the people who were writing the New Music. We were friends and we talked. Composers such as Marek Kopelent or Zbyněk Vostřák. I remember us listening to some music and I said to Vostřák: "I do not like the piece." And he replied: "But haven't you noticed that there is a canon in inversion? That it is dodecaphonic?" That is how it goes. This music can accommodate lots of fraud. One group of people says: "That is interesting." The other: "It is bad." And the third: "I do not understand it!" And who is, right? They support each other, it is such an international clan.

I believe in ambiguity in music. There are many genres and styles. You can find swell jazz music, operettas, operas, dodecaphonic music. Why force yourself into just one branch to believe that that is the only redemption? It is not even a matter of education, it is rather a matter of emotion. In any genre you can make good or bad music.

Do you agree with the statement that the Czech composers have always conformed to the rather conservative styles which celebrated the best European tradition, at least before 1950s?

Absolutely! The “Pope” of music here was Vítězslav Novák. He was the king and nothing was possible without him. Josef Suk was not that aggressive but Novák was very self-confident and he ruled by a strong hand. There was the whole school that followed him. It is a very interesting fact that many pupils turned away from Janáček by then to follow Novák’s footsteps. Novák never got to understand Janáček. He called him “the fool from Brno.” And he infected his students. His pupil was my teacher Miroslav Krejčí. Once I brought him Janáček’s Violin Sonata for analysis and he told me not to bring such garbage anymore. That certainly was Novák’s influence. Josef Suk was not a great innovator and neither was Foerster. It was a conservative environment. But after Novák’s death there was a new era and everything changed.

How would you describe the relationship between Czechs and the composers who had left the country for various reasons to live and compose as emigrants?

At the moment, the relationship is good. It was mostly difficult for political reasons when people such as Milan Kymlička or Jan Novák emigrated. Even Martinů suffered some repression from the communists. I came across it in person in 1974 when one important bureaucrat removed Martinů from the Almanach of the Czech Music because he was an émigré. These things were commonly happening.

The problem with the recognition and appreciation of the émigré composers is the fact that there are not too many opportunities for them. The competition is high and every composer is also a competitor at the same time.