

Jaroslav Svěcený (8.12.1960)

Born in Hradec Králové, Jaroslav Svěcený is one of the most notable contemporary Czech violinists and a unique personality on the Czech music scene. His solo career began while studying at the Prague Conservatory and the Academy of Performing Arts, where he studied under Prof. František Pospíšil and Prof. Václav Snítíl. His education culminated with masterclasses by the famous international virtuosos Nathan Milstein and Gidon Kremer.

Jaroslav Svěcený is renowned for popularising the violin, and his television, radio, and concert projects attract an audience of all ages.

Jaroslav Svěcený's numerous concert tours and festival performances have taken him across Europe, to the USA, Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Chile, Russia, Turkey, Israel, Egypt, Algiers, Libya, Morocco, Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, India, Pakistan, Indonesia, Thailand, and the Philippines.

To date, Jaroslav Svěcený has recorded 44 albums with works by international and Czech composers, and many of them have been awarded gold or platinum discs. He was the first Czech violinist to record a compact disc for SONY CLASSICAL. In 1996, he was awarded the prestigious *Masaryk Academy of Performing Arts Prize* for creative artistic activity. Since then he has won many other awards, such as the *Golden Plaque of the President of the Republic* in 2010, awarded at Prague Castle by the Head of State. In February 2016, Jaroslav received an award at the *International Music Festival* in Frutillar, Chile.

He is the co-founder of several currently prestigious Czech festivals - the *Smiřice Music Festival*, an Easter festival in Smiřice near Hradec Králové, *Klášterec Musical Springs* at the charming chateau in Klášterec nad Ohří, which also includes international summer studies in violin, *Tones of the Chodov Fort* in Prague, and *Kocian's Ústí* in Ústí nad Orlicí, where his cooperation however, is no longer active. Jaroslav has also become a patron for the *Antonín Bennewitz Festival* in Česká Třebová, and become involved in a new project at a special festival called the *South Bohemian Nové Hrady*, its inauguration having taken place at the end of July and beginning of August this year.

His dramaturgical and organisational experience had been definitively influenced by the year 2006, during which he played the *Bohuslav Martinů violin concerto no. 2* with the BBC Philharmonic at Rudolfinum's Dvořák Hall in Prague for the opening concert of the *Prague Autumn International Music Festival*. The experience he gained abroad was invaluable in developing his concert and festival activities in the Czech Republic.

He has also become active with composition - in February 2013, he premiered his work in New York dedicated to the city's citizens, *Strings for NYC*, and received a letter of appreciation from the then Mayor of New York Michael Bloomberg.

Jaroslav Svěcený is also an acknowledged expert in the history of violin making. His concert project titled *VIOLINO*, presents masterpieces of the art of violin making from important violin makers from the 17th century up to contemporary times, highlighting especially and promoting the superb Czech masters from the 18th to 21st centuries. So far, he has recorded a set of six CDs and one DVD in which he captures the instruments of the very best Czech violin makers in Europe, introducing them through numerous pieces and a richly detailed booklet. In 2009 and to great international acclaim, he held a two-month exhibition of *FAMOUS EUROPEAN VIOLINS* at the Municipal House in Prague. This exhibition included concerts at the Smetana Hall and the *VIOLINO* Classical Music Club, which he also founded. On this occasion he produced *FAMOUS EUROPEAN VIOLINS* as an exclusive Czech-English publication, boasting 140 detailed photographs of four centuries of violin making masterpieces. In 2008, Jaroslav Svěcený was appointed as a string instrument expert and has been increasingly and regularly consulted as an expert internationally.

Charity has also been a long-term and integral part of Jaroslav's artistic endeavours. For 14 years now he has been a patron for *Beneficial Brick*, an organisation helping the mentally handicapped. He cooperates substantially with *Barriers Account* and the *Art of Accompaniment Endowment Fund*, which provides assistance to palliative and mental care institutions, and has recently become a patron for the *Let's Give Children a Chance* public benefit company, supporting education and talented children from children's homes. He has donated his performance proceeds to several fundraisers aimed at helping people affected by natural disasters, the *Anti-Cancer League*, and many other charities.

After twenty-five years, Jaroslav still cooperates with various artists on joint projects, something he regards as extremely important for promoting classical music amongst

younger generations. One of the most significant achievements is the *Vivaldianno* project, which he created together with rock musician Michal Dvořák (from the legendary group *Lucie*) 13 years ago.

He created the prestigious Czech-Slovak concert project *Jaroslav Svěcený/Cigánski diabli*, uniquely combining folk and classical music, and together with the superb accordionist Ladislav Horák conceived the *In the Sign of the Tango* project, where the Nuevo Tango of Astora Piazzolla and his contemporaries are presented.

Following notably in the footsteps of violinist Jaroslav Svěcený is his daughter Julie (4.4.1994), who holds winner of the *International Radio Competition Concertino Praga* in the violin category.