

### **Josef Skarka (Brno, 1983)**

He's been studying at the Academy of Music in Prague since 2003. After obtaining the Bachelor grade under direction of professor Rene Tucek grade he continues studying on the Master degree with professor Miloslav Podskalsky.

His repertoire ranges from Gregorian chant (since 2007 he collaborates with Schola Gregoriana Pragensis), or baroque music (with Collegium 1704, Collegium Marianum, Ars Brunensis Chorus, Roxy Ensemble), to opera (National Theatre in Prague, currently in Puccini's „La Fanciulla del West“ and also as Figaro in „La nozze di Figaro“, J. K. Tyl Theatre in Pilsen, or Donizetti's „Le convenzione ed inconvenzione teatrali“ in F. X. Salda Theatre in Liberec). He is favourite performer of many ensembles and orchestras of classical music. Notably he collaborated with the Prague Orchestra Berg with conductor P. Vrabel, focusing on modern and contemporary music. His successful co-operation with Zlin Philharmonic Orchestra followed with special Christmas concert series.

He performs regularly well-received recitals, often accompanied by the pianist Richard Pohl. One of their first success includes presentation during the International Music Festival Moravian Autumn 2004 or a concert performance at the Festival of Czech Music under the auspices of Sir Charles Mackerras. His most recent success include 2nd prize on the International Singer Competition of Antonin Dvorak in Karlovy Vary, where he received also special award for the performance of Dvorak's Biblical Songs and prize of the Baerenreiter Edition. He performed abroad as Figaro and Papageno (Japan, Germany) and was also invited to present his artistry in Italy and Switzerland.

He specializes on the Lieder repertoire, but also devote himself strongly to the performance of contemporary works, as well as the early music. He is praised by the audience and reviewers for his artistic nobility, charity of style and powerful sense of the expression.

### **Richard Pohl (Ostrava, 1983)**

Richard Pohl has been devoted chamber player and accompanist since his young age; among many prizes he received on that field is the 1st Prize at the C. Ditters von Dittersdorf Chamber Music Contest in Vidnava (CR) or Honorary Award at the International Broadcast Competition Concertino Praga.

Since 2004 he's been studying at the Janacek Academy of Music and Performing Arts in Brno, studying under tutelage of professor Zdenek Hnat, a pupil of H. Neuhaus. Later he studied also with doc. Alena Vlasakova and after getting his Bachelor diploma he entered the Master degree under direction of Jan Jirasky, PhD. He also attended masterclasses with A. Kubalek (Canada), J. G. Jiracek (Austria), S. Vldar, S. Speidel, T. Steinhöfel (Germany), G. Kanev (Bulgaria), P. Sefl and I. Kahanek (CR). Pohl's main interest is the chamber music, especially his collaborations with singers (including M. Zhang, J. Dvorsky, R. Fujii, J. Dolezilkovala or J. Pustina).

In 2002 he established a partnership with one of the most talented singers of his country, the bass-baritone Josef Skarka. They created a duo focusing on performing Art songs, and together took part in such events like the „International Music Festival Moravian Autumn“, the „International Nadia and Lili Boulanger Competition“ (Paris), „The Days of Young Performers“ (Brno), „Bravo Mozart“ (Prague, Olomouc, Jesenik), Czech Music 2004 and many others. Pohl was also appointed as an official accompanist at Frantisek Jilek Music School in Brno. Additionally, he collaborated with the Brno Conservatory, Matl Academic Choir or Sinfonia Chamber Orchestra.

As a participant of the International Kubalek Piano Courses where in 2004 he received a special prize for the best performance of a piece by a Czech composer and in 2006 for the best performance of a Mozart piece. He's been awarded with full scholarship for the International Sommerakademie Prag-Wien-Budapest 2006 and invited to perform at the opening concert of that festival and the orchestral event. He has recorded as both soloists and accompanist for broadcast and on CD.

## **Contact information**

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