

## Introduction

During its eight years of existence, the international colloquy From Folklore to World Music in Náměšť nad Oslavou has gained a regular form, as well as a regular group of people ready to discuss contemporary music with folk roots. Nevertheless, each year brings something special: not only a new theme, but also new speakers and new points of view, plus new topics for the coming year, which emerge from the afternoon round table discussions.

In July 2011, the Náměšť colloquy on folk music, modern folk music, ethnic and world music focused especially on journeys to visions. This topic was intentionally close to the main topic of the Folk Holiday Festival, which was Journeys: Homage to Tenacity. What is the meaning of a journey in the world of music? What is the importance of a person who sets off on an unknown journey following her/his dream? Sometimes even a journey can be the aim; nevertheless, it is the aim which gives the journey its purpose. Musical journeys and travels can be quite personal when a composer lets his or her individuality and creativity flow, they can also be a strong stream within a huge social movement, and finally there is a flow merging, which moves ideas, genres, as well as composers further on. Following a vision often means to turn off a straight way and take rough and blind alleys. Some journeys are finished soon, some take a whole life. The purpose and aim of journeys is fulfilled when the vision is not lost.

The first day of the colloquy (July 26, 2011) revealed that there still was a lot left to be explored by scholars and academics, and that their interpretations would link in an interesting way the past and the present. Some speakers discovered the work of forgotten personalities in the archives and suggested their present day importance. We learned about Czechs and Slovaks who were quite ahead of their times with their opinions on collective and individual creation in folk music, who outlined modern rules of scholarly song editions which are still used these days, or who were ahead of scholarly structuralism ideas, or pioneers in the use of audiovisual technology, who introduced specific dance and stage manifestations, who recorded songs by an overlooked local ethnic minority group, or who were so talented that they could neutralize ideological demands of the period. One of the speakers commented on the hot

topic of the use and misuse of folk heritage: folk culture and its legacy are still available for everybody to use for free. Nevertheless, it must be understood that folk culture can never be personal or group property and it should never be used for personal benefits. At the close of the first day of the colloquy, music composer Miloš Štědroň provided a unique analysis of his own work: his inspiration through folk music stretches not only across the borders of central Europe, but across the history of the modern civilization as well.

The second day of the colloquy (July 27, 2011) gave space to ideas by journalists, music editors, music writers and promoters of music. They commented on new routes within modern folk music, blues, bluegrass, polka, ethnic music and world music, and easily moved from the Czech lands and Slovakia to all possible regions of the world. Despite the region and period touched, it was proved that only strong and morally fit personalities would fulfil their visions.

The present collection brings a written form of the majority of presentations from the colloquy *From Folklore to World Music in Náměšť nad Oslavou*. The picture and sound of the presentations are gone, as well as the discussions which followed. Nevertheless, the texts remain: for pleasure and education, for inspiration, or just for information. Enjoy.