

[translation from Esperanto original]

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Our first symphony, "The Esperanto"

In the Moravian Philharmonic's Reduta Hall in Olomouc, Czech Republic, a concert took place, in collaboration with the Master Musicians Collective of Boston (USA), which presented the Symphony No. 1 ("Esperanto") [of David Gaines]

by Ladislav Lani

The four movements of the symphony for mezzo-soprano and orchestra by the American composer David Gaines uses texts by Ludwig Lazarus Zamenhof, Marjorie Boulton, Penka Papazova, and David Gaines. The soloists were violinist Antonin Hradil from the Czech Republic and the famous American singer Kimball Wheeler (mezzo-soprano). Conductor of the orchestra was Vit Micka.

Before the concert there was a recording of a new compact disc, which will, according to Dr. Gaines, be available in 2001 at all Esperanto shops and book services.

The concert was attended by about 100 listeners, who noticed that through our language it is possible to express all emotions. The symphony is made up of motives gleaned from the composer's travels in Bulgaria, Brazil, and the United States. The concert gave a modern impression; the *maestro* has written a truly serious work, about which we can rightly be proud. At the conclusion, the audience warmly and sincerely applauded the orchestra, the soloists, the conductor, but also the *maestro* David Gaines (who attended the event in person) many times.

The *maestro* David Gaines, an enthusiastic Esperantist, is an internationally renowned composer, holding degrees from the most renowned universities. His interviews and works have been heard on radio stations from the United States to Brazil and acclaimed ensembles have interpreted his compositions, for example the Tokyo String Quartet and the Peabody Wind Ensemble.

The four-movement *Symphony No. 1 ("Esperanto")* for mezzo-soprano and orchestra is dedicated to the composer's parents. The first, solemn movement brings close to us the words of Dr. Zamenhof, through which he inaugurated the 1910 World Congress of Esperanto in Washington, D.C. What mainly radiates from it is admiration for American liberty. The second, faster movement is inspired by the poetry of the British poet Marjorie Boulton, and the third, thought-provoking movement has as its source the verse of Penka Papazova of Bulgaria. The final fourth part, full of alternately humorous and serious scenes, is written to the composer's own text. The work is the first symphony composed with original Esperanto texts.

The soloist Kimball Wheeler began her career by way of a debut with the New York Philharmonic and has sung, for example, at the Rome Opera; in the famous Venetian theater *La Fenice*; in Basel, Vienna, Madrid, Zurich, Lyons, and other cities. Currently she teaches at the California Institute of the Arts.

David Gaines, during his stay in Olomouc, visited (together with the author of this article) the city park, among other places, where there stands an Esperanto monument, as well as Zamenhof Street.