

The Krása Quartet releases its debut album, *Youth*



Youth is the title of the debut album by the **Krása Quartet**, featuring early works by Jewish authors **Hans Krása**, **Erwin Schulhoff** and **Karel Ančerl**. The individual compositions originated between 1914 and 1935, during a period marked by the Great War, its aftermath and the ensuing crisis. Yet, this was also the time when the authors represented on the album could still live their free lives. They studied and worked abroad, had their first successes and were full of youthful energy and conflicting emotions. And this is precisely how the members of the Krása Quartet, who were of a similar age when they started playing together thirteen years ago, wished to represent these authors to their audiences – as young artists unburdened by the tragic events that followed. Their album comprises **Hans Krása's** *String Quartet, Op. 2* from 1921, which was favourably received

upon its premiere performances in Paris and Prague, and his *Theme with Variations* from 1935, which was premiered at the Terezín Ghetto where the composer was deported in 1942. Both compositions are informed by Krása's sense for irony and the grotesque, but also his heightened sentiment. **Erwin Schulhoff's** *Divertimento for String Quartet* is a lighter piece that switches between different styles and moods while pointing us to a Dvorakian joyfulness. **Karel Ančerl**, who later became a world-renowned conductor, features in the album as a young and talented author. While his *Two Student Fugues* were composed in 1914, during his studies at the Prague Conservatory, they have only recently been discovered and are released here in a world premiere.

"We received the first impulse to record this album after our performance marking the tenth anniversary of the quartet in November 2022, when a friend came up to us and asked why we haven't recorded the Krása pieces yet. The proverbial bee in the bonnet got louder after we realized Krása's String Quartet has only been recorded a few times and that none of these recordings were recent. The idea then crystallized after we got access, thanks to Ivan Bierhanzl, to the unique student works of Karel Ančerl, which feature on the album in a world premiere recording," says the quartet's cellist, **Marie Forestová**, adding that, *"Because our quartet family is about to grow, we will release the album in the spring, on 11 April 2026. We chose the date also because it falls on Karel Ančerl's birthday and we look forward to symbolically dedicating the recording to his memory."*

The members of **Krása Quartet** – violinists **Šárka Petříková** and **Jan Palouček**, violist **Daniel Menhart** a cellist **Marie Forestová** – met while studying at the Prague Conservatory and decided in 2012, under the guidance of Tomáš Stražil, to found their own ensemble. Besides quartet classics, such as, for example, works by Ludwig van Beethoven, the ensemble's repertoire encompasses 20th-century music, with special emphasis on works of Hans Krása and other Terezín authors. Last year, by a special concert on the occasion of the International Holocaust Remembrance Day, they commemorated the legacy of Krása and his tragic death in Terezín eighty year ago, while also celebrating the 130th birthday of Erwin Schulhoff. The ensemble has participated in master classes (Pavel Haas Quartet, Hagen Quartet) and appeared at many festivals in Czechia and abroad. Krása Quartet regularly collaborates with foremost instrumentalists, including pianists Jan Bartoš and Marek Kozák, as well as with choirs and dance ensembles. For several years, the quartet performed as part of the



ballet production Vertigo at the National Theatre in Prague. Besides Krása Quartet, **Šárka Petříková** is member of the orchestra of the National Theatre in Prague and with the ensemble NiTrio also dedicates herself to the performance of early music. **Marie Forestová** is first cello of the Czech Chamber Philharmonic Orchestra Pardubice and member of the cello duo Juma.

Album **Youth** was recorded at the Prague studio Domovina in May 2025, in collaboration with the sound master and recording engineer Martin Stupka. The cover design is by Jakub Spurný from Studio Najbrt, the photographs are by Jan Dufek and Ondřej Tylčer. Album **Youth** is released on 5 December 2025, on CD and all streaming platforms. It will be available from the Animal Music e-shop (www.animalmusic.cz) and the usual distribution outlets of Supraphon. The album will be launched at a concert performance on 11 April 2026.

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