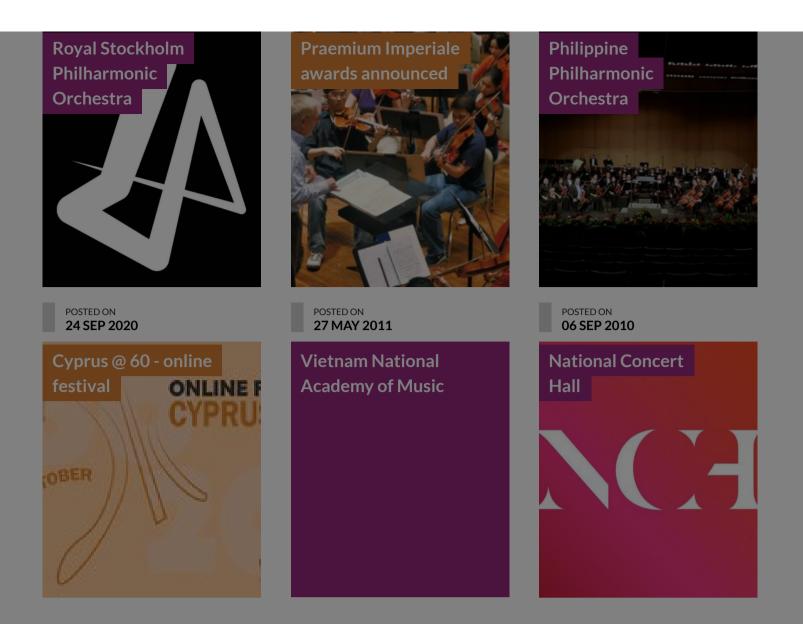


The Prague Spring International Music Festival – Mezinárodní hudební festival Pražské jaro is a permanent showcase for outstanding performing artists, symphony orchestras and chamber music ensembles of the world. The first festival was held in 1946, initiated by Rafael Kubelík, chief conductor of the orchestra at the time. Since 1952, the festival has opened on 12 May – the anniversary of the death of Bedřich Smetana – with his cycle of symphonic poems Má vlast (My Country). The festival commemorates important musical anniversaries by including works of composers concerned on its programmes, and presents **Czech as well as world premieres of compositions by contemporary authors**. Artists and orchestras of the highest quality are invited to perform here as well.

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