



## Artistic director PAVEL HŮLA

The Czech Republic is considered to be a great power in the area of chamber music. The ensemble **PRAGA CAMERATA** follows this tradition and the tradition of the Prague Chamber Soloists ensemble, which was established in 1961 by the principal conductor of the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra Vaclav Neumann. Pavel Hůla, current leader of the Praga Camerata, had been a member of the original ensemble since 1972. In what has been its major characteristic feature, the Praga Camerata membership is now comprised exclusively of outstanding instrumental soloists, chamber musicians, cultivating with the ensemble a repertoire centered around highlights of the world concertante literature from baroque to contemporary music. The orchestra's standard string combination (comprising 14 players) is occasionally enlarged by wind instruments, opening up the way to a broader repertoire.

Praga Camerata appears not only on the major music platforms in its home country, the Czech Republic, but also worldwide. Since 2003 the orchestra has been regularly invited to Japan and participated there e.g. in the very successful „Dvořák Festival 2004“, performed in such famous halls such as the Suntory Hall, Tokio. In 2006 Praga Camerata was invited to tour Spain, France and Germany and performed also in the „Prague Symphony Orchestra Chamber music series“. In 2007 Praga Camerata recorded the first CD for the French label *Praga Digitals*, distributed by Harmonia Mundi, with Schubert's music including the string quartett „Death and the Maiden“ in Mahler's arrangement for string orchestra. This CD was warmly recommended by international music critics. In 2008 the ensemble participated in the prestigious festival “Folle Journée” in Nantes, France, devoted to Schubert's anniversary year. Beside regular concerts in the 2011-12 season, Praga Camerata will perform also in famous halls such as the Tonhalle Zürich, Palau de la Musica in Barcelona or Auditori in Valencia.

**PAVEL HŮLA**, the current artistic director, is a versatile violinist, successfully combining the twin careers of soloist and chamber music player. Since 2010 he has been first violinist of the Pražák Quartet, while from 1975-2010 he was leader of the Kocian Quartet with which he appeared in over 3000 concerts worldwide, and made more than 60 Cds for Denon, Supraphon, Orfeo and Praga Digitals. In 1997 the Kocian Quartet was awarded a Grand Prix du Disque in Paris. Pavel Hůla is professor at the Prague Academy of Music. In connection with his leadership of the Praga Camerata orchestra he is also beginning to conduct.

