



## DVOŘÁK HOUSE MUSEUM EXHIBITION DESIGN BRIEF

### OVERVIEW

We are conducting a tender process to appoint the Exhibition Design team for the transformation of the Antonín Dvořák Birth House at Nelahozeves into a 21<sup>st</sup> century museum.

### THE CLIENT

#### **Lobkowicz Collections, o.p.s.**

The Lobkowicz Collections, o.p.s is a non-profit culture and education organization based in Prague which manages the wide-ranging historic Lobkowicz Collections and runs two art museums housed in historical buildings in Prague (Lobkowicz Palace) and Central Bohemia (Nelahozeves Castle). The Lobkowicz Collections, o.p.s is one of the family of organizations known as the House of Lobkowicz.

In April 2019, the management of the Dvořák Birth House was transferred from the National Museum back to the Lobkowicz family, who have owned the building since 1884 until the confiscations following February 1948, and then again from 1992. The building is now managed by the Lobkowicz Collections, o.p.s, which is actively raising funds to reconstruct and transform this historic site into an international destination and 21<sup>st</sup> century museum.

### THE PROJECT

#### **Dvořák House Museum**

There are several pilgrimage places across the Czech Republic associated with Antonín Dvořák, but arguably none is as important as Nelahozeves, the place where he was born. In this small village, 35 km outside Prague, a young boy developed into the world-famous composer of the New World Symphony, which was even taken on the Apollo 11 mission to the moon. Antonín Dvořák is revered not only in the Czech Republic as the nation's most important composer, but across the world.

The aim of the Lobkowicz Collections, o.p.s. is to transform Dvořák's birth house, which is badly in need of restoration and attention, into a world-class non-profit museum. Reflecting the latest in museum display and technology, the exhibit would orchestrate a journey back to the early life of Dvořák, the son of a tavern-keeper and butcher in the small Bohemian town of Nelahozeves. The exhibition will explore his early musical development and the influences from childhood that were to shape his mature music, leading to some of world's best loved pieces of classical music.

In partnership with the Antonín Dvořák Museum and the Czech Museum of Music in Prague (both part of the National Museum), and with the advice and guidance of leading international experts, the new museum will create a dynamic program of displays and public activities. A new Activity Room will offer regular

workshops for adults and children, while specialist workshops for seniors and talented young musicians will also be part of the Education Program. Music Therapy workshops will also explore the healing power of music. Interactive exhibits, a musical playground and other participatory events will create lively ways for visitors of all ages to engage with the story of Dvořák and his music.

### **A bit of history**

*“Look there at the little village with the long name of Nelahozeves. And there just below the castle of the Prince Lobkowitz, that low building...do you see it? That’s where my father had his inn and at the same time carried on his trade of butcher. It was in that little house that I was born, and in that lovely region that I spent my poor childhood.”*

Antonín Dvořák, cited by Václav Novotný, *With Dvořák in England*, 1911

Antonín Dvořák was born in Nelahozeves in 1841, the oldest of nine children born to Anna and František Dvořák, the village butcher and tavern keeper. Antonín Dvořák spent a great part of his childhood in Nelahozeves. He was baptized in St. Andrews church situated opposite the birth house, received his first music education in Nelahozeves, encountered various kinds of music, and stayed there until 1853 when he moved to nearby village of Zlonice to pursue his education. The Antonín Dvořák Birth House is part of a complex of residential and farm buildings listed in the Central List of Cultural Heritage since 1958 as both a memorable place connected with Dvořák, but also as a valuable example of a historic farmyard with neoclassical details. The main building (No. 12) has Baroque core and served as a village tavern since at least the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Its current appearance is due mainly to substantial reconstruction in the 1830s and by 20<sup>th</sup> century interventions.

The first museum dedicated to the composer was opened in the building No. 12 in 1951, thanks to the Antonín Dvořák Society. Since then, the exhibition has only occupied ground floor of the historical building. Our intention is to double the current exhibition space by making use of the second floor of the historical building as well as the Granary building opposite.

Please see photo documentation enclosed to this document to see the historic main building and interiors in their current state.

### **Project background**

In 2016, the Lobkowitz Collections, o.p.s. commissioned UK architects Wright & Wright to develop a Masterplan for Nelahozeves. The Masterplan created a unified vision and plans for a series of different cultural offers at Nelahozeves. These include: 1) the transformation of the Dvořák House and surrounding buildings into a new museum; 2) a new Library and Study Center building to create research spaces and storage facilities for the Lobkowitz Collections, Library and Archive; and 3) the renovation of Nelahozeves Castle as a potential performance space and conference center.

In 2019, the Lobkowitz Collections, o.p.s. decided to proceed with plans for the new museum at the Dvořák Birth House, and to prepare plans for a major bid for funding from the EEA Fund in 2020. An international project team was appointed to take the project forward:

Project management company:	Atkins & Langford Development s.r.o. (Prague)
Lead designers:	Wright & Wright Architects (London)
Executive architect and engineer:	A40 obnova objektů a měst, spol. s.r.o. (Prague)

As plans for the site developed, international exhibition designers, Ralph Appelbaum Associates International (Berlin) were appointed to develop the Exhibition Concept.

The architectural plans for the new museum include the refurbishment of the historic birth house, including installing a new staircase and elevator to increase public access, as well as refurbishment of the surrounding farm buildings and courtyard. The former Granary or “Butcher’s Shop” is planned as a future Interpretation and Film area, with staff office space; and the former Stable building has been re-designed at the new visitor center. A derelict barn has been redesigned as the future Activity Room for the Education programs. In addition, the architects have proposed reconstructing a former barn that had been destroyed in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century as the museum’s new café and multi-function community space. The plans for the new museum design, plus refurbished and reconstructed buildings were awarded planning and building permit in January 2020. The architects are currently finalizing the Technical Design stage, which is the UK’s RIBA Stage 4 or VF05-07 in the Czech system.

Area of new museum (exhibition space): 357 sq m

Construction budget estimate: 3.5 million Euros

Estimated project completion date: June 2022

### **Exhibition Design Concept**

In January 2019, RAAI were appointed to develop the exhibition design concept, in partnership with the Lobkowicz Collections “Dvořák House Museum Project Team”, and a small group of external advisors and Dvořák specialists. Over 1 year, involving 3 workshops with the Project Team, Advisory Group, and wider stakeholders within the organization, two core principles were established: “The House as Object” and “Music as Object”. The museum concept and design will be centered around the principles that the historic house itself is the main experience, alongside the music itself. Listening to Dvořák’s music should be a core part of the museum experience. The Lobkowicz Collections do not have any holdings associated with Dvořák, and in fact there are very few objects or documents existing associated with this period of his life. For this reason, it was decided that the museum would not attempt to recreate historic environments, but would take a thematic approach, with creative and conceptual solutions to these themes, including the use of new technology.

The Exhibition Designers appointed to take on the next and final stages of this project will be asked to use the Concept Design put together by RAAI as the road map and inspiration for the final exhibition design. However, it is expected that the final designs will also incorporate new thinking and ideas. A link to the RAAI Concept will be given at the short-listing stage.

### **The Brief**

The Lobkowicz Collections would now like to move from Concept Study stage onto detailed designs for the museum, with creative solutions for the presentation of objects and documents, proposals for interactive exhibits and innovative approaches to audio-visual experiences across the museum.

We are looking for a forward-thinking and creative approach to exhibition and museum-making that engages visitors across all age groups. We anticipate that this will be a family experience museum, but we wish to attract a variety of visitors. We would like to combine ambient and personal experiences of music. We want our visitors to have the opportunity to experience music of the highest sound quality, and to have private moments for immersion in the music. We also want this to be a place for the exchange of thoughts and ideas, for collective enjoyment and appreciation. We seek respect for the historic architecture of the building itself and for historical accuracy, while also seeking innovative and creative displays that harness the power of story-telling and the imagination.

We would like to see ideas that include:

- Evocation of life in 1840s and 1850s Nelahozeves
- Historical rooms presented as a reflection and evocation of history but without ‘pastiche’
- A combination of technologies including film, animation, audio, VR, projections, with tablets and / or headsets
- Information texts presented in an informative but engaging manner with diverse formats
- Inventive custom-made display solutions where appropriate
- Interactive and participatory experiences through the museum
- Highest quality listening experiences
- Consideration of all visitors, including the visually impaired and people with disabilities

We are open to applicants with a range of different experience. However, we seek applicants who have the team or network of contacts to manage the whole installation process from design through to delivery and completion. This will include commissioning and delivering all AV content, identifying and working with suppliers for specialist furniture or custom-made displays, vitrines, text and label production, and all other exhibition content.

Fluency in English and Czech languages is desirable for this project.

## **APPLICATION PROCESS & TIMELINE**

### **Stage 1: Expressions of Interest**

In the first stage, we are inviting Expressions of Interest from interested and qualified exhibition designers or architecture practices. This should include:

- A Cover letter stating your reasons for your interest in this project and your qualifications for the job; a brief description of your approach to this project.
- A CV / PDF / website or other documentation to give evidence of your range of experience, including descriptions and illustrations of relevant previous projects.
- Minimum 2 professional references.

These should be sent to: [adela.klinerova@lobkowicz.cz](mailto:adela.klinerova@lobkowicz.cz) by 2 August 2020.

### **Stage 2: Shortlisting**

The Lobkowicz Collections will shortlist preferred candidates during the first week of August 2020. Those selected to go forward will be invited to develop a proposal and presentation for an interview in late September/early October. Shortlisted candidates will be informed by 9 August 2020, and will have 6 weeks to develop their proposals. Further details about the Dvořák House Museum will be provided to the shortlisted candidates, including RAAI Concept Study, architectural plans and photographs, subject to signing a non-disclosure agreement.

**Stage 3: Selection Interviews**

The final interviews will take place during the week of 21 September 2020. Dates TBC. They will take place in Prague, if travel is possible, or via online platforms (Microsoft Teams or Zoom). Decisions will be made and communicated in due course, after the final interviews.

**Project Start Date**

We are looking for a practice that would be ready to start directly after the appointment – at the beginning of October 2020.

**Project Timeline**

We are currently completing Technical Designs for the new museum (July-September) and will be preparing documentation for construction tender in mid-October. Subject to confirmed funding, we expect to start construction in Spring 2021, with a presumed project completion date of June 2022.

We will work with the selected applicant to coordinate the exhibition designs processes with our construction program.

**Prague, 17 July 2020**

**PHOTO DOCUMENTATION**



**The Antonín Dvořák Birth House, Nelahozeves – Exterior.**



**The Antonín Dvořák Birth House, Nelahozeves – Interiors of the main building.**