

PRESS RELEASE

Karel Komárek Family Foundation to buy Czech Petrof pianos rejected by China and distribute them to schools

Prague, 8 September 2020 - **The businessman's Karel Komárek Family Foundation (KKFF) has purchased all the pianos produced by the traditional Czech producer Petrof and rejected by its Chinese customer. The rejection came for fear of sanctions mentioned by the Chinese government officials in connection with Czech Senate President Miloš Vystrčil's visit to Taiwan. The news was confirmed today by Petrof's owner Zuzana Ceralová Petrofová and by Karel Komárek, the co-founder of the Foundation.**

"We decided to buy the pianos as soon as we learnt about the issue. My wife and I agreed that our Foundation would donate them to Czech schools immediately. We would be happy if those eleven instruments became the symbol of Czech pride and cohesion," Karel Komárek, the founder of KKFF, said. "Czechia is a successful and, most of all, free country. It's what I myself appreciate beyond anything else and what I would like to remind our citizens of with this little step," Karel Komárek adds.

"We highly value this generous action, we're happy that our pianos will find their way to Czech schools. I was personally surprised about Karel Komárek's speed and determination with which he decided to make this unplanned trade," Zuzana Ceralová Petrofová, the owner and President of Petrof, said. She says the whole shipment is available in warehouses in Hradec Králové and nothing stands in the way of their distribution. It was ready for export when the customer for the Beijing area wrote to them about rumours in China that the Chinese government wanted to impose sanctions on the Czech Republic and their goods and that the importer had no money to pay fines. It therefore asked for the shipment to be suspended. The suspension of the shipment is very unpleasant for Petrof. "After the complicated year which we have all gone through, such a contract is more than important", Petrofová adds.

KKFF will organize a grant call for schools in the coming days on the basis of which school could apply for the pianos.

Karel Komárek and his wife Štěpánka Komárková are the co-founders of KKFF. In the long run, the Foundation has focused on supporting Czech cultural heritage – the main project in this regard is the Dvořák Prague Music Festival (its 13th year was launched on Friday, 4 September 2020), which goes on even under the current strict hygienic measures. In addition, the Komárek family have paid much attention to the development of the Czech public space, environment and education for a long time – the related projects are organized by the Karel Komárek Proměny Foundation. KKFF supports the US-based John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC, as well as many individuals and groups in the Czech Republic. This spring, KKFF became quickly and strongly engaged in the fight against the pandemic. It paid over twenty million Czech Koruna to 240 organizations who take care of senior citizens.

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