

# **Rediscovering Pavel Haas (1899-1944) and his Four Songs on Chinese Poetry (1944)**

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## **Poster Abstract**

The life of Pavel Haas abruptly ended in October of 1944 at the Auschwitz concentration camp. Behind him he left a legacy of selfless giving. He gave his marriage, musical talent, and eventually his life (Karas, 1985). He started to study music at the age of fourteen, enrolling at the Music School of the Philharmonic Society. Later, he studied for two years in the master class of composer Leoš Janáček (1854–1928), who was Haas's most influential teacher. Haas proved to be Janáček's best student (Frenk, 2013). Eventually he worked his way into being a film and stage composer with the help of his brother. Aside from this, Haas's musical output contains a variety of instrumental and vocal music (Miranda, 2011). The song cycle *Four Songs on Chinese Poetry* is one of his most famous works, written for baritone and piano, will be the main focus of my poster. This work was originally written for a recital, by fellow Terezin Ghetto member Karel Berman, containing the music of some of the great composers: Beethoven, Wolf, and Dvorak (Karas, 1985). I will also provide biographical information about the largely 'forgotten' Haas from before World War II to his death. This will be the first time the piece has been extensively analyzed in English, having been mentioned only in Czech publications; it is instrumental for the understanding of Haas' work. Included will be an in depth look at the poems used and their relationships to the music.