

### Great Conductors of the 20th Century Vol.24 – Vaclav Talich



CD1 1. *Bedrich Smetana - Má vlast Sárka, B113* 9:32 2. *Anton Dvorak - The Water Goblin Op. 107 - Symphonic Poem* 19:30 Josef Suk *Serenade for String Orchestra in E flat, Op.6* 3. *Serenade in E flat Op. 6 I. Andante con moto* 6:06 4. *Serenade in E flat Op. 6 II. Allegro ma non troppo e grazioso* 5:51 5. *Serenade in E flat Op. 6 III. Adagio* 10:18 6. *Serenade in E flat Op. 6 IV. Allegro giocoso, ma non troppo presto* 7:22 7. *Leos Janacek - The Cunning Little Vixen: Suite* 18:48  
Czech Philharmonic Orchestra (1-7) CD2 Georg Benda - *Symphony for String Orchestra in B flat major*  
1. *I. Moderato* 2:51 2. *II. Allegretto* 1:52 3. *III. Allegro vivacissimo* 1:10  
Amadeus Mozart - *Symphony No. 33 in B flat K319*  
4. *I. Allegro assai* 6:04 5. *II. Andante moderato* 5:26 6. *III. Menuetto & Trio* 2:46 7. *IV. Finale (Allegro assai)* 4:23 8. *Tchaikovsky - Suite No.4 in G Op. 61 'Mozartiana' III Preghiera. Andante non tanto* 4:18 9. *Bedrich Smetana - Prague Carnival - Introduction and Polonaise* 5:22  
Antonin Dvorak - *Symphony No. 9 in E minor 'From the New World' B178 (Op. 95)*  
10. *I. Adagio - Allegro molto* 9:12 11. *II. Largo* 12:41 12. *III. Scherzo (Molto vivace)* 8:07  
13. *IV. Allegro con fuoco* 11:21 14. *Vitezslav Novak - Slovak Suite, Op.32 Amorous Couple* 4:05  
Czech Philharmonic Orchestra (1-7, 9-14) Slovak Philharmonic Orchestra (8) Vaclav Talich – conductor

Václav Talich (1883-1961) established himself during the inter-war years as the leading figure in Prague's musical life. At the helm of the Czech Philharmonic for nigh on a quarter of a century, and as the director of the Prague National Theatre for a decade (holding these posts concurrently for five years), he galvanised his musicians to give of their best, gaining for them international acclaim. Tragically, after the liberation of his country in 1945, Talich fell victim to the ruthless politics of the period, was falsely accused of 'unpatriotic conduct' during the German occupation and thrown into jail. Released from prison on the orders of President Benes, he was fully exonerated by the official 'purification' court, but after the Communist coup in February 1948 his arch enemy Zdenek Nejedly, Minister of Education, Science and the Arts,

prevented Talich from appearing before Czech audiences for five bitter years. Talich was, however, allowed to work in Bratislava where he created, in the course of three seasons, the Slovak Philharmonic. Only in 1953, after Nejedly's retirement, could Talich re-enter Czech cultural life as artistic adviser to the Czech Philharmonic. In a triumphant return, matched only in recent times by that of the exiled Rafael Kubelik, he conducted his old orchestra in Smetana's cycle *Má vlast* for the opening concert of the 1954 Prague Spring Festival. Talich received a hero's welcome, but, sadly, his poor state of health, undermined by years of persecution, very soon forced him into retirement. In 1957, around the time of his 74th birthday, he was belatedly honoured with the well-deserved title 'National artist'.

This compilation includes two live broadcasts, made with the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra in 1954, of Dvorák's *The Water Goblin* and of Mozart's *Symphony No.33* (a favourite of the conductor), which are even more impressive than Talich's studio recordings and therefore of particular interest and importance. Talich was chief conductor of the Czech Philharmonic between 1919-1931 and 1933-1941, when he established the orchestra's world-class status, and he returned as guest conductor in 1952 until 1954, during which period he recorded all the works heard in this compilation. The *Benda Symphony* and *Smetana's Prague Carnival* are extremely rare and appear here for the first time on CD. The extract from Tchaikovsky's *Mozartiana Suite* gives the collector the opportunity to hear a 1951 recording made by Talich's 'other' orchestra, the Slovak Philharmonic, which he founded in 1949 when in political exile in Bratislava. --- bayreuthclassical.blogspot.com

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Written by bluesever

Monday, 14 January 2013 17:27 -

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