

Fibich: Overtures - Symphonic poems (1994)

Written by bluesever

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1. Comenius, Festive Overture, op.34 [0:11:07.25] 2. Záboj, Slavoj and Ludék, Symphonic poem, op.37 [0:16:36.00] 3. Toman and the Wood Nymph, Symphonic poem, op.49 [0:12:56.00] 4. The Fall of Arkona, Opera Overture, op.60 [0:12:34.05] Prague Symphony Orchestra Vladimir Valek – conductor

Composer Zdenek Fibich, Dvorák's near contemporary, has until the last few years been known mostly for a large set of piano pieces he wrote toward the end of his life, programmatically depicting in sometimes explicit detail his relationship with a young piano student. Fibich also wrote a good deal of orchestral music.

Fibich was more oriented toward Germany than was Dvorák, but he seems on surer ground with more nationalistic themes: Toman a lesní panna (Tomas and the Wood Nymph), Op. 49, adumbrates the magical realism of Dvorák's later works, and Záboj, Slavoj, and Ludek, Op. 37, based on a story in an old Czech manuscript, is said to have influenced Smetana's *Má vlast*. *Vesna* (Spring), Op. 13, is a short, luminous interlude that could open any symphony concert profitably. The music is uneven, but in truth so is much of Dvorák's output, and these strong performances might cause more listeners to give Fibich's music a second look. --- James Manheim, Rovi

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