

Antonín Dvořák

RODNÝ DŮM ~ BIRTH HOUSE

International Cultural ~ Historical Conference
Nelahozeves · Czech Republic
September 9, 2024



„... I had a yearning to visit my native village of Nelahozeves, where I'd first immersed myself into the beauty of music“

Childhood as an Inspirational Source for the Artist

International Cultural-Historical Conference, Nelahozeves,
September 9, 2024

Compared to other composers of his generation, Antonín Dvořák (1841–1904) came from humble origins. His father, the village butcher and innkeeper, never owned his own business and had to pay annual rent, making life hard at times. But Nelahozeves was ideally situated for a young boy to witness the most important social and economic developments of his time. In 1841, the first steamship on the Vltava River passed by the village. Then, from 1845 to 1851 the railway line between Prague and Dresden was constructed, cutting right through Nelahozeves. The revolutions of 1848 were also closely followed in this community with their consequences having an impact on the young villager's life. Antonín was also fortunate to grow up within a strong musical tradition. While his father was a skilled zither player, he would also profit greatly from the revived cantor tradition.

Extensive research conducted in preparation for the new Dvořák's Birth House exhibition has revealed many new connections from the composer's childhood which would later influence his work to a greater or lesser extent. Given that most scholars mainly follow the creative period of artists' lives, the reopening of this historical monument seems the right opportunity to investigate and present possible insights into the childhood and youth of other artists, even though this knowledge is often very difficult to obtain...



9:30-10:00

Registration of speakers and attendees

10:00-10:15

Welcoming

10:15-11:00

Eleonore Kinsky

Introduction

11:00-11:15

Coffee break

11:15-11:45

Tomáš Slavický

Personal or Collective Memory?

The Sound Landscape of Childhood
and Its Echoes in Dvořák's Late Compositions

11:45-12:15

Ivana Círová Hacmacová, Barbora Števanika Kadlíčková

The Cookbook of Terezie Liehmannová,
Antonín Dvořák's First Love

12:15-14:00

Lunch and guided tour of the Nelahozeves Castle

14:00-14:30

Veronika Vejvodová

Dvořák in Zlonice.

Piano Album by Terezie Liehmannová, 1857-1859

14:30-15:00

Kateřina Viktorová

“He will definitely become a concert player!”

Smetana's Years in Havlíčkův Brod

15:00-15:15

Coffee break

15:15-15:45

Michael Beckerman (online),

Dvořák's American Lullaby and the Idyll of Childhood

16:00

Visit of the Antonín Dvořák Birth House

Eleonore Kinsky

Lobkowicz Collections, o.p.s., Czech Republic

Introduction

After the decision was taken to renovate and create a new museum in the Birth House of Antonín Dvořák in 2019, the question that arose was what themes the new exhibition should touch? The decision to focus on the childhood of the composer was taken very quickly. This opened new points of views on the Dvořák research. At the center of the research was not the composer himself anymore, but rather a child in the mid 19th century in central Bohemia and his social and cultural surroundings. The introduction will present some of the sources that helped to give this interactive exhibition content.

Born in Paris, **Eleonore Kinsky** grew up in Prague and attended the French Lycée. She studied musicology at the Ruprecht Karls Universität Heidelberg where she graduated with a Bachelor thesis with the theme *Jan Hugo Voříšek's Mass and the Beginning of the Early Music Movement* in Vienna and at Kings College London where she completed her studies with a master thesis entitled "*My Prague People Worship Me*": *Mozart and His Prague Public in 1787*. In 2018 she started working for the Lobkowicz Collections as an Assistant Curator. Since 2019 she has focused her research on the childhood of Antonín Dvořák becoming the curator of the new museum in the composer's birth-place.

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Tomáš Slavický

National Museum – Czech Museum of Music, Czech Republic

Personal or Collective Memory? The Sound Landscape of Childhood and Its Echoes in Dvořák's Late Compositions

One of the frequent criticisms of Antonín Dvořák made by his contemporaries concerned his alleged lack of national commitment, or his general lack of originality, his own style and dependence on contemporary utilitarian music. A new look at this (not entirely correctly posed) question is necessary today. It is possible to do so thanks to the research that was carried out to prepare the exhibition in the birth house in Nelahozeves. This paper will attempt to characterise the forms and transformations of folk music during Dvořák's childhood, music cultivated at castles, schools and patron churches. It will also attempt to find echoes of this collective musical memory in Dvořák's later compositions. The object of interest will therefore be primarily the late operas and symphonic poems, i.e. works written at a time when Dvořák was abandoning 'absolute' musical forms and concentrating on dramatic and programmatic music, tied to story and setting. Given his frequent choice of themes from the past or timeless stories, he was fond of using stylizations of an older musical world that was within the reach of memory for contemporary listeners. Attention will also be paid to examples of the stylization of various forms of folk music, as well as the thoughtful portrayal of characters, situations and settings through the use of individual musical instruments, their sound colors and playing styles.

Tomáš Slavický studied musicology at the Charles University in Prague and worked at the Institute of Musicology, later Institute of Ethnology, Czech Academy of Sciences, focusing on the research of the 17th–19th century music history of Czech lands, participating in the interdisciplinary research projects and critical editions. From 2018 he has been working at the National Museum – Czech Museum of Music as a curator and researcher.

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Ivana Círová Hacmacová, Barbora Števkanka Kadlíčková
National Museum – Czech Museum of Music, Czech Republic

The Cookbook of Terezie Liehmannová, Antonín Dvořák's First Love

Antonín Dvořák studied in Zlonice in 1853–1865 with the composer, cantor and musician Antonín Liehmann (1808–1879), who provided him with a thorough foundation of musical knowledge that was crucial for the further development of the young and gifted composer. During this stay, Dvořák met his daughter Terinka (later married as Čapková), who became Antonín's first love. They sang and played music together at school, in church and at various festivities - at first as a piano and violin duo, later as a four-hand piano ensemble. They participated together in performances of Liehmann's compositions and often sang duets together. Dvořák's relationship with Liehmann's daughter is evidenced by a four-verse poem inscribed by the composer's hand in the young girl's album on 7 September 1858, and by a congratulatory note - a colourful printed card edged with lace dated 26 July 1860, presented to Terinka during a visit to Zlonice. The composer was happy to return here repeatedly, and Zlonice inspired him during the creation of his opera *Jakobín*.

An interesting insight into this chapter of Dvořák's youth is offered by Terezie Liehmannová's cookbook, which is preserved in the collection of the Antonín Dvořák Museum (National Museum – Czech Museum of Music). The conference paper will present this manuscript, written in German and Czech, which on 189 pages contains a total of 344 different recipes from desserts to meat dishes, reflecting the cuisine of the time and bringing closer the customs and reality of dining around the second half of the 19th century. Using a few selected recipes as examples, it will show the differences between the lifestyles of that time and today, the availability of ingredients, period measurements and weights, and also Antonín Dvořák's favourite dishes.

Ivana Círová Hacmacová works at the National Museum – Czech Museum of Music as curator of the collection of photographs and three-dimensional objects in the Antonín Dvořák Museum. Previously, she worked at the National Museum – Náprstek Museum of Asian, African and American Cultures and in the collection department of the Jewish Museum in Prague. She graduated in historical sciences at the Faculty of Arts at the Masaryk University in Brno, majoring in museology.

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Barbora Števkanka Kadlíčková studied violin at the Janáček Conservatory in Ostrava (2008–2014). She then continued with musicology studies at musicology at the Faculty of Arts at the Masaryk University in Brno, where she is currently pursuing her Ph.D. programme. She worked as a guide at the Leoš Janáček Memorial and as a curator at the Department of History of Music at the Moravian Museum in Brno (2019–2022). Since 2022 she has been a curator at the Antonín Dvořák Museum (National Museum – Czech Museum of Music, Czech Republic).

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Veronika Vejvodová

National Museum – Czech Museum of Music, Czech Republic

Dvořák in Zlonice.

Piano Album by Terezie Liehmannová, 1857–1859

The compositional and pedagogical legacy of Antonín Liehmann (1808–1879), Dvořák's teacher in Zlonice, still awaits a comprehensive treatment. Music autographs and copies preserved in the Music History Department of the Czech Museum of Music (National Museum of the Czech Republic) and in the Antonín Dvořák Memorial in Zlonice document not only Liehmann's compositional and arranging activities, but also, in part, his pedagogical methods. They present the music production and versatile activities of the cantor of the second half of the 19th century, with whom the composer Antonín Dvořák studied between 1853–55. The paper will focus on a musical source stored in the Antonín Dvořák Memorial in Zlonice, which is entitled: "Piano Forte et Gesang Buch der Theresia Liehmann a Zlonitz Nr. 19". Liehmann dedicated this album, which he created between 1857 and 1859, to his daughter Terezie, who studied music together with Antonín. Although the album was not begun until two years after Dvořák's departure for organ school in Prague, it is a testament to Liehmann's piano teaching and composing activities, which certainly had an influence on young Dvořák. Moreover, Antonín always visited Zlonice during his holidays and maintained intensive contact with his teacher and his daughter during the early years of his Prague stay. Terezie Liehmannová's album also gives us an insight into the popular entertainment and sacred music repertoire of the Zlonice estate of the period.

Veronika Vejvodová studied musicology and history at Masaryk University in Brno, where she also earned her doctorate with the thesis *Dvořák's Last Opera Armida, Op. 115: Genesis and Reception*. After her studies she worked as a curator of the Janáček Archive in the Department of Music History at the Moravian Museum in Brno and since

2013 as a curator and later as the head of the Antonín Dvořák Museum – Czech Museum of Music in Prague. She is the author of editions of works by Leoš Janáček and Antonín Dvořák (for Bärenreiter Verlag). She has participated in projects of processing the online catalogue of Janáček's speech melodies and Janáček's correspondence. Together with Kateřina Nová she published the recollections on Dvořák by Josef J. Kovařík, composer's collaborator "Three Years with the Maestro: An American Remembers Antonín Dvořák" (2016). She is the author of the online catalogue of Dvořák's correspondence (www.antonindvorak.nm.cz) and of catalogues for the exhibitions "Famous Czech Composers" (2020) and "Antonín Dvořák: My Life and Work" (2023), an exhibit prepared on the occasion of the inscription of the Archive of Antonín Dvořák to the UNESCO International Memory of the World Register.

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Kateřina Viktorová

National Museum – Bedřich Smetana Museum, Czech Republic

"He will definitely become a concert player!"

Smetana's Years in Havlíčkův Brod

During his childhood and youth Smetana got to know the environment of several towns. He was born in Litomyšl into a music-loving family. His father, a brewer and enthusiastic amateur musician, passed on his love of music to his son from his early childhood and cultivated music together with him. Bedřich's musical talent was obvious from the very beginning. The family often moved. Smetana lived in Jindřichův Hradec, Růžkovy Lhotice and Jihlava. In 1836, the then twelve-year-old Bedřich transferred from Jihlava to the grammar school in Německý (nowadays Havlíčkův) Brod, where he spent three years. These years brought young Smetana many new stimuli. At the grammar school he met teachers who had understanding for his musical interests.

It was primarily Smetana's class professor Karel Josef Šindelář, who developed his interest in music and thanks to whom Smetana became acquainted with new compositions, and who allegedly pronounced the following prophetic words about Smetana: "Aus dem wird gewiss Concertist werden!" Last but not least Smetana established a number of friendships with equally music-loving classmates, especially František Buttula, František Kostka, Vilém Vlček and Karel Havlíček Borovský. The contribution emphasizes Smetana's years in Havlíčkův Brod until his departure to Prague in 1839. Attention will also be paid to the cultural and musical life of the city and its possible influence on young Smetana.

Musicologist **Kateřina Viktorová** is the curator of the National Museum in Prague (specifically, curator of the scenography fund and of the non-musical manuscripts and prints collection in the Bedřich Smetana Museum). She holds a doctorate from Masaryk University in Brno and completed a study internship at Université Paris-Sorbonne, musique et musicologie. In her current scientific research, she focuses on the reception studies of Smetana's operas abroad and on scenography for Smetana's operas. She is the author of several exhibitions, and at the same time works as an editor of opera evenings at the Czech Radio. She worked as an opera dramaturge, editor of the project "The Met: Live in HD" in the Czech Republic, and music reviewer.

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Michael Beckerman

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Dvořák's American Lullaby and the Idyll of Childhood

No national tradition is richer in lullabies than the Czech one. From Michna's "Chtíc aby spal," and dozens of Christmas lullabies to the "Terezin Ukolébavka" of Gideon Klein, and from Smetana's "Hajej, můj andílku," to Suk's Op.33, a plethora of compositions use the lullaby to reflect on such themes as childhood, sleep, and even death. Dvořák was an important contributor to this tradition, most notably in the role that the lullaby plays in *Jakobín* where it is sonically and conceptually at the very core of the opera; and there are several lullabies scattered among his vocal and instrumental works. This presentation focuses on a fascinating and enigmatic composition from 1894 titled *Ukolébavka* (B.188). In my "New Worlds of Dvořák", written thirty years ago, I suggested that the piece was inspired, like many other works of the period, by Longfellow's *The Song of Hiawatha*. While this theme will be revisited, I will also try to suggest that this small composition gives us some special insight into Dvořák's conception of childhood as an idyllic moment. Finally, when you Google "Dvořák and Lullaby" one of the first things to pop up is the Largo from the "New World" Symphony. Is the Largo actually a lullaby?

Michael Beckerman is Carroll and Milton Petrie Professor of Music at NYU. He has written books and articles on topics related to Czech and Eastern European music, as well as studies of music in the camps, Romani music, film music, and articles about Mozart, Schubert, Brahms, and others. He has just completed "The Doctrine of One", about the uniqueness of individual responses to artworks, and is currently writing a paper, "Smetana and the Hussites," in honor of Lenka Hlávková. This year he will be teaching a new course on Music and Disability in memory of Brooke Ellison, and co-authoring a book with Aleš Březina titled "Martinů and His World".

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