

Considered a lesser-known gem of the operatic repertoire, Smetana's *Dvě vdovy* ('The Two Widows') is set in a Bohemian country estate in which the contrasting personalities of recently widowed cousins Karolína and Anežka are tested by the attentions of gentleman-farmer Ladislav. Smetana's expert theatrical craftsmanship seamlessly blends Czech dances and choruses with beautiful cavatina-like solos. With the humane warmth of its chamber-like comedy and deftly transparent orchestration, Smetana created a style of conversational opera in *The Two Widows* that was much admired by Richard Strauss.

Bedřich
SMETANA
(1824–1884)

Dvě vdovy
(‘The Two Widows’)

Comic opera in two acts (1873–74, rev. 1877)

Libretto by Emanuel František Züngel (1840–1894)

Karolína	Adriana Kučerová, Soprano
Anežka	Kateřina Kněžíková, Soprano
Ladislav	Pavol Breslik, Tenor
Mumlal	Adam Plachetka, Bass-baritone
Lidunka	Jana Sibera, Soprano
Toník	Petr Nekoranec, Tenor

Prague National Theatre Chorus

(Pavel Vaněk, Chorus master)

Prague Radio Symphony Orchestra • Robert Jindra

A detailed track list can be found inside the booklet.

The Czech libretto and an English translation can be accessed at www.naxos.com/libretti/660609.htm

Recorded: 24–27 and 29–31 August, 1 and 3 September 2023 at Studio S1, Czech Radio, Prague, Czech Republic

Producer: Markéta Janáčková (Czech Radio) • Engineer: Rostislav Supa

Booklet notes: Eliška Šedivá (Czech Radio) • Score courtesy of the National Theatre, Prague

Cover: *The Sisters* (1869) by Berthe Morisot (1841–1895)

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