Janáček

Jenůfa

Rafael Kubelík

mpLIVE

Leoš Janáček 1854–1928

Jenůfa

Libretto by the composer, after Gabriela Preissová's play

Sung in an English translation by Vida Harford

Jenůfa	**Gré Brouwenstijn**
Kostelnička	**Mary Jarred**
Števa	**Raymond Nilsson**
Laca	**John Lanigan**
Grandmother Buryakova	**Doris Doree**
Foreman of the mill	**Arnold Matters**
Barena	**Olivia Rossi**
The Magistrate	**Edmund Donlevy**
His wife	**Elsie Boardman**
Karolka	**Marion Davies**
A maid	**Mildred Watson**
Jano	**Beryl Hatt**
The Aunt	**Irene Brightman**

The BBC Opera Chorus *chorus master* Alan G. Melville

BBC Opera Orchestra *leader* John Sharpe

Rafael Kubelík

Recorded at the BBC Studios, 19 May 1951

mpLIVE

Janáček Jenůfa

Rafael Kubelík LM7407

CD 1 **79’42**

Act 1

1	How the twilight deepens (*Jenůfa*)	11’23
2	What might that be Laca? (*Foreman of the mill*)	4’47
3	Come now Jenufa (*Grandmother Buryja*)	2’01
4	Števa! (*Jenůfa*)	8’28
5	Števa, Števa, I know what happened (*Jenůfa*)	5’30
6	Suddenly there stood a wonderful Steva (*Laca*)	4’17

Act 2

7	Introduction	1’26
8	I’ll just let the little door stand open a while (*Kostelnička*)	6’50
9	But, in only twenty weeks gone by (*Kostelnička*)	1’53
10	Dear Aunt Kostelnička, you have sent this note to me (*Števa*)	6’16
11	Mother dear… (*Jenůfa*)	4’40
12	One moment…one moment (*Kostelnička*)	3’49
13	Mamma, my head is aching (*Jenůfa*)	8’59
14	My child dead (*Jenůfa*)	2’31
15	But now Steva (*Jenůfa*)	6’43

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Act 3

1	Introduction…Are you an anxious Jenůfa? (*A peasant*)	2’32
2	God be with you (*The Mayor*)	3’33
3	There now Laca (*Jenůfa*)	3’23
4	What now, they’re here (*Laca*)	5’04
5	Take now my blessing (*Grandmother Buryja*)	3’21
6	Now listen to me(*Kostelnička*)	2’44
7	Do not kneel, dearest mother (*Jenůfa*)	3’26
8	There they go (*Jenůfa*)	3’25
9	Back announcement	0’11

Transferred from acetates in the Harewood Collection

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Synopsis

Alison Latham

When the Widow Klemeň married the elder son of Grandmother Buryjovka, she gave him control of her mill. This effectively disinherited her son by her first marriage, Laca Klemeň . In due course the son of her second marriage, Števa Buryja, inherited the mill; now Laca has to work as a hired labourer at his half-brother's business.

Grandmother Buryjovka, who lives at the mill as housekeeper, had a second son, Tomás, who also married twice. He had a daughter, Jenůfa, by his first marriage. After his first wife's death Tomás married Petrona Slomková, the Kostelnička (village sacristan). The marriage was unhappy: Tomás wasted her money, was a drunkard and often beat her. Since his death the Kostelnička has cared for and brought up Tomás's daughter Jenůfa. The girl works at the mill, hoping to marry Števa, by whom she is pregnant.

FAMILY TREE

Grandmother Buryjovka

Widow Klemeň = Elder son

Unnamed woman = Tomás Buryja = **Petrona Slomková** (**Kostelnička**)

Laca Klemeň **Števa Buryja** **Jenůfa**

ACT I

Autumn

Jenůfa is anxiously awaiting Števa's return from the annual conscription ceremony. If he is drafted into the army Jenůfa will not be able to marry him and she will be disgraced when people discover that she is pregnant with his child. Laca, jealous of his half-brother's wealth and his relationship with Jenůfa, speaks bitterly to Grandmother Buryjovka of the way she favoured Števa when they were boys. Jenůfa chides him for talking to the old woman with such disrespect. Laca notices Jenůfa's nervousness about Števa's future.

Jano, a shepherd boy, excitedly tells Jenůfa that he can now read, thanks to her teaching. Grandmother Buryjovka says that Jenůfa has a man's brain like her stepmother; Jenůfa replies that her brain has long since gone to waste. While the Foreman sharpens Laca's knife, Laca torments Jenůfa about her love for Števa. The Foreman announces that Števa has not, after all, been conscripted. Jenůfa is overjoyed but Laca is angry.

Števa, drunk, arrives with the villagers who have been recruited. Jenůfa reproaches him for his drunkenness, which provokes him into boasting that all the girls are attracted to him. He shows off with his money, demands to hear Jenůfa's favourite song and leads the dancing.

The Kostelnička arrives and silences the raucous party. She considers Števa a typical member of the Buryja family and forbids Jenůfa to marry him for a year, during which he must remain sober. Laca is delighted and tries to flatter the Kostelnička, who then leaves. Grandmother Buryjovka sends the musicians away, tells Števa to go and sleep and tries to comfort Jenůfa.

Jenůfa begs Števa to behave himself so that they can marry before her pregnancy

is revealed. Števa reacts angrily and continues boasting of his conquests. Jenůfa tells him that she will kill herself if he abandons her. Števa reassures her that he will not let her down and admires her rosy cheeks. Grandmother Buryjovka takes him off to bed.

Laca mocks Jenůfa about Števa's boasting but she replies that she is proud her lover is attractive to others. Laca takes out the knife the Foreman sharpened. He wonders how Števa would feel if the rosy cheeks he so admires were spoilt. Suddenly Laca slashes Jenůfa's face. Horrified at what he has done, he tries to tell her that he has always loved her. In the confusion that follows, the servant girl Barena tries to explain the incident as an accident. But the Foreman calls for help and says Laca cut Jenůfa deliberately.

ACT II

Winter

The Kostelnička discovered Jenůfa's pregnancy and hid her away at her cottage, where, eight days ago, her son was born. Jenůfa is still weak and anxious. The Kostelnička tells her that instead of worrying about the baby (also called Števa) she should be praying to God to let the child die. She sends Jenůfa to bed.

Alone, the Kostelnička admits that she hates the baby, just as she hates its father, and has prayed it would not live. Now she will have to beg Števa to marry Jenůfa. She is prepared to humiliate herself and has summoned Števa to her house. Števa arrives. He had thought Jenůfa had gone to Vienna, but now learns from the Kostelnička that Jenůfa is there and that the baby has been born. The Kostelnička pleads with him to acknowledge his son and marry Jenůfa. But Števa can no longer love Jenůfa after seeing her scarred cheek. He is frightened of the Kostelnička, who seems to him like a horrible witch. He tells her he is going to marry Karolka, the mayor's daughter, offers money and hurriedly leaves. Jenůfa cries out in her sleep.

The Kostelnička is enraged and wishes she could kill the child and throw it at its father's feet.

Laca arrives, having seen Števa leave, and wants to know if Jenůfa is back (he, too, believed her to be in Vienna); the Kostelnička tells him that Jenůfa did not see Števa. Laca asks permission to marry Jenůfa. The Kostelnička now tells him the truth. Laca is dismayed at the prospect of having to take on Števa's son, so the Kostelnička, fearing that he will now not want to marry Jenůfa, tells him the child has died and that Števa knows. She sends Laca to find out when Števa is to marry Karolka.

The Kostelnička wrestles with her conscience: by killing the baby she will give Jenůfa back her life, and God will understand. Jenůfa wakes from her drugged sleep and wonders where her stepmother and baby are. She wishes Števa would come and see their child, and she imagines she can hear the baby crying. She concludes that the Kostelnička must have taken him to the Buryja mill to show him to everyone. Calmed by this, she offers a prayer to the Virgin Mary.

The Kostelnička returns and Jenůfa asks where her son is. The Kostelnička tells her that she has been delirious for two days and her son is dead. Jenůfa accepts this with resignation, remembering that the Kostelnička had said this would be for the best. The Kostelnička tells her of Števa's visit and his proposed marriage to Karolka, and says she should look kindly on Laca.

Laca arrives and asks Jenůfa to marry him, dismissing her doubts as to her worthiness. The Kostelnička blesses them and curses Števa and his planned marriage. But she is frightened when she hears sighing noises: it is as though death were looking into the house.

ACT III

Spring

Preparations are underway for the wedding of Jenůfa and Laca. The mayor and his wife arrive and notice how ill the Kostelnička seems. They discuss Jenůfa's trousseau.

Jenůfa thanks Laca for standing by her and he tells her that he will spend the rest of his life making up for the harm he has done her. Števa and Karolka arrive to wish the couple well and Jenůfa tells Števa that she has finally found real love. The stepbrothers seem to be reconciled. As the guests gather, the girls sing a wedding song to Jenůfa. Everyone is preparing to leave for the church and Grandmother Buryjovka gives her blessing to the couple. Voices are heard. Jano tells the mayor that he is wanted: workmen from the brewery sent to cut ice from the stream have found the body of a child.

Jenůfa realizes that the dead child is hers. The people assume that she killed the baby and cry out that she should be punished. Laca holds them off, but the Kostelnička silences them with her confession: it was she who killed the child, and she explains why.

Karolka is horrified to learn of Števa's child. Laca blames himself, seeing this tragic event as a consequence of his scarring of Jenůfa. She, however, begins to understand the motives behind the Kostelnička's terrible deed. When the Kostelnička asks Jenůfa's forgiveness, she grants it. The Kostelnička is led off to stand trial.

Alone with Laca, Jenůfa tells him he must leave her: he cannot possibly want her now. She says he should remember that she forgave him long ago for cutting her face, an act provoked by his love. Laca pleads with her: the world's scorn means nothing if they can offer each other comfort. Jenůfa gladly accepts his love.

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Jenůfa

Stephen Jay-Taylor

Leoš Janáček was born in Moravia, part of the Czech lands under Austro-Hungarian control, in 1854 – the same year as Alfredo Catalani and Oscar Wilde, and six years before the Bohemian-born Gustav Mahler – in the small town of Hukvaldy. His schoolmaster father was keen for his son – one of ten children – to pursue a similarly academic career, and though the young Leoš showed early musical aptitude, he nevertheless completed a conventional education and at the age of 15 attended the Teaching Training Institute in Brno, Moravia's provincial capital, for the full three-year course. Aged 18, he graduated and became the choirmaster of his local monastery. Two years later, he finally arrived in Prague, the capital of Bohemia and the Czech Estates, to study both keyboard and composition at the Organ School. In what was a recurrent pattern throughout Janáček's life, he took badly to all forms of authority, in particular pedagogy – which perhaps tells us something about the relationship with his father – and wrote so critical a review of his teacher's organ playing that he was expelled within the year, though eventually readmitted in order to sit his exams, which he duly passed first class.

Back in Brno in 1876, he began teaching music at the Teacher Training Institute, and by the time he was studying some three years later at the Leipzig Conservatory for a desultory and tempestuous four months – as usual rowing with his teachers – he had already conceived an alarming passion for the director of the Brno Institute's 14-year old daughter, whom he bombarded with love letters from both Leipzig and subsequently Vienna, where he spent a no-less fraught three-month term in1880. Newly appointed to the Directorship of the Brno Organ School, Janáček married Zdenka Schulzová in 1881 when he was 25 and she was still 15; and their only daughter, Olga, was born the following year. No sooner had this happened than Janáček moved out of the family home, unable and temperamentally

unwilling to cope with the strains of domesticity, though two years later, in 1884, he moved back in, and soon founded a musical review *Hudební listy* of which he was the senior critic. And it was at exactly this point in his career – the mid 1880s – when the evidently late-starting Janáček began, tentatively at first, to dip his toes into compositional waters, that he unfortunately sowed the seeds of his own future frustrations by writing a scathing review of the Brno premiere of Karel Kovařovic's opera *The Bridegrooms*, describing its music as variously deafening and ill-matched to its libretto. This, alas, would be the same Karel Kovařovic who in 1900 assumed the Musical Directorship of the National Theatre in Prague, and who would spend 12 years keeping Janáček's *Jenůfa* off his theatre's boards in covert retaliation.

Janáček began work on his first opera, *Šárka*, in 1887, the very year of *The Bridegroom's* debut, and though this brought him into advisory contact with Dvořak, legal wrangling over rights to the libretto caused the completed project to be shelved. The life-long Russophile Janáček was overjoyed the following year when Zdenka gave birth to a son he named Vladimir (such was the composer's loathing of the German cultural élite which ruled his country that he refused to board Brno's buses, whose tickets and maps were printed in the language). The joy was short-lived. Zdenka fell ill and was unable to breast-feed the boy, the pathologically parsimonious composer refused to pay for a wet-nurse, and so Vladimir's sickly life stuttered on for two more years until he died of meningitis in 1890, dealing an irreparable blow to an already ailing marriage. It was in the following year that the composer saw the 28-year old Gabriela Preissová's highly controversial new play, *Její pastorkyňa – Her Stepdaughter*, and to this day the opera *Jenůfa*'s actual title in the Czech language – in Brno, though his initial response, possibly bearing in mind the central subject of child-murder and redemption through forgiveness, was to turn his attentions to another of Preissová's works instead, and compose *The Beginnings of a Romance*, an unexpectedly cheery number-opera very much in folksy Smetana mould derived from the author's series of short stories, *Scenes from Moravian Life*.

Janáček was well advanced in composing it when the cultural bombshell that was *Cavalleria rusticana* went off, creating a sensation at its Brno premiere in 1891, and alerting any ambitious composer that a new operatic aesthetic – *verismo* – had arrived (Wagner, being part of the despised German musical establishment, barely featured in Janáček's musical reckonings). No less important for the formation of Janáček's mature operatic style was his discovery in Brno, in the same year, of Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*, a work which impressed him for the naturalness of its rhythmic structures and its close mirroring, in Janáček's view, of the cadences of normal speech (for all that Tchaikovsky's work, like Pushkin's original text, is in verse).

By the time *The Beginnings of a Romance* premiered in Brno in 1894, Janáček was well aware that opera's goal-posts had moved substantially and that Czech composers were now drawing on their own immediate store of Zola-influenced low-life tragic dramas for their operas, not least Josef Foerster's *Eva* – based on Preissová's previous play *The Farmer's Wife* – which had successfully premiered the year before (and Foerster, irritatingly, was not only five years younger than Janáček and from Bohemia, but happily married to a star soprano). With what must have seemed like the weight of historical inevitability descending upon him, Janáček set to work in 1894 on adapting the text of *Její pastorkyňa* and by the end of the year had composed the original – later suppressed – overture known as *Jealousy* and then subsequently embarked upon Act I, which was only finished some two years later. It was in 1896 that Janáček's Russophilia blossomed: following the to-him revelatory local premiere of *The Queen of Spades* (a musical echo of which can be detected in Act 2 of *Jenůfa*) the composer finally undertook his inaugural visit to St. Petersburg, ostensibly to visit his brother František and the All-Russia Industrial and Art Exhibition in Nizhny Novgorod, but which in reality he regarded as his spiritual homecoming and liberation from slavery. Characteristically, following his return from Russia, in 1897 he founded a rabidly anti-Austro-German society called the 'Russian Circle' which was eventually banned by the police.

Though *Jenůfa*'s compositional chronology is not entirely clear, it seems that work on the opera came to an extended halt after the completion of the first act, perhaps for as long as five years, while Janáček, burdened with official commitments in his capacities as teacher, organist and choirmaster, set about collecting his orchestral arrangements of Moravian folk material for publication, and writing an oddly Dvořakian, spooky Gothic cantata, *Amarus*. Though he never said as much in his autobiography, there is a sense that the long lay-off in *Jenůfa*'s genesis was occasioned by a realisation on Janáček's part that his musical idiom, hitherto melodically conventional enough and dictated in vocal music by the strict forms of balanced verse structures, needed a complete rethink if justice was to be done to the bleakly intense, broodingly claustrophobic second act of the opera. Work on *Jenůfa* only resumed in the new century, and we know that Janáček was still working on the second act in mid-1902.

Unhappily, that year was notable for other reasons. The Janáčeks' 20-year-old daughter Olga had been involved in a fraught affair with a student who had turned out to have criminal leanings and was threatening her life, so the composer decided to spirit her away to St. Petersburg, where she could continue her studies – of Russian, naturally – under the watchful eye of František. But three months later Janáček was compelled to return since the always-sickly girl had contracted typhoid, and was too frail to return home to Brno unaccompanied. As the composer wrote the great swelling double-curve of forgiveness that concludes *Jenůfa*'s Act III in February 1903, Olga lay mortally ill, and only outlived the double-bar line by four days. Zdenka blamed her husband for the events that had now robbed her of both her children, while he himself arranged to have a copy of the opera's manuscript buried in his daughter's coffin, and for the work to be dedicated to her. In his later autobiography, he wrote that for him, the score was bound with a black ribbon of the long illness, pain and sighs of Olga and Vladimir.

Immediately the opera was completed, Janáček submitted it to the National Theatre in Prague for performance, only to meet with a summary rebuff in April. Though he would sporadically continue to beat his head against that particular Vltava-facing brick wall on a number of subsequent occasions, in the short term he reconciled himself to settling for a purely local premiere in the Brno National Theatre, a grand name for what was in reality a converted café-cum-dance hall with a pit band of no more than 30. *Jenůfa* – or, more accurately, *Její pastorkyňa* – was first performed on 21 January 1904, conducted by Cyril Metoděj, and scored a notable success, though not one that impressed anybody in Prague sufficiently to lead to any reconsideration. The opening-night Brno programme contained a preface – authorship unattributed, though perhaps by Janáček himself – which tackled head-on the work's likeliest barriers to instant musical appreciation. It pointed out that, exceptionally, the opera was set in prose, not verse (though Alfred Bruneau's *Messidor* could lay claim to being the first all-prose opera to reach the stage – in 1897 – *Jenůfa*'s overall conception and the composition of at least Act I predated it) and that the truest expression of the soul rested with short melodic motifs of speech, which therefore replaced the conventional, verse-set arias with free-flowing, asymmetrical arioso, the whole characterised by authentically Moravian folk melody.

Jenůfa toured the provinces, and was revived in Brno later in 1904, and then again in both 1905 and 1906, albeit only for solitary performances. In 1907, with the possibility of a published vocal score acting as a spur, Janáček revised the opera, cutting the Kostelnička's explanation of her hostility towards Števa, the object of *Jenůfa*'s affections, in Act I and generally pruning ruthlessly elsewhere, particularly ensembles, in which format the work was printed in 1908. Subsequent performances in Brno in 1911 and 1913 led to renewed pressure on the artistic administration in Prague to mount the work.

In 1915 Marie Calma-Veselá, who had latterly taken on the role of the Kostelnička, called in a number of old favours with well-connected friends to bully the unyielding Kovařovic into submission. Janáček himself had turned 60 but was still effectively unknown as a composer on the wider international stage, while Kovařovic was clearly in need of some face-saving exit strategy if his sudden acquiescence after 12 years' obduracy was to carry any credibility as a purely musical judgement. Kovařovic therefore made it a condition that he himself should supervise a revision of the work, which entailed numerous small-scale cuts and a complete reorchestration of the score to bring it into conformity with the general musical *lingua franca* of late Romantic, well-upholstered sonority.

Janáček bitterly resented this intervention – and complained to anybody who would listen – but, faced with the reality of the situation, was forced humiliatingly to acquiesce. It is just as well that he did. The premiere in Prague of *Jenůfa* on 26 May 1916 not only marked the turning-point in his acceptance as a significant composer, but also furnished the circumstances that brought him into contact with Kamila Stösslová, the 26-year-old wife of a Prague-based antique dealer. His infatuation with her, which would last for the remaining 12 years of his life, fuelled a remarkable Indian summer of creativity that saw the composition of *Katya Kabanova*, *The Cunning Little Vixen*, *The Makropoulos Case*, *From the House of the Dead*, the Glagolitic Mass and the Sinfonietta.

Jenůfa was steadily taken up elsewhere, principally in Vienna in 1918 and Berlin in 1924 (under Erich Kleiber) in a German translation by Max Brod: and this effectively became the opera's new language as it made its way around the world, including a scandalised New York Metropolitan – with Maria Jeritza, in 1924 – which branded the work as 'filthy' and promptly ignored it for the next 50 years. London first saw the work at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden in 1956 –

sung in English, as it was there until 1986 – while Paris had to wait until 1980 to see the opera staged at all, but at least then had the satisfaction of being the first to hear Sir Charles Mackerras's careful reconstruction of Janáček's revised 1908 score, something which no performance of *Jenůfa* given after Kovařovic's tinkerings in 1916 had ever presented. Covent Garden only premiered this restoration in 2001, conducted by Bernard Haitink.

It is perhaps worth mentioning how very different from the operatic mainstream of contemporaneous composers Janáček's score actually sounds, even in the interfered-with version we have here. Though influences have been signified above – and there are others, as when the orchestral cry of pain that accompanies Rodolfo's discovery of Mimi's death at the end of *La bohème* suddenly turns up note-for-note in *Jenůfa* Act III – the fact is that with this opera Janáček finds his voice, and utterly unique it is too, not sounding remotely like cosmopolitan, Brahmsian Dvořak, nor even the more specifically Czech Smetana, much less like anybody else then currently active, least of all Strauss and Mahler. Much of this has to do with Janáček's creatively subsumed years of study of folk music, and the volumes of notebooks he filled with scraps of notation of virtually everything auditory, including laughs, sighs and screams. There is also his passionate belief in the need to approximate the irregular patterns of real speech in musical word-setting, replacing smooth-flowing cantilena with repetitions of short motifs, ostinati, and a generally jabbing, exclamatory style of utterance at the furthest remove from the Wagnerian long line (though the two men are united by the fact that, *au fond*, the musical meat of their otherwise opposed operatic matter and manner is in large part entrusted to the orchestra to put across). Strangely, with his obsessive rhythmic patternings, Janáček seems to extend a familiar hand to the late 20th-century minimalists, while doing for the variety of human speech what Messiaen did for birdsong, all of which tends to make him sound agelessly 'modern' in a way that few of his contemporaries now do.

mpLIVE

Janáček Jenůfa

Rafael Kubelík LM7407

At the time that this BBC studio relay was made, in 1951, both the work and its composer were virtually unknown to the British public, and the broadcast, conducted live by Rafael Kubelík on 19 May, constituted the work's local premiere. The conductor had only just the year before turned down the offer of succeeding Sir Adrian Boult as Principal Conductor of the BBCSO, many of whose players we may assume fetched up in the 'BBC Opera Orchestra' utilised in this performance. Kubelík, the son of the world-renowned Czech violinist Jan Kubelík, had conducted the Czech Philharmonic in 1934 when still only twenty and had become thereafter its chief conductor shortly after the German invasion of his homeland, a post he just about managed to keep throughout the war despite constant friction with Nazi officialdom. Immediately after the war he founded the Prague Spring Festival and resumed full-time conducting of the Czech orchestra until the Communist coup of 1948, whereupon he fled, saying: 'I have lived through one form of bestial tyranny, Nazism. As a matter of principle I am not going to live through another.'

His official defection took place in England, where he had arrived to conduct *Don Giovanni* for Glyndebourne. Thereafter, following his rejection of the BBC's offer, he became principal conductor of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, a post his commitment to new-music programming soon soured, which brought him back to England and the Music Directorship of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, in 1955. Xenophobic mischief-making by that faux-Falstaff of the British musical scene, Thomas Beecham, eventually undermined Kubelík's position, which he vacated in 1958 (although, there being some justice, Beecham still failed to secure the job he thought his by rights, a consolatory irony). The undoubted bedrock of Kubelík's later career was his 18-year long stint as music director of the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra throughout the 1960s and 70s which firmly established the band as one of the world's greatest. Kubelík retired in 1979 – officially pensioned off as a German civil servant at age 65 – and retired definitively in 1985,

suffering with arthritis, though he reappeared in 1990 to conduct his beloved Czech players in order to celebrate the fall of communism. He died in 1996.

It seems likely that the BBC's decision to perform *Jenůfa* in 1951 had much to do with their recent association with Kubelík, though doubtless activity had also been sparked by the intense critical interest in, and public appreciation of, *Katya Kabánova*, which had received its first British staging – the first of any Janáček opera – at Sadler's Wells Theatre, on 10 April 1951, conducted by the 25-year-old Mackerras. Clearly *Jenůfa*, even in Kovařovic's edition, impressed greatly, and the Third Programme – forerunner of Radio 3 – gave a further pair of live concert performances in 1954 under Vilem Tausky, seeming to ensure that when Kubelík was appointed to the post of Music Director of the ROH in 1955, there was not likely to be a long wait for the UK stage premiere of the work.

Strangely, when Kubelík duly did conduct it, on 10 December 1956, it was with Amy Shuard in the title role – the Sadler's Wells Katya – rather than with his BBC heroine Gré Brouwenstijn, who was a great Covent Garden favourite and who had just been singing Desdemona under him at the ROH the month previously. But then, Brouwenstijn was even more famous as Leonore in *Fidelio*, and never sang that at Covent Garden either, where for the entirety of her local career, from 1951 to 1963, she was confined exclusively to Verdi roles, one of them – Elisabeth de Valois – sung continuously throughout four revivals of *Don Carlo*. She was born in Holland in 1915, and in her glory years was much in demand, not least in Bayreuth, an echo of which is preserved in her most famous studio assumption, Sieglinde, on the *Die Walküre* remnant of RCA's ill-fated *Ring* project under Erich Leinsdorf. She retired from the stage in 1971, and died at home in Amsterdam in 1999.

The Kostelnička for the BBC relay was Mary Jarred, less well remembered these days, but in her own, a formidable figure. Born in Yorkshire in 1899, she sang the fearsome role of the Nurse in Strauss' *Die Frau ohne Schatten* in the work's Hamburg premiere in 1932 before returning to London the following year where she sang at the ROH in every season until the war-closure in 1939. She sang Margret in Boult's trailblazing 1934 BBCSO *Wozzeck*, and was one of the 16 singers chosen by Vaughan Williams to create a hand-crafted role in his *Serenade to Music* in 1938. In the post-war years she had a triumph as Mother Goose, the brothel madam, in three seasons of *The Rake's Progress* for Glyndebourne, followed by a distinguished career as a professor of voice at the Royal Academy of Music. She died in 1993.

mpLIVE

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The rival half-brothers Laca and Števa are sung by John Lanigan and Raymond Nilsson respectively, both of them soon to be Covent Garden stalwarts, and both belonging to the influx of Australians that had also brought Joan Sutherland to the ROH in the 1950s. Lanigan had already made his London stage debut in 1949 singing Rodolfo at the old Stoll Theatre, and following this BBC performance of *Jenůfa* joined the Covent Garden Opera company, where he made his debut as the Duke of Mantua. Clearly, Kubelík was a man with a good memory for a voice, since Lanigan reprised his role of Laca when the company gave the stage premiere under him, and went on in 1957 to sing Hylas in Berlioz's *Les Troyens*, a legendary highlight of Kubelík's brief tenure as music director. Lanigan sang at Covent Garden through the 1960s and 70s, carving a niche for himself in sharply observed character roles, with one of which – the Rector in *Peter Grimes* – he bade farewell to the House in 1981. He died in 1996.

Raymond Nilsson sang 12 roles for the Royal Opera between 1953 and 1959, including Normanno in Sutherland's career-making *Lucia di Lammermoor*, and also appears as Bob Boles in Decca's *Peter Grimes* conducted by Britten.

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Janáček Jenůfa
Rafael Kubelík LM7407

Music Preserved is a registered charity that has devolved from the work of Jon Tolansky and Basil Tschaikov in establishing the Music Performance Research Centre in the 1980s. It now holds an archive of several thousand items. The bulk of those are private, off-air recordings of live classical music performances from the last 80 years. Nearly all the great names, the 'historic artists', in every genre are represented, many in considerable depth, with repertoire they never recorded commercially. The most significant collection is that donated by the Earl of Harewood, but several other connoisseurs and collectors, among them recording engineers, have donated to Music Preserved their complete collections of broadcast live recordings.

The original sources are stored in the Borthwick Library at the University of York, where they are curated by Dr. Christopher Webb. Many of them are unique, irreplaceable and fragile: acetates in particular have an unpredictable shelf-life and require extremely careful handling. They are being remastered by Roger Beardsley, who has a worldwide reputation in the field, to the highest possible standard, with the emphasis kept on the feel of the live performance.

Music Preserved welcomes additions to its archive, but the process of preservation is time-consuming and expensive. If you are able to donate recordings, or help us in our work to ensure that yesterday's great music can also be tomorrow's, please contact us.

A technical note from the remastering engineer
All the performances being released for the first time by Music Preserved are over 50 years old, and were recorded off-air via a radio or radio tuner by enthusiastic amateurs. In general the sound quality is very good, but there can be instances where tape faults (usually age-related) or transmission/reception difficulties cause audible defects. In many instances, such noises can be eliminated or reduced, but not always. This in turn leads on to the use of noise reduction systems when our tapes are remastered. Only CEDAR is used, and then never to the point where any music-signal degradation occurs.

Having said all that, it is remarkable just how few of our recordings have audible faults. It is important to remember that you are hearing them as the first listeners did over half a century ago.
Roger Beardsley

What do you think of this mpLIVE release? Please tell us.
Are you interested in giving further support to the work of Music Preserved?
Please let us know.
Would you like to know about future mpLIVE releases?
Write to us and join the mailing list.
mplive@musicpreserved.org.uk

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Recorded: 19 May 1951, BBC Studios
From the Harewood Collection
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For Music Preserved:
Remastering engineer: Roger Beardsley
Creative consultant: Peter Quantrill
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