

## **Abstract**

*The Prague Carnival (Pražský karneval)* is Smetana's last orchestral composition. Since the very beginning, this work has been misunderstandingly apprehended as a result of composer's illness. Especially in the first half of the 20th century, it became a subject of a series of polemics in which it was conceived either as a product of a sick mind or as a compositions of a genius looking far into the future. This thesis aims at explaining the genesis of the work and the grounds of such a contradictory and changeable comprehension of the composition. With regard to this, retouches and arrangements made by Karel Kovařovic and Václav Talich will be introduced and different renditions of the composition in the concert halls will be shown.

**Key words:** Bedřich Smetana, *Prague Carnival*, orchestral music, reception, critical edition, polemics, Karel Kovařovic, Václav Talich