<https://www.classicfm.com/composers/dvorak/music/rusalka/>

Antonín Dvořák: Rusalka

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**Dvořák wrote Rusalka, his penultimate opera, at the age of sixty, with just three years left to live.**

He had lost none of his compositional powers, though; it proved his biggest operatic hit. It’s based on the folk tale of Undine, the water nymph (from the Latin Unda, meaning wave) although, by the time Dvořák offered up his music, Hans Christian Andersen’s ‘The Little Mermaid’ was already sixty-five years old, so there is the odd doff of the cap to this version, too.  
  
The premiere took place in the National Theatre in Prague, where Dvořák himself had once played in the house band. Mahler tried but failed to get it into Vienna. Today, it is still revived, buoyed by the stand-out success of possibly its finest moment. It comes in Act I, when Rusalka (the ‘little mermaid’) tells her father she has fallen in love with a mortal, and wants to become human. Having been pointed in the direction of the local witch, Rusalka sings to the moon, with the wish that the moon tell her beloved all about her. This Song to the Moon remains the shining-hit aria of the whole work.   
  
**Recommended Recording**   
  
[**Kate Royal**](https://www.classicfm.com/artists/kate-royal/) (soprano) as Rusalka; [**Orchestra of the English National Opera**](https://www.classicfm.com/artists/english-national-opera/); [**Edward Gardner**](https://www.classicfm.com/artists/edward-gardner/) (conductor). EMI Classics: 2681922.