A Star Is Born?

Is it possible to be an opera singer at age 12? An age when young people are interested in so many things, but not usually in opera? To Ostrava's Patricia Janečková, opera means everything. Her fantastic talent wowed a nationwide audience in the autumn 2010 TV show Talentmania. From thousands of applicants, just a few dozen made it through to the final rounds of the show – and Patricia was by far the most popular and successful of them all. Experts praised her natural talent and beautifully trained voice. Patricia has been singing since the age of four, encouraged by her parents. Her father Martin Janečka plays double bass in Ostrava's Janáček Philharmonic, so talent clearly runs in the family. Her favourite aria is the Queen of the Night from Mozart's Magic Flute – the piece she performed in the talent show [sic]. Patricia attends voice classes at the Children's Opera Studio – part of the National Theatre of Moravia-Silesia in Ostrava, whose opera company offered her the first boy's soprano part in its production of The Magic Flute. Lenka Živocká, who has run the studio for the past seventeen years, describes Patricia as the finest talent she has ever encountered – for both her vocal performance and her acting skills.

Her TV success changed the lives of the entire Janeček family. Thanks to the cash prize of almost 4 million crowns, Patricia will be able to study at a conservatory, possibly abroad. She is lucky – for over fifty years Ostrava has had a top-quality conservatory where, uniquely in Central Europe, performers can study singing, acting, music and ballet. The media interest in the young singer was huge: one of the Czech commercial TV stations filmed her return to school after her success, scenes which were broadcast by many stations abroad. This twelve year-old star with an angelic voice has enchanted the world. Perhaps one day she will perform at the Metropolitan Opera in New York.

