

Ferenc FARKAS

COMPLETE CHAMBER MUSIC FOR CELLO, VOLUME ONE

ALLA DANZA UNGHERESE NO. 2

SONATA FOR SOLO CELLO

FOLKSONG SONATINA

QUATTRO PEZZI

FRUIT BASKET

ALL'ANTICA

BALLADE

ARIOSO

Miklós Perényi, cello
Dénes Várjon, piano

Lúcia Megyesi Schwartz, mezzo-soprano
Kristof Baráti, violin
Lajos Rozmán, clarinet

INCLUDES FIRST RECORDINGS

FERENC FARKAS Chamber Music for Cello, Volume One

[1]	<i>Alla danza ungherese</i> No. 2 (1934)*	4:40
	<i>All'antica</i> (1962)*	8:36
[2]	I <i>Pastorale</i>	2:46
[3]	II <i>Aria con variazioni</i>	4:24
[4]	III <i>Giga</i>	1:46
[5]	<i>Ballade</i> (1963)	8:42
	<i>Folksong Sonatina</i> (1955)*	4:35
[6]	I <i>Allegro moderato</i>	1:28
[7]	II <i>Andante espressivo</i>	1:11
[8]	III <i>Allegro</i>	1:56
	<i>Sonata for violoncello solo</i> (1932)*	9:43
[9]	I <i>Allegro</i>	3:50
[10]	II <i>Andante</i>	3:01
[11]	III <i>Allegro molto</i>	2:52
[12]	<i>Arioso</i> (1926)	3:01
	<i>Quattro pezzi</i> (1965)*	9:14
[13]	I <i>Intrada</i>	2:02
[14]	II <i>Scherzo</i>	2:07
[15]	III <i>Petit poème</i>	2:43
[16]	IV <i>Rondo</i>	2:22

Gyümölcskosár ('Fruit Basket'; 1946)**

17:00

Song-cycle for soprano, violin, clarinet, cello and piano based on poems by Sándor Weöres

17	I	Gáspár ('Caspar')	0:56
18	II	Ládika ('The Magic Box')	0:54
19	III	Marasztalás ('Sunbeams')	1:50
20	IV	Falusi reggel ('Morning in the Village')	0:43
21	V	Mondóka ('Violets')	0:59
22	VI	A köbeka ('The Stone Frog')	1:00
23	VII	Altatódal ('Lullaby')	2:28
24	VIII	Száncsengő ('Sleigh Bells')	0:41
25	IX	Béka király ('Frog King')	2:00
26	X	A tündér ('The Little Elf')	1:43
27	XI	Paprika Jancsi szerenádja ('Harlequin Serenade')	2:05
28	XII	Déli felhők ('Midday Cloud')	1:41

TT 67:14

Miklós Perényi, cello

Dénes Várjon, piano 1–8, 12–28

Lúcia Megyesi Schwartz, mezzo-soprano 17–28

Kristóf Baráti, violin 17–28

Lajos Rozmán, clarinet 17–28

*FIRST RECORDINGS

**FIRST RECORDING IN THIS VERSION

FERENC FARKAS: CHAMBER MUSIC FOR CELLO, VOLUME ONE

by László Gombos

This album presents pieces for cello and piano by the Hungarian composer Ferenc Farkas (1905–2000), as well as a chamber version of a song-cycle with a role for the cello and a long-lost work for solo cello. These works also provide shining examples of the harmony and balance which Farkas, who is particularly popular in his homeland, strove throughout his life to create in his compositions. He revived musical characteristics, genres and styles which he felt were required in Hungarian musical life in the doctrinaire twentieth century, or were needed by humanity in the broader sense of the word. He gave free voice to reveries that recalled forgotten times, in the course of which he was able to make up for a gap in the development of Hungarian composition, when historical circumstances in the Baroque and Classical eras meant that fewer works had come into being. He was capable of the most advanced ‘modernism’, and of setting dramas which cut to the heart, but his personality, his basic character, was drawn towards the expression of calm, joy and harmony. He was amongst the first in Hungary to experiment with the twelve-tone system, but the struggle and striving which characterise the music of Beethoven, Brahms, Wagner and Richard Strauss were alien to his kind of peaceful musical aspiration; still further removed was the expression of crudely wrought and violent music.

The music of these masters formed the mainstream at the beginning of the twentieth century, and it was from a reaction to it that Bartók and Kodály found their voices. Farkas himself was born into the world of Late Romanticism and that nationalist response, and yet his artistic constitution veered in a completely different direction. Some composers of the day retired to ivory towers to contemplate their own truths, but Farkas wasn’t one of them: he lived among everyday people and wanted to speak to the widest possible cross-section of the populace. Thanks to this impulse, the

range of his genres and combinations of performers and styles became almost boundless, from music written for music students or amateur choruses to more 'modern'-sounding chamber works and cantatas, and even popular operetta. He maintained this accessibility to the last and, besides his personal professional skills, it may also explain his singular success as a teacher. From 1935 he taught in Budapest, then in Kolozsvár (now in Cluj in Romania), and from 1949, for a quarter-century, he was Professor and head of the Composition Department at the Liszt Music Academy, Budapest. György Ligeti and György Kurtág were among his best-known students, who over the second half of the twentieth century emerged to form the cream of Hungarian composers.

Studies with Ottorino Respighi in Rome (1929–31) had helped Farkas find his own path, for which, back home, a double effort was required to maintain his individuality. Part of the problem was identified in the title of a 1967 talk, 'In the Shadow of Bartók'. Familiarity with Neo-Classical music under Respighi's tuition pointed the way to a style within which he could more easily and freely express himself. While still in Rome he completed *Kállai táncok* ('Dances from Nagykálló'), originally for cello and piano; then in 1934 came a second, similar work with the title *Hétfalusi boricza-tánc* ('Boricza Dance from Hétfalu'). For international performance, the composer gave the title *Alla danza ungherese* to both pieces, numbering them separately. He took the folk-melodies for both pieces from the same source: Marián Réthei Prikkel's 1924 collection, *Magyarság táncai* ('Dances of the Hungarians').¹ No. 2 [1] is connected with a folk-custom: in the County of Brassó (now Braşov in Romania), in the part of the countryside named Hétfalu (meaning 'Seven Villages'), a group of young men comes together in the middle of December to practise dancing the four-part Boricza dance, and on the 28th of the month, in characteristic local dress, they make a tour of all the villages, proceeding from house to house. Gathering in an inn, they consume some of the food they have collected, and then the girls arrive and further hours of merriment with dancing ensue. The first part of Farkas' work (*Allegro moderato*) is in the form of a three-part strict dance ABA in E minor; then follows a fast second section in double tempo in C major, the structure

¹ Réthei Prikkel (1871–1925) was a self-taught Benedictine monk, philologist and ethnographer, who saw folk-dance as an equally rich source of information as more traditional dialectal analysis.

of which suggests a sonata form without a development section (the first section is in C major, two other sections are played in the dominant, and then comes the return of all three in the tonic).

Respighi influenced Ferenc Farkas not only in the adoption of a Neo-Classical style but in his rediscovery of earlier eras. This is evident in the *All'antica*, the title of which refers to Respighi's series of three suites of *Antiche danze ed arie*. When a twentieth-century composer of the order of Farkas or Respighi turns to old sources for new music, it becomes far more than a simple game or exercise in style. The music never fits the precise style of any particular earlier composer; in fact, it doesn't even match with the characteristic style of any one period, since only some of its traits will be reminiscent of the music of several centuries ago. *All'antica* was originally written for a special Baroque instrument now almost forgotten, the baryton gamba, with harpsichord accompaniment, and entitled *Sonata all'antica*. In 1962 the cellist János Liebner commissioned Farkas to write a piece for the baryton, for which Joseph Haydn had written over a hundred works in the 1760s and '70s. Haydn's employer Prince Nicolaus Esterházy himself played the instrument, which is somewhat smaller than the cello; in addition to seven bowed strings, it also had eleven resonating strings running behind the fingerboard, which could be plucked with the thumb. Farkas recalled the circumstances of its composition thus:

When János Liebner commissioned me to write a piece for the revived, or reborn, baryton, I began to study the instrument. [...] While composing I noticed that the new piece was becoming an old piece; I had immersed myself in the character of the instrument so completely that in my composition I had conjured up the olden times.²

So that more people might play and hear the piece, Farkas made three alterations in 1964. He tailored the baryton part, with minimal changes, to the cello, orchestrated the accompaniment and added some new orchestral sections.³ (In the chamber version the

² Typescript in the composer's estate.

³ This *concertante* version (*Concerto all'antica*) was recorded by Miklós Perényi and the MÁV Symphony Orchestra conducted by Péter Csaba and released on Toccata Classics TOCC 0176 in 2014.

piano simply plays the original harpsichord part.) The titles of the movements themselves conjure up typical Baroque forms. With its rocking rhythms and lyrical melody, the first movement, 'Pastorale' [2], stands back from the obligatory opening movement of a sonata or concerto focusing on the soloist. Here, by contrast, the soloist has no virtuoso challenges, and the light and intimate atmosphere of the work is maintained throughout. The slow second movement, an *Aria con variazioni* [3], is more lyrical in character. Its song-like melody is first sounded not by the soloist but by the pianist, accompanied by *pizzicati*, and the harmonic background is closer to Impressionism than the Baroque. If it were not for the title, the fact that the movement is a theme and variations might go unnoticed, so refined are the means by which Farkas has loosened the rigid traditional formal framework. The cellist does not have the main melody of the movement until the third and final variation. The fast closing movement, 'Giga' [4], is full of stylistic elements of the Baroque, with voices answering one another in imitation and various rhythmic games.

In the same period, in 1963, Farkas produced the *Ballade* [5], which reveals an entirely different stylistic face. Alongside the folklorist and the Neo-Classicist dreaming of earlier times, there also existed an Expressionist who composed music of substance and passionate gestures that break open the traditional tonal framework. The *Ballade* originally bore the name *Sonata-Fantasia*, which suggests that it might have been conceived as a one-movement sonata. But it can also be interpreted as a cycle of five short, organically related movements. Farkas wrote about it as follows:

The first section is the exposition of a sonata; with a passionate, ballad-like opening, above an evenly sparkling piano accompaniment the cello sings a secondary theme and a closing theme which is related to the first theme.⁴

The second section, itself subdivided into ABA form, takes the place of a slow movement. A passacaglia, built upon the final seven bars of the cello theme, then follows, reaching an impressive culmination, with themes restated from the exposition appearing as a development. The energetic coda provided for the closing section fulfils the function of

⁴ Typescript with handwritten corrections in the composer's estate.

a reprise; here the main theme is reversed and the secondary theme returns in the form of a canon. The first performance abroad took place in October 1967 in the Collegium Hungaricum in Vienna, performed by Ede Banda and Lóránt Szűcs.

Like the *Alla danza ungherese*, the **Folksong Sonatina**, written in 1955, is built on Hungarian folk-music, as the title suggests; it was written for Lajos Montag, an outstanding double-bassist at the National Opera. As the work does not employ playing techniques specially tailored to the bass alone, it can equally well be played by the cello or even bassoon, accompanied by piano. Farkas wrote about this work of three miniature movements as follows:

As with all of the works in which I have used folksongs, I'm not content with just adding simple harmonies to them, but I create ambitious art-music forms using chamber-musical construction and counterpoint. So, for the exposition of themes of the first movement [6], they form the main, second and closing subjects, a development is dispensed with because on the one hand this is only a short sonata, and on the other hand the character of the folksongs wouldn't bear the development of the motifs. The second movement [7] is a repeated lyrical melody with a varying accompaniment. The third movement [8] is a rondo in which folksongs form the theme and two episodes.⁵

On Farkas' return to Budapest from Rome in 1932, he began to compose in various different genres, using this Italian experience to fill his music and evolve his own personal style, and it was then that he wrote his **Sonata for violoncello solo**. But with the difficulties of making a satisfactory living and the activities which diverted him away from his own compositions – he was a theatre pianist, conductor, teacher and director of educational institutions – it is no wonder that some shorter works sometimes passed out of his mind in the course of the decades and that later he himself had no record of them. It is not known, for example, if there was a performance in the 1930s of his Cello Sonata, since the first recorded public presentation of the work came only 82 years after its composition, in

⁵ Typescript in the composer's estate.

2014. The manuscript came to light in the papers of the cellist Ede Banda.⁶ The opening *Allegro* [9] is characterised by an ornamented melody with long notes, which possibly was something Farkas absorbed on his Mediterranean travels, although the intonation of the music and the style of playing seem at the same time to refer to Kodály's famous Solo Sonata, Op. 8 – then not two decades old. Though Farkas wasn't one of Kodály's students, on several occasions the elder composer expressed his high regard for him, accepting him as an 'honorary' student. Indeed, it is not impossible that Farkas intended the work as a token of respect for Kodály; it may also have served as a demonstration that he had 'arrived' as a composer. A meditative *Andante* [10] is followed by the *Allegro molto* finale [11], which exudes penetrating power and energy; its theme is built on double and triple stops and its variations have a dancing, folk-like quality. The cello literature of the twentieth century would be the poorer if this impressive work were to remain unknown.

In 1926, while Farkas was still studying at the Music Academy, he wrote his *Arioso* [12], where, in traditional manner, the solo instrument sings the melody accompanied by Romantic harmonies. The work was originally the slow movement of a lost Viola Sonata, but when it was published in 1960, Farkas indicated a preference for the cello – allowing (in brackets) that the viola might still play it.

The titles of the movements of the *Quattro pezzi* might conjure up the music of early times, but what one can hear in this amalgam of the elements of the traditional and the modern is truly twentieth-century music. Farkas composed the work in 1965 for his twenty-year-old son, András, who later chose to follow a career as a conductor, but in his earlier years also learned the double-bass. One year later a version of the work for wind quintet and bass was written, and then a version for cello and piano appeared. An important element of the first-movement *Intrada* [13] is a rhythmical game, and the Scherzo [14] is given variety by the alternation of small rhythmical sections containing groups of two or three bars (*due battute* and *tre battute*), where the three bars make

⁶ Banda (1917–2004) studied at the Ferenc Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest, where his cello teachers were mainly Jenő Kerpely and Miklós Zsámboki; he studied chamber music with Leó Weiner (and took private lessons in theory with him after his degree). Ernő Dohnányi and Zoltán Kodály were also major influences. Although a prominent orchestral cellist, he was best known as a member of the Tátrai Quartet. His students include his son Pál Banda and Miklós Perényi.

a 'big' $\frac{3}{4}$ bar and the pairs of bars give the feeling of $\frac{2}{4}$. The 'Petit poème' [15] is a lyrical interlude, and the closing movement is a Rondo [16], in which an unusual fugato episode and the ostinato-like figures of the closing section create a stir of excitement.

The closing work on this album, the song-cycle *Gyümölcskosár* ('Fruit Basket'), is a setting of poems of Sándor Weöres⁷ from the years following the Second World War. Farkas got to know Weöres in Budapest in 1945 and almost immediately they formed a life-long friendship. From April the following year he set to music a dozen-and-a-half verses from the Weöres volume entitled *Fruit Basket* (the last to be written, 'The Little Elf', was composed in the Rákóczi Castle in the town of Sárospatak in the summer of 1947). Later Farkas chose twelve of them for publication. Strangely, those people who had paid subscriptions received their copies of the sheet music in 1948, but – for political reasons – all other copies were remaindered and sent for pulping. In November 1946 Erzszi Török sang the songs already written from the cycle, then for voice and piano, in a concert in Székesfehérvár, where for two years Farkas was director of the Conservatoire, and where Weöres was also then based (for a while both of them lived in the school classrooms and so formed their close working partnership). Already in 1946, Farkas completed chamber-orchestra versions from the song-cycle, and several of these numbers were played in Budapest in December that year. The version on this recording is for voice, clarinet, violin, cello and piano; subsequently Farkas transcribed the accompaniment for clarinet, viola and piano (1972), and additionally for clarinet quartet and wind quintet.⁸ He wrote about the work as follows:

The 'Lullaby' to celebrate the first birthday of my son András forms the first melody of the 'Fruit Basket'. This cycle of children's poems is full of humour and delicacy of feeling, sometimes even reminiscent of a grotesque, which makes such poems equally delightful for adults. There thus arose twelve melodies to match this cycle of very short songs with the

⁷ Weöres (1913–89) grew up in western Hungary, near the Austrian border, but travelled widely (not least to the Far East) before and after the Second World War. The advent of Stalinism in 1948 effectively silenced him as a published poet until 1964. He was active also as a translator, producing Hungarian versions of works by writers as diverse as Eliot, Carroll, Lear, Mallarmé, Rustaveli, Shakespeare and Shchvchenko. Kodály, Ligeti and Eötvös are among the other composers to set Weöres' poems to music.

⁸ The wind-quintet version was released in 2005, on Toccata Classics TOCC 0019.

following characteristics: the curious march of ‘Punch’ [17]; the fabulous world of the ‘Magic Box’ [18]; the tenderness of ‘Sunbeams’ [19]; the sound of bells in ‘Morning in the Village’ [20], where a cock crows and a donkey brays; the tranquility of the forest where ‘Violets’ [21] are hidden. Abstraction and humour are found in the ‘The Stone Frog’ [22]; charm in the lyricism of the ‘Lullaby’ [23]; gentleness in the sound of the ‘Sleigh Bells’ [24]. In a watery world there reigns the ‘Frog King’ [25]; while ‘The Little Elf’ [26] dances with the angels; and the ‘Harlequin’ Serenade [27] rings out in jocular and sad vein. Together a whole series of wonderful appearances all find their epitome in the concluding ‘Midday Cloud’ [28].⁹

László Gombos, born in 1967, is a Hungarian musicologist, graduating from the Ferenc Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest in 1990 (as a choral conductor) and in 1995 (in musicology); in 1995–98 he took part in the musicological PhD programme of the Liszt Academy. He taught music history at the University of Debrecen from 1998 to 2002, and since 1995 he has been a professor at the Béla Bartók Conservatoire in Budapest. Since 1994 he has been a member of the research staff at the Institute for Musicology in Budapest. His main area of interest is Hungarian music of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The brilliant and internationally praised Hungarian cellist **Miklós Perényi** was born in 1948 into a musical family and began cello lessons at the age of five with Miklós Zsámboki, a student of David Popper. He excelled from the beginning and at age seven his exceptional talent was recognised when he was admitted to the cello department of the Ferenc Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest, where he studied under Ede Banda. At nine he gave his first concert in Budapest and went on to study between 1960 and 1964 in several master-classes with Enrico Mainardi in Rome. Further studies at the Accademia Santa Cecilia brought him a degree in 1962 and the following year he was a prize-winner at the Casals International Violoncello Competition in Budapest. Pablo Casals



Photo: Szilvia Csibi

⁹ Typescript in the composer's estate.

invited him to his master-classes in Zermatt and Puerto Rico in 1965 and 1966, followed by invitations to perform at the Marlboro Festival for four consecutive years.

In 1974 Miklós Perényi joined the faculty at his *alma mater*, the Ferenc Liszt Academy in Budapest, where he has held a professorship since 1980. He was honoured with the Kossuth Prize in 1980 and the Bartók-Pásztory Prize in 1987. Academic life has permitted him to develop further as a performer. He is recognised as one of the outstanding cellists of his generation, with a distinctive, subtly nuanced sound matched by extraordinary musicality. He has appeared in the world's major musical centres, performing regularly around Europe, in Japan and China and in North and South America. His festival engagements have included Berlin, Edinburgh, Hohenems, Kronberg, Lucerne, Prague, Salzburg, Vienna and Warsaw, and the Pablo Casals Festival in Prades in France, as well as in the USA.

This is his second appearance on Toccata Classics. For the first, on TOCC 0176, he recorded Farkas' *Concertino all'antica* and *Trittico concertato*.

A sensational technique, deep musicality and a wide range of interests have made **Dénes Várjon** one of the most highly regarded participants in international musical life. He is a universal musician: excellent soloist, first-class chamber musician, artistic leader of festivals and highly sought-after piano pedagogue. As a chamber musician he works regularly with such partners as Joshua Bell, Heinz Holliger, Steven Isserlis, Kim Kashkashian, Leonidas Kavakos, Miklós Perényi, András Schiff, Jorg Widmann and Tabea Zimmermann. As a soloist he is a welcome guest at major concert-series, from Carnegie Hall to the Wiener Konzerthaus and the Wigmore Hall. He is frequently invited to work with many of the leading symphony orchestras (Academy of St Martin-in-the-Fields, Berlin Radio Symphony, Budapest Festival, Chamber Orchestra of Europe, Kremerata Baltica, Russian National, St Petersburg Philharmonic, Tonhalle). Among the conductors with whom he has worked are Ádám Fischer, Iván Fischer, Leopold Hager, Heinz Holliger, Zoltán Kocsis, Sir Georg Solti, Horst Stein and Sándor Végh. He appears regularly at festivals from Marlboro to Salzburg and Edinburgh. He also performs frequently with his wife, Izabella Simon, playing four-hand and two-piano recitals. In the past decade they have organised several chamber-



music festivals, the most recent one being ‘kamara.hu’ at the Ferenc Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest.

Dénes Várjon has recorded for Capriccio, Hungaroton and Naxos. Teldec released his recording of Sándor Veress’ *Hommage à Paul Klee* (with András Schiff, Heinz Holliger and the Budapest Festival Orchestra), and his *Hommage à Géza Anda* (Pan Classics) was equally well received. A solo CD with pieces by Berg, Janáček and Liszt was released in 2012 by ECM, and in 2015 he recorded the Schumann Concerto with the WDR Symphonieorchester and Heinz Holliger, and all five Beethoven Concertos with Concerto Budapest and András Keller.

Dénes Várjon graduated from the Ferenc Liszt Academy of Music in 1991, where his professors included Sándor Falvai, György Kurtág and Ferenc Rádós. Parallel to his studies he was a regular participant in András Schiff’s master-classes. He has won first prizes at the Piano Competition of Hungarian Radio, the Leó Weiner Chamber Music Competition in Budapest and the Géza Anda Competition in Zurich. He is a professor at the Ferenc Liszt Academy of Music and has been awarded the Liszt, Sándor Veress and Bartók-Pásztory Prizes.

The mezzo-soprano **Lúcia M. Schwartz**, born in Pécs, graduated from the Ferenc Liszt Academy of Music. In 1991 she was awarded the Mozart prize of the ‘Vinas’ International Singing Competition in Barcelona, and in 1993 she won the First International Baroque Singing Competition in Budapest. She attended master-classes given by Walter Berry, Ingrid Bjoner, Júlia Hamari, Walter C. Moore and Barbara Schlick.

She has been a member of the ensemble of the Hungarian State Opera since 1994, with a repertoire including operas and oratorios from the early Baroque to contemporary music. She is a frequent guest at festivals at home and abroad (singing Dido in Miskolc and Wellgunde (*Das Rheingold* and *Göttdämmerung*) in the Wagner Days in Budapest), appearing at the opera houses in Dusseldorf (Carmen), Graz (Magdalena in *Rigoletto*) and Philadelphia (Angelina in Rossini’s *La Cenerentola*). The conductors with whom she has worked include Klaus Arp, Ádám Fischer, Martin Haselböck, Zoltán Kocsis, Stephen Lord, Zoltán Peskó, Hellmut Rilling and Tamás Vásáry.

For Hungaroton she has recorded music by Durkó, Galuppi, Michael Haydn, Lajos Huszár and György Orbán; she also has a solo album of opera and oratorio arias on the Premier Art



label to her credit. Her recital recordings for Hungarian Radio (with Jenő Jandó, Zoltán Kocsis and Izabella Simon at the keyboard) have included songs by Bellini, Debussy, Haydn, Liszt and Ravel.

The clarinetist and conductor **Lajos Rozmán** was born in 1970 in Sárvár in western Hungary. Since receiving his diploma from the Ferenc Liszt Academy of Music in 1994, he has been engaged in a wide range of musical activities. Besides appearing as a soloist, he is the founder of several ensembles (Forrás Chamber Music Workshop, Trio Lignum, the New Hungarian Music Society (UMZE) and the Qaartsiluni Ensemble), and he teaches chamber music at the Liszt Academy. He has been active as a conductor since the late 1990s. Among his more important prizes are the Ferenc Liszt Prize, gained in 2007, and the Artisjus Prize, won five times between 2004 and 2013. His many recordings have been released mainly by Hungaroton, BMC and Telos.



The violinist **Kristóf Baráti** was born in Budapest, but a large part of his childhood was spent in Venezuela. He began his violin studies at the age of five and at eight he made his first solo performances with the leading Venezuelan orchestras. At eleven he was invited to Montpellier to give a recital at the Festival de Radio France. His studies continued in Budapest with Miklós Szenthelyi and Vilmos Tátrai at the Ferenc Liszt Academy of Music. During this period he won first prize at the Lipizer Competition in Italy and second prize in the Long-Thibaud Competition in Paris. In 1997 his career took a new turn after he won third prize and the audience prize of the prestigious Queen Elisabeth Competition in Brussels, although he was the youngest finalist. After this success he refined his violin technique with Eduard Wulfson, whose knowledge was influenced by such major violinists as Yehudi Menuhin, Nathan Milstein and Henryk Szeryng. In 2010 Kristóf Baráti won the Paganini Competition in Moscow, considered the 'Oscar' of violinists.

Kristóf Baráti performs in important concert halls around the world with major orchestras (including the Budapest Festival, Deutsches Symphonie, Japan Philharmonic, NDR Symphony,



NHK Tokyo, Royal Philharmonic, Russian National, St Petersburg Symphony, Spanish Radio and Television Symphony, WDR Cologne) and conductors (among them Yuri Bashmet, Jiří Bělohlávek, Charles Dutoit, Iván Fischer, Marek Janowski, Kurt Masur, Eiji Oue, Mikhail Pletnev, Jukka-Pekka Saraste, Pinchas Steinberg, Yuri Temirkanov and Gilbert Varga). His chamber-music partners include Jean-Efflam Bavouzet, Yuri Bashmet, Ning Feng, Richard Goode, Kim Kashkashian, Zoltán Kocsis, Nina Kogan, Misha Maisky, Enrico Pace, Miklós Perényi and Dénes Várjon, among many others. He has been invited to many of the world's leading concert halls: the Musikverein in Vienna, Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, Tchaikovsky Hall in Moscow. His sensational solo recital in Carnegie Hall in January 2015 resulted in an immediate re-invitation.

In 2009 and 2010 he recorded the first two Paganini concertos and Bach's Sonatas and Partitas for solo violin for Berlin Classics. His recording of the Beethoven violin sonatas with Klára Würtz was released by Brilliant Classics in 2012, and those of the Ysaÿe solo sonatas in 2013, the three Brahms violin sonatas in 2014 and the Korngold Violin Concerto in 2015.

Texts and Translations

Gyümölcskosár

(Weöres Sándor)

17 1. Gáspár

Elindult, elindult
Gáspár messze földre,
Három betűje lemaradt,
Gás falu lett belőle,
három betűje odaért,
pár lett belőle,
született öt gyerekük,

Fruit Basket

Texts by Sándor Weöres

17 1. Caspar

He went off, he went off,
Caspar, to a faraway land,
Three letters of his fell behind,
And became the village Cas,
three letters of his made it there,
and they became a pair,
and gave birth to five children,

kettő fiú, kettő lányka,
ötödik meg vicepápa.

[18] 2. Ládika

Volt egy szép ládika,
nőtt benne egy almafa,
én azon az almafán
dinnyét szedtem délután.
Nagyot ugrott Sárika,
beszakadt a ládika.

[19] 3. Marasztalás

Ó ne vidd el
két szemeddel
a napsugarat!
Ne menj, várj még:
mert e tájék
sötétben marad.
Ág nem himbál,
fecske nem száll,
béres nem arat.
Ó ne vidd el
két szemeddel
a napsugarat!

[20] 4. Falusi reggel

Már üti – üti már
a torony a hajnalban!
Az időt bemeszeli a korai kikeriki,
lendül a vad dallam.

two sons and two daughters,
and the fifth a pope-pauper.

[18] 2. Casket

There was a lovely casket
an apple tree grew from it.
On the apple tree I too
picked melons in the afternoon.
Sárika jumped upon it
And there ended the casket.

[19] 3. Entreaty

Don't take away
with your two eyes
the light of the sun!
Don't go, stay on:
Because the land
will only darken.
Branches won't sway,
Swallows won't fly,
farmhands won't sow
Don't take away
with your two eyes
the light of the sun!

[20] 4. Village Morning

Striking – it's striking now –
the steeple in the morning!
Time is painted white by the early calling
cock-cry,

Kiscsacsi, kiabálj,
örülök a hangodnak!
Ha lefőz ez a kusza kikeleti kikeriki,
vége a rangodnak.

[21] 5. Mondóka

Mély erdőn
ibolya-virág,
ráhajlik a boróka-ág.
Minek is rejt az az ág,
gyere, tágas a világ,
mély erdőn
ibolya-virág.

[22] 6. A Kőbéka

A kőbéka lassan ment,
a kőbéka lassan ment.
Kitépték az éjféli szőré,
lenyúzták a hajnal bőrét.
A kőbéka lassan ment.

[23] 7. Altatódal

Csíja, csicsíja, rózsza,
csicsíja, mályva!
Hold-lepte úton,
csillag-lepte úton,
két kutya kullog,

a wild melody floating.
Little donkey, shout aloud,
it's good to hear you honk!
If you are drowned out by this cranky cackling
cock-cry,
you'll forfeit your rank.

[21] 5. Ditty

In the deep wood
a violet patch
hung over by
a juniper branch
Why must the branch hide?
Come now, the world is wide!
In the deep wood
a violet patch.

[22] 6. Stone Frog

The stone frog went slowly,
the stone frog went slowly.
Midnight's fur was torn away
the skin of dawn was stripped away
The stone frog went slowly.

[23] 7. Lullaby

Hush shush-hush rosehip,
Hush hush cowslip ...
On a moon-sheathed road,
on a star-sheathed road,
two dogs dawdle

köves, szeles úton.

Csíja, csicsíja, rózsza,
csicsíja, mályva!

A nagyfülű kutya kérdi:

Rózsza-rózsza mit csinál?

A nagyorrú kutya kérdi:

Mályva-mályva mit csinál?

Rózsza-szál, mályva-szál

kék gyöngyöt tesz bársony-tokba,
addig jó, míg szundikál.

Csíja, csicsíja, rózsza,
csicsíja, mályva!

[24] 8. Száncsengő

Éj-mélyből fölzengő

– csing-ling-ling – száncsengő.

Száncsengő – csing-ling-ling

tél öblén halkan ring.

Földobban két nagy ló

– kop-kop-kop – nyolc patkó.

Nyelc patkó – kop-kop-kop

csönd zsákból hangot lop.

Szétmálló hangerdő

– csing-ling-ling – száncsengő.

Száncsengő – csing-ling-ling

tél öblén távol ring.

[25] 9. Békakirály

Nád alól és gőz alól

vízi várból nótá szól,

on the stony windy road.

Hush shush-hush rosehip,

Hush hush cowslip ...

The big-eared doggy asks you:

Rosehip, rosehip, what's your game?

The big-nosed doggy asks you:

Cowslip, cowslip, what's your game?

Rosehip lays. Cowslip lays

a blue pearl in a velvet casket,

as long as slumber reigns it stays.

Hush shush-hush rosehip,

Hush hush cowslip ...

[24] 8. Sleigh Bells

Deep in the night ringing round

– ching ding ding – sleigh-bells resound

Sleigh-bells resound – ching ding ding –

A silent drift on winter's wing.

Two horses come throbbing through

– clop clop clop – of eight horseshoes

Eight horseshoes – clop clop clop –

robbing sound from silence pouch.

Mouldering forest of sound

– ching ding ding – sleigh-bells resound

Sleigh-bells resound – ching ding ding –

A distant drift on winter's wing.

[25] 9. Frog King

Beneath the reed, beneath the haze

song rises from the water palace,

vízi várban zöld kövön
dalol Ung király –
Hallja kinn a síma rét
Ung királynak énekét,
és nótára hajladoz
lepke és fűszál.

[26] 10. A tündér

Bóbita Bóbita táncol,
körben az angyalok ülnek,
béka-hadak fuvoláznak,
sáska-hadak hegedülnek.
Bóbita Bóbita játszik,
szárnyat ígéz a malacra,
ráül, ígér neki csókot,
röpteti és ki kacagja.
Bóbita Bóbita épít,
hajnali köd-fal a vára,
termeiben sok a vendég,
törpe-király fia-lánya.
Bóbita Bóbita álmos,
elpihen őszi levélen,
két csiga őrzi az álmát.
szunnyad az ág sűrűjében.

[27] 11. Paprika Jancsi

Gyöngé fuvallat a tóba zilál,
fények gyöngysora lebben.
Sóhajom, árva madár-pihe,
száll s elpihen édes öledben.

in the palace on green stone
the Ung king sings –
Outside the smooth meadow hears
the song of Ung king coming near
and towards the melody bend
butterfly and grassblade.

[26] 10. The Fairy

Plumicorn, Plumicorn dancing,
around her the angels are listening,
bullfrog-armies play on pan-pipes
cricket-armies on violins.
Plumicorn, Plumicorn playing
conjures up wings on a piglet,
sits on her, promises her kisses,
and flies her away as she giggles.
Plumicorn, Plumicorn building,
the walls of her castle of dawn mist,
visitors fill up her hallways,
daughters and sons of the dwarf-king.
Plumicorn, Plumicorn sleeping,
resting on the autumn leaves,
she slumbers in thickets of branches,
and two snails watch over her dreams.

[27] 11. The Clown

A weak breeze ripples on the lake,
a pearlstring of lights billows.
My sigh – orphan bird-fluff – escapes
and rests on your sweet pillow.

Tárt kebelemben reszket a kóc:
érted szenved a Jancsi bohóc.
Szép szemeidtől vérzik az ég,
sok sebe csillagos ösvény.
Egy hajfürtöd nékem elég:
sok sebemet bekötözném.
Hull a fűrészpör, sorvad a kóc:
nem lesz többet a Jancsi bohóc.
Tálad a rózsa, tükröd a Hold,
ajkodon alkonyok égnek,
Víg kedvem sűrű bűba hajolt,
téged kérlel az ének.
Hogyha kigyullad szívem, a kóc,
meghal érted a Jancsi bohóc.

[28] 12. Déli felhők

Domb tövén, hol nyúl szalad,
s lyukat ás a róka:
nyári fényben, napsütésben
felhőt les Katóka.
Zöld fűszál az ajka közt,
tenyerén az álla ...
A vándorló felhő-népet
álmosan csodálja.
Elől úszik Mag király,
kétágú az orra,
feje fölött koronája,
mint a habos torta.
Fut mögötte a bolond
szélesen nevetve

In my open breast the straw shivers:
for you this clown does suffer.
Your beautiful eyes make the sky bleed,
its many wounds are a starry road.
A lock of your hair is enough for me:
to bandage my many wounds.
The sawdust spills, the straw falters:
this clown will not be much longer.
Your bowl the rose, your mirror the Moon,
and twilights burn on your lips.
My delight into thick grief swoons,
the song entreats and implores.
And if my heart, my straw, ignites,
for you this clown will die.

[28] 12. Midday Cloud

At the hill's root where the rabbits run
and the foxes dig a burrow:
in the summer light in the sunshine
Katóka watches the clouds.
A green grassblade between her lips
her chin rests in her palm ...
and drowsily she wonders at the clouds
There King Mog swims up ahead
with his two-pronged beak,
and his crown above his head
poised like a cream cake.
There behind him runs the fool
grinning from ear to ear –
a grey snake stretches to the sky

nagy púpjából szürke kígyó
nyúlik az egekbe.
Törött kordén utazik
egy kopasztott kánya,
s haját tépve Bogyóvére,
a király leánya.
És utánuk cifra ház
gördül sok keréken,
benn a cirkusz hercegnője
öltözködik éppen.
Száz ruháját, ékszerét
odaadná szépen,
csak egy hétig futkoshatna
lenn a nyári réten.

from his hunched rear.
On a broken-down trolley
travels a shorn bear,
and the princess Berryblood
is tearing out her hair.
Behind them on a hundred wheels
rolls a gaudy house:
inside the lady of the circus
is putting on her clothes.
Her many clothes and all her jewels
she would swap happily
to run around for just a week
down on the summer fields.

*English version by Stephen Humphreys
and Csilla Dér*

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Toccata Classics, 16 Dalkeith Court, Vincent Street, London SW1P 4HH, UK

Tel: +44/0 207 821 5020 E-mail: info@toccataclassics.com