

# Ferenc FARKAS

## CHAMBER MUSIC, VOLUME FOUR: COMPLETE WORKS WITH CELLO II

PRÉLUDE ET CHACONNE ÉGARÉE  
SONATA A DUE  
THREE SONGS  
PIANO TRIO  
NOTTURNO  
DREI SÄTZE  
DIALOGHI  
MINUTI

Gábor Bretz, bass  
Veronika Oross, flute  
Kristof Baráti, violin  
Eszter Lesták Bedő, violin  
Péter Bársony, viola, viola d'amore  
Miklós Perényi, cello  
Miklós Spányi, harpsichord  
Balázs Szokolay, piano

INCLUDES FIRST RECORDINGS

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## FERENC FARKAS Complete Chamber Music with Cello, Volume Two

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<b>Notturmo for string trio (1927–29)*</b>	<b>11:08</b>
1 I <i>Andante</i>	5:14
2 II <i>Allegretto</i>	5:54
 <b>Drei Sätze for flute, cello and harpsichord (1983)</b>	 <b>6:17</b>
3 I <i>Preludio</i>	1:56
4 II <i>Feuille d'album</i>	2:48
5 III <i>Rondo</i>	1:43
 <b>Prélude et Chaconne égarée for two violins, viola d'amore and cello (1990)</b>	 <b>5:18</b>
6 I <i>Prélude</i>	0:59
7 II <i>Chaconne égarée</i>	4:19
 <b>Minuti for voice and cello (1990)</b>	 <b>7:11</b>
8 I <i>Il passato</i>	1:16
9 II <i>Congedo</i>	0:48
10 III <i>Amen per la Domenica in Albis</i>	0:44
11 IV <i>I morti</i>	1:21
12 V <i>Ed è subito sera</i>	0:54
13 VI <i>La rondine</i>	1:18
14 VII <i>Ecco il segno</i>	0:50
 <b>Sonata a due for viola and cello (1960–61)</b>	 <b>15:49</b>
15 I <i>Maestoso ma con slancio</i>	5:37
16 II <i>Andante moderato</i>	5:42
17 III <i>Allegro non troppo</i>	4:30

<b>Three Songs for voice and cello (1989)</b>	<b>3:44</b>
[18] I The music flows like poured wine	1:23
[19] II Loneliness lives along the way	1:37
[20] III The cold wind rushes up the river valley	0:44

<b>Dialoghi for two instruments (1987)</b>	<b>5:08</b>
[21] I <i>Moderato cantabile</i>	2:02
[22] II Scherzo	1:06
[23] III <i>Allegro leggiero</i>	2:00

<b>Piano Trio (1977–79)</b>	<b>11:39</b>
[24] I <i>Allegro agitato</i>	4:25
[25] II <i>Andante moderato</i>	4:23
[26] III <i>Allegro leggiero</i>	2:51

<b>Gábor Bretz, bass</b> [8]–[14] [18]–[20]	<b>TT 67:09</b>
<b>Veronika Oross, flute</b> [3]–[5] [21]–[23]	
<b>Kristóf Baráti, violin</b> [1]–[2] [6]–[7] [24]–[26]	
<b>Eszter Lesták Bedő, violin</b> [6]–[7]	
<b>Péter Bársony, viola</b> [1]–[2], <b>viola d'amore</b> [6]–[7]	
<b>Miklós Perényi, cello</b>	
<b>Miklós Spányi, harpsichord</b> [3]–[5]	
<b>Balázs Szokolay, piano</b> [24]–[26]	

ALL EXCEPT \* FIRST RECORDINGS

# **FERENC FARKAS: CHAMBER MUSIC, VOLUME FOUR –WORKS FOR CELLO II**

by László Gombos

This second Toccata Classics album of chamber music with cello by the Hungarian composer Ferenc Farkas (1905–2000) is much more diverse and irregular than the first.<sup>1</sup> Whereas the earlier anthology comprised pieces composed for cello and piano, in addition to a solo work and the chamber version of a song-cycle, every work in this collection was fashioned for a different combination of instruments. Only the performers of the two song-cycles found here are identical, but in this instance the setting is unusual, since in place of a piano a single cello accompanies the singers. Traditional musical genres are represented by the opening string trio and the closing piano trio, whereas in the duos the cello plays with a viola or with a flute. A flute, cello and harpsichord feature in a further trio and in a string quartet a viola d'amore takes the role of the standard viola.

The fact that in Farkas' chamber works there are 35 different combinations among the instrumental duos, eighteen types of trio, seven types of quartet, four kinds of quintet, seven types of sextet and two sorts of octet might at first seem to provide evidence of an extravagant, even eccentric, composer. Who else would have thought of grouping together a flute quintet with a double bass, two flutes with four guitars or three Hungarian *tárogató*s (a kind of clarinet, with a conical bore like a saxophone) with a Baroque harpsichord, if not a composer given to reckless experiment? In truth, one doesn't have to know much about Ferenc Farkas, the man and the artist, to realise that he was far from being the eccentric Romantic artist; indeed, he saw the preservation and extension of the great musical traditions as one of the chief

<sup>1</sup> Chamber Music for Cello, Volume One, Toccata Classics TOCC 0345.

tasks of his life. As the renowned Professor of Composition at the Academy of Music in Budapest, the influential teacher of Zoltán Jeney, Miklós Kocsár, György Kurtág, György Ligeti, Emil Petrovics, Sándor Szokolay and many others, he insisted on his Hungarian and European roots, their harmony and the beauty of their sounds – and yet at the same time he was drawn to experimentation and nurtured openness in his students. He looked for new sounds with those bold instrumental ensembles, and they also gave him the opportunity to offer music to a wide variety of chamber groups or random gatherings of musicians. When after the Second World War he travelled the country with his colleagues, taking their cultural message even to backward, isolated parts, he found that not every place had a usable piano available, and there was often a shortage of other instruments, too, and so he composed for the kind of musical groups which were immediately to hand, not only in the days following the War but later when he received requests for works from musicians. They knew they could confidently turn to him, one of Hungary's most popular composers. He wrote compositions both for beginners and for world-famous soloists, for school groups and professional orchestras, full-time and amateur choirs alike, and at many degrees of difficulty and in many styles. As the whole country listened to his operettas and radio adaptations, tens of thousands played his early-music arrangements, and even the connoisseurs of modern music always found something entirely new somewhere in Farkas' music.

It may seem strange in these liberal times that in the decades of the Socialist period, when the Iron Curtain closed off eastern Europe from the air of freedom, people in some respects came closer to one another, and cultural life played a decisive role in the creation of this sense of togetherness. This factor may explain the unusually high esteem in which composers living among the people were held, including Farkas and his disciples, who, like their teacher, were not cut off in some ivory tower, but often appeared before the public, performed on TV and radio, and took part in competition juries.

Farkas' exceptional knowledge of his profession was based on his studies at the Budapest Academy of Music (1922–27) and then from 1929 his two years spent at the Santa Cecilia Academy in Rome, as a student in Ottorino Respighi's advanced composition class. In between his two periods of study, when he worked as répétiteur

at the Municipal Theatre, he composed a string trio entitled *Notturmo*. It was first committed to paper in 1927 and completed in Vevey during a 1929 summer trip to Switzerland; he travelled with his friend the writer László Cs. Szabó. They stayed at the Hôtel de la Suisse, making trips out to Lausanne, Geneva and the hills of Les Pléiades. From a distance of half a century Farkas recalled it thus:

If I sensed an inexplicable reserve in Geneva, I fell in love with Lausanne with its enchantingly uneven streets in which the youth from all parts of the world congregated; in a manner not common at the time, they walked around in shirt sleeves and pullovers. The experience of the trip – to which I would add my study in Rome – had a decisive effect on my whole life, on my art and on my interests.<sup>2</sup>

The first performance of his *Notturmo* took place on 16 December 1930, when in a break from his Rome studies Farkas presented the first recital dedicated to his music in Budapest. The violin part was played by György Hannover, the viola by Leó Jotischky, and the cello by Pál Hütter. In Farkas' entire output this is the only work where an opus number is known: the composer allocated 'Op. 2' to it, but his numbering of pieces went no further. It was soon performed in Rome and Zagreb, but then the manuscript was lost during the adversities and upheavals of war. It turned up only some three decades later, when with some small revisions it was once again presented to the public. Péter Hidy, Zoltán Sümeghy and János Liebner performed it in December 1960 as part of the festival Budapest Music Weeks. In a programme note that Farkas wrote for the occasion, he described it thus:

Both movements of the *Notturmo* are in sonata form. In the first [1] a short retransition replaces the development section. The tone of this movement is lyrical, that of the second [2] is playful, jaunty, evoking the atmosphere of night music.<sup>3</sup>

*Drei Sätze* (1983) is a work of the elder master in which the combination of flute, cello and harpsichord is reminiscent of Baroque chamber music. A general characteristic

<sup>2</sup> *Vallomások a zenéről. Farkas Ferenc válogatott írásai*, ed. László Gombos, Püski, Budapest 2004, p. 217 (an English translation by Malcolm Sharps, *Ferenc Farkas on Music, Selected Writings 1930–95*, is in preparation from Toccata Press).

<sup>3</sup> Typescript in the composer's estate.

of Farkas is a fondness for recollecting the musical styles of past eras. Indications of this tendency can be seen in the Baroque main motif of the first movement called *Preludio* [3] and in its imitative treatment. In the *Feuille d'album* [4] two upper parts, accompanied continuously by the pendulum movement of the harpsichord, progress in a canon-like manner; the tunes, however, are from a later era. And in the third movement, a rondo [5], the instrumentation of an earlier time is paired with music of complete modernity – if it refers back to anything, it is to Farkas' earlier Neo-Classical propensities. The work was written for the members of the Hungarian Baroque Trio (Gyula Csetényi, flute; Zsolt Bartha, cello; Csaba Végvári, harpsichord), who gave the premiere in October 1984 in Budapest.

In sound and atmosphere, the third movement of the *Drei Sätze* is closely related to the first piece of the *Prélude et Chaconne égarée*. Listening to them in succession one might think that the former was a rethinking or continuation of the latter. The short *Prélude* [6] in the key of D introduces the '*Chaconne égarée*' ('Chaconne astray') [7], also in D, which features variations on a four-bar theme. The odd title may suggest that at times the variations are so far removed from the original theme that one hardly hears the relationship between them. According to the composer's manuscript, the piece was completed on 11 March 1990, but no information seems to have survived about who or what inspired it to be written. The string quartet for the piece is one where the viola part is taken by a Baroque viola d'amore. Farkas, contrary to standard practice, places it on the top line of the score, and the voice of the instrument is given more prominence in the second movement. Three decades earlier János Liebner had requested Farkas to write for the even more rarely used Baroque baryton gamba,<sup>4</sup> but there is no trace of a similar commission after 1990, nor any information about the viola d'amore player who collaborated with Farkas.

A song-cycle where the voice is accompanied not by a piano but by a cello would be unusual enough; Farkas wrote two of them. Composed in the first two months of 1990, *Minuti* consists of seven songs, most of them barely a minute long, based on the verses

<sup>4</sup> *Allantica* for baryton and harpsichord appears on Toccata Classics TOCC 0345, and *Concerto allantica*, its orchestral version, on TOCC 0176.

of four Italian poets. The title thus refers simultaneously to the brevity of the songs and additionally – because of their themes of sadness and passing – to the brevity of life. To a poem of Giovanni Pascoli (1855–1912) Farkas composed ‘*Il passato*’ (‘The Past’) [8], and to the poetry of the first Nobel Prize winner in Literature, Giosuè Carducci (1835–1907), he wrote ‘*Congedo*’ (‘Farewell’) [9]. Farkas couldn’t have known those two poets personally. Salvatore Quasimodo (1901–68), though, did make several visits to Hungary. Already a Nobel laureate, in the summer of 1961, Quasimodo marked his treatment and cure in the spa at Balatonfüred by planting a willow tree on the promenade along the banks of Lake Balaton.<sup>5</sup> At the same time Farkas was on holiday at Balatonlelle on the other side of the lake, and one can only speculate that the two masters may have met. In the song-cycle three Quasimodo verses are set to music: ‘*Amen per la Domenica in Albis*’ (‘Amen for Palm Sunday’) [10], ‘*I morti*’ (‘The Dead’) [11] and ‘*Ed è subito sera*’ (‘And suddenly it’s evening’) [12]. The series ends with two settings from another Noble laureate, Eugenio Montale (1896–1981), the original titles of which Farkas does not indicate in his manuscript (‘*Lindau*’; ‘*Motetto VIII*’), merely giving as the titles the first words of the poems: ‘*La rondine*’ (‘The Swallow’) [13] and ‘*Ecco il segno*’ (‘Behold the Sign’) [14].

The **Three Songs** composed in 1989 were given only numbers and not individual titles, with all three poems selected from a single poet, the American John Gracen Brown (born in 1936). The first two, ‘The music flows like poured wine’ [18] and ‘Loneliness lives along the way’ [19], convey a melancholic atmosphere similar to the one which characterises *Minuti*, whereas the third, *Allegro agitato*, snatches the listener out of that mood with its pictorial music: ‘The cold wind rushes up the river valley’ [20].

The inception of **Sonata a due** occurred thanks to a chance meeting. In October 1960 Farkas represented Hungary at a UNESCO conference in Paris, and on the way paused to rest at the house of an old friend, the conductor László Somogyi, in Geneva. The violist of the Végh Quartet, György Janzer, and his wife, the cellist Éva Czákó, were also staying there at the time. They asked Farkas to write them a duo for viola and cello, the main theme of which he noted down a month later at Christmas in the

<sup>5</sup> A verse written on the occasion of this visit can be read on the memorial plaque on a statue which stands next to the tree. Since 1993 the town of Balatonfüred has organised a meeting and a competition for poets in memory of Quasimodo.



resort of Galyatető in the Mátra Mountains.<sup>6</sup> The work was completed on 17 March 1961. Its origins notwithstanding, it was Géza Németh and Ede Banda who gave the first performance, on 11 October at an evening recital of Farkas' works.

All three movements are composed within a twelve-tone system used with a certain freedom, each built on its own tone-row. The source of the theme that Farkas had written down in Galyatető was revealed to me some decades later by his poet friend and writing partner, László Dalos: the initial notes of the main theme following the slow introduction conceal the telephone number of a valued colleague, violinist Vilmos Tátrai, transposed into pitches in D flat.<sup>7</sup> Farkas himself described the piece thus:

After a wide gesturing introduction some bars in length which stands like a gate in front of the work, the first movement, written in sonata form, begins [15]. The main theme is drawn over a jaunty ostinato, from which is woven the transition section, then a languorous, emotional secondary theme appears that later gives way to the pulsing, four-part closing theme built on the double-stopping of the two instruments. The second movement [16] is a profoundly expressed confession: an intimate dialogue of instruments in ternary form. The third movement [17] is a playful, bantering, 'irregular' Rondo. The jaunty secondary theme returns changed yet recognisable. In the trio the cello sings lyrically. To close the piece the introduction is heard once again, providing a frame for the three movements.<sup>8</sup>

Farkas' *Dialoghi* for two instruments was written in 1987. The higher voice can be played also on the flute or clarinet, and the lower on the cello or bassoon. Initially the clarinet-bassoon version was played in 1989 in Mannheim, and in September 1990 in Budapest it was performed by László Horváth and Gábor Janota. The three-movement composition actually forms a single large arch in which it is possible for all forms of dialogue between the two instruments to occur, in counterpoint or independently, interwoven or in parallel, and so on. The *Moderato cantabile* [21] is a close relative

<sup>6</sup> Cf. *Vallomások a zenéről*, op. cit., p. 276.

<sup>7</sup> If one gives progressive numbers to the notes of the scale, beginning with D flat, the phone number – 110529 – produces the following theme: D flat–D flat–pause–A flat–E flat–E flat. Farkas memorised telephone numbers he used frequently by singing them to himself and at the beginning of the composition process he chose the melody ringing in his ears.

<sup>8</sup> Typescript in the composer's estate.

of Farkas' later songs; the voices are sensitively interwoven. The second piece, a Scherzo [22], resembles a graceful and cheerful chase deploying a wide range of ideas. There is hardly a moment in the intricacies of the rhythmic or melodic counterpoint when the movement of the instruments comes together; only in the final four bars do the instruments progress in parallel, anticipating the end of the third movement. This *Allegro leggiero* [23], built on complementary movement, has a triumphant finale, in which the pantomimic gestures of the piece come together in lively ensemble.

Farkas' **Piano Trio** arises from his middle period, when twelve-tone music played an important role in his chamber music. Constructed in three movements, the work follows the conventions of the genre in its external features: the first is *Allegro agitato* [24], the second *Andante moderato* [25] and the third *Allegro leggiero* [26]. But seen as part of Farkas' *œuvre* as a whole, its tone is unusual: here he approaches the fierce gestures of Expressionism, with the music characterised by sharp and dramatic contrasts. The inception of the composition came about thanks to a chance meeting: in 1976 the cellist János Starker and pianist Menachem Pressler gave a concert in Budapest, after which they were guests at Farkas' home. Pressler was a member of the Beaux Arts Trio and commissioned a piano trio for the ensemble. Farkas began it the following year in Lausanne and completed it in summer 1979; the premiere came about in December 1982 in the Academy of Music, Budapest, where it was performed by Leila Rásonyi, Erzsébet Mezey and László Almásy. I have not been able to discover whether the Beaux Arts Trio included the piece in one of their concert programmes.

*László Gombos, born in 1967, is a Hungarian musicologist, graduating from the Franz 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 Ph.D. 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.*

Born in Budapest, the bass **Gábor Bretz** began his vocal training with Stephan Czovek in Los Angeles and with Albert Antalffy in Budapest. He subsequently studied at the Béla Bartók Conservatoire of Music with Mária Fekete and the Franz Liszt Academy of Music with Sándor Sólyom-Nagy, and won the 2005 Maria Callas Grand Prix Competition in Athens.

Since graduating from the Franz Liszt Academy, his frequent performances at the Hungarian State Opera have included the title roles in *Mefistofele* and *Le nozze di Figaro*, Leporello and the title role in *Don Giovanni*, Banquo in *Macbeth*, Colline in *La bohème*, Don Basilio in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Escamillo in *Carmen*, Gurnemanz in *Parsifal*, Zaccaria in *Nabucco* and Orestes in *Elektra*, as well as Landgraf in *Tannhäuser* at the Wagner Festival under Ádám Fischer in Budapest.

Other notable appearances include the title role in *Der fliegende Holländer* at the Passionstheater in Oberammergau; Ferrando in *Il trovatore* at the Royal Opera House; Escamillo in *Carmen* at the Bayerische Staatsoper, the Royal Opera House, the Metropolitan Opera, New York, the New National Theatre in Tokyo and the Hamburg State Opera; Colline in *La bohème* at the Royal Opera House; Shaklovity in *Khovanshchina* at Dutch National Opera; Phillippe II in *Don Carlos* under Renato Palumbo at the Hamburg State Opera, in a Peter Konwitschny production; and numerous performances in the title role of *Bluebeard's Castle* with The Berlin Philharmonic, Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra, the Bayerische Rundfunk Orchestra, Oregon Symphony Orchestra and the New York Philharmonic under Daniel Barenboim, Gustavo Dudamel, Ádám Fischer, Edward Gardner, Daniele Gatti, Valery Gergiev, Daniel Harding, Michele Mariotti and Esa-Pekka Salonen. He has also worked with other eminent conductors, including Alain Altinoglu, Philippe Jordan, Kent Nagano, Simon Rattle, Juraj Valčuha and Omer Meir Wellber.



**Veronika Oross**, flute, born in Győr in 1973, studied at the Ferenc Liszt Academy of Music under János Bálint, Lóránt Kovács and Erika Sebők, and is now a member of the staff there herself. She has won a number of awards as a member of the Concordia Wind Quintet and since 1995 has been

solo flute of the MÁV Symphony Orchestra in Budapest. Concert highlights include a European tour with the Budapest Festival Orchestra under Sir Georg Solti and MÁV Symphony Orchestra concerts in Japan under James Levine, with the 'three tenors', José Carreras, Plácido Domingo and Luciano Pavarotti. Her solo appearances include the Mozart Flute and Harp Concerto and the Reinecke and Ibert Flute Concertos (all with the MÁV Symphony Orchestra), and her concert performances include works by J. S. Bach, C. P. E. Bach, Cimarosa, Doppler, Doráti, Madarász and Szokolai, as well as in Farkas' *Serenata Concertante*. Her recordings include the Mozart Flute and Harp Concerto, Attila Reményi's *Rhapsody* for BCC and Iván Madarász's *Episodi Concertanti* (Flute Concerto No. 3) for Hungaroton. She is also a member of the Trio da Capo, with the harpsichordist Angelika Csizmadia and cellist Kousay Mahdy Kadduri; with them she has recorded flute sonatas by Jiří and František Benda, also for Hungaroton.



**Eszter Lesták Bedő**, violin, was born in Budapest in 1971. She started learning the violin with Alice Király at the age of six, before studying at the Béla Bartók Conservatoire under Teréz Pichner. At the Ferenc Liszt Academy of Music her teachers were Géza Kapás, Ferenc Rados and Vilmos Szabadi, and she participated in master-classes by Dénes Zsigmondy, Loránd Fenyves and Ferenc Rados. She is concert-master of the Erkel Chamber Orchestra, and has been a member of the Pulzus String Quartet since 2002, and its first violinist since 2017, as well as a violinist with the Budapest Festival Orchestra since autumn 2002. She has been a prizewinner at the Sándor Végh competition on three separate occasions, and is a regular performer at the International Chamber Music Festival in Kaposvár. Since 2012, she has performed in the Pannon Philharmonic



Orchestra in Pécs as a visiting concert-master. She gives a number of concerts each year on Baroque and period instruments, both as a member of the Budapest Festival Orchestra and with the Ensemble Cantile, founded by Anneke Boeke.

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



Photograph: Szilvia Csibi

In 1974 Miklós Perényi joined the faculty at his *alma mater*, the Ferenc Liszt Academy, 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 fourth appearance on Toccata Classics, playing music by Ferenc Farkas on every occasion. On the first, on TOCC 0176, he recorded Farkas' *Concertino all'antica* and *Trittico concertato*, TOCC 0345 presents the first volume of this survey of Farkas' chamber music for cello, and on TOCC 0379 he joined a group of musicians presenting chamber music for flute.

The violinist **Kristóf Baráti** was born in Budapest, Hungary, 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 he won the Paganini Competition in Moscow, considered the ‘Oscar’ of violinists.



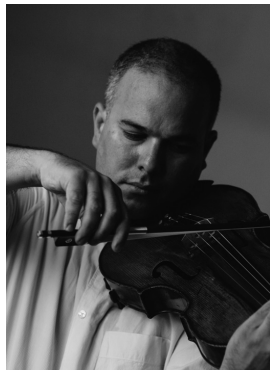
Kristóf Baráti performs in important concert halls around the world with its major orchestras, including the Budapest Festival, Deutsches Symphonie, Japan Philharmonic, NDR Symphony, NHK Tokyo, Royal Philharmonic, Russian National, St Petersburg Symphony, Spanish Radio and Television Symphony, WDR Cologne, and with conductors who have included 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, Mischa Maisky, Enrico Pace, Miklós Perényi and Dénes Várjon, among many others. He has been invited to many of the world's leading concert-halls, not least the Musikverein in Vienna, the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam and 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 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.

*kristofbarati.com*

The violist **Péter Bársony**, a professor at the Franz Liszt Academy of Music and the Kunstuniversität Graz, is a frequent recitalist, soloist and chamber musician, his chamber partners including Péter Csaba, Márta Gulyás, Ida Kavafian, Barnabás Kelemen, Zoltán Kocsis, Miklós Perényi, Dezső Ránki, Hagai Shaham and István Várdai. He has performed with such ensembles as the Brentano, Kodály, Miró and Ying String Quartets. His enjoyment of exploring new repertoire for the viola has led him to work with Péter Eötvös, Sofia Gubaidulina, György Kurtág and Steve Reich, and several other composers have dedicated viola works to him. He made his Carnegie Hall debut as a soloist with the American Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Leon Botstein, in May 2013. On his latest album he performs the complete Brahms sonatas and the songs with viola, Op. 91, with Peter Frankl and Ildikó Komlósi.

*[www.peterbarsony.com](http://www.peterbarsony.com)*



The Hungarian organist, harpsichordist and pianist **Miklós Mikael Spányi** studied harpsichord and organ at the Ferenc Liszt Music Academy with Ferenc Gergely and János Sebestyén. He continued his studies at the Koninklijk Vlaams Muziekconservatorium in Antwerp with Jos van Immerseel and at the Hochschule für Music in Munich with Hedwig Bilgram. He won first prize at international harpsichord competitions in Nantes (1984) and Paris (1987).

Miklós Spányi has given concerts in most European countries as soloist on five different historical keyboard instruments (organ, harpsichord, fortepiano, clavichord, tangent piano), as well as playing continuo with various chamber groups and Baroque orchestras. He has been Artistic Director of the Hungarian Baroque orchestra



Concerto Armonico, founded in 1983. He has recorded an extensive discography for different labels as soloist and with his orchestra.

For a couple of decades Miklós Spányi's work as performer and researcher has been focused on Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach and he is one of the world's most acknowledged scholars and performers of his work. For the Swedish label BIS he has recorded all his keyboard concertos and all the works for keyboard solo.

From 1990 to 2012 he lived in Finland, teaching at the Oulu Conservatoire and the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki; he was also Artistic Director of the Finnish early-music group Ensemble Opus X. He has given master-classes in the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, France, Portugal, Hungary and Finland. Currently he teaches at the Staatliche Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst in Mannheim, at the Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest and at the Conservatorium van Amsterdam in the Netherlands.

**Balázs Szokolay** was born into a legendary family of musicians in Budapest in 1961: his father is the Kossuth Prize-winning composer Sándor Szokolay. Balázs started to play the piano at the age of five, taught by Erna Czövek. Later, at the Ferenc Liszt Academy of Music, his professors included Pál Kadosa, Zoltán Kocsis, György Kurtág, Klára Máthé and Ferenc Rados. Following his graduation in 1983, he won scholarships for two more years of studies in Munich and Moscow. He received instruction from Ludwig Hoffmann, Yvonne Lefébure, Mikhail Voskresensky and Amadeus Webersinke. He was a prize-winner in no fewer than fourteen competitions, and has now himself become a jury-member in major music competitions. He has been professor of piano at the Franz Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest since 1987, a guest professor at the University of Graz since 2009 and at the Franz Liszt University of Music in Weimar since 2012. For over a decade now he has given an annual master-class in Festetics Palace, Keszthely, on Lake Balaton, in western Hungary. He has given concerts and master-classes in over 40 countries across the world. His students have won more than 50 international prizes in different music competitions. His own repertoire covers a wide range of styles, with





a strong focus on chamber music, although he has also appeared as a soloist with a number of leading orchestras and conductors. He has recorded extensively, not least with Naxos and Hungaroton, and has broadcast for a range of television and radio stations, among them the BBC in London, RIAS in Berlin, AVRO and TROS in the Netherlands, RAI in Turin, the CBC in Canada and, of course, Hungarian Radio and Television. In 2001, he was awarded the prestigious Liszt Prize by the Hungarian government.

[www.szokolaybalazs.com](http://www.szokolaybalazs.com)

## Texts and Translations

### *Minuti*

#### **[8] I Il passato**

*Giovanni Pascoli*

Rivedo i luoghi dove un giorno ho pianto:  
un sorriso mi sembra ora quel pianto.  
Rivedo i luoghi dove ho già sorriso...  
Oh! Come lacrimoso quel sorriso!

*I see again the places where I cried one day:  
Now the cry seems like a smile  
I see again the places where I've already smiled...  
Oh! How tearful was that smile!*

#### **[9] II Congedo**

*Giosuè Carducci*

O fior tricolore!  
Tramontano le stelle in mezzo al mare  
e si spengono i canti entro il cuore.

*O, tricoloured flower!  
Stars are falling in the middle of the sea  
And songs are dying in the heart.*

#### **[10] III Amen per la Domenica in Albis**

*Salvatore Quasimodo*

Non m'hai tradito, signore,  
d'ogni dolore son fatto primo nato

*You haven't betrayed me, sir,  
With every pain I am born anew.*

### **11 IV I morti**

*Salvatore Quasimodo*

Mi parve s'aprissero voci,  
che labbra cercassero acque,  
che mani s'alzassero a cieli.  
Che cieli! Più bianchi dei morti  
che sempre mi destano piano;  
i piedi hanno scalzi, (non vanno lontano).  
Gazzelle alle fonti bevevano,  
vento a frugare ginepri  
e rami ad alzare le stelle?

*It seemed to me as if voices were opened,  
as if lips were searching for water,  
as if hands were being lifted to the skies.  
What skies! The most white of the dead  
Which always woke me gently.  
No shoes on their legs (they're not going far),  
Gazelles were drinking at fountains,  
Wind to browse the junipers  
And branches to wake up stars?*

### **12 V Ed è subito sera**

*Salvatore Quasimodo*

Ognuno sta solo sul cuor della terra  
trafitto da un raggio di sole:  
ed è subito sera

*Everyone is alone on the heart of the planet  
Pierced by a ray of sunshine:  
And suddenly it is the evening.*

### **13 VI La rondine**

*Eugenio Montale*

La rondine vi porta  
fili d'erba, non vuole che la vita passi.  
Ma tra gli argini, a notte, l'acqua morta  
logora i sassi.  
Sotto le torce fumicose sbanda  
sempre qualche ombra sulle prode vuote.  
Nel cerchio della piazza una sarabanda  
s'agita al mugghio dei battelli a ruote.

*The swallow carries you,  
Blades of grass, you don't want life to pass.  
But between the levees, at night, dead water  
blunts the stones.*

*Under the torch the smoke drifts  
There's always some shadow over the courageous  
voids  
In the circle of the plaza, a sarabanda  
Shakes like the roar of a ship.*

**14 VII Ecco il segno**

*Eugenio Montale*

Ecco il segno; s'innerva  
sul muro che s'indora:  
un frastaglio di palma  
bruciato dai barbagli dell'aurora.

Il passo che proviene  
dalla serra sì lieve,  
non è felpato dalla neve, è ancora  
tua vita, sangue tuo nelle mie vene.

*Here's the sign; angry  
On the golden wall:  
An ornament of palms  
Burned by the brightness of the dawn.*

*The step which comes  
from the greenhouse is faded,  
not softened by the snow, and yet  
your life, your blood in my veins.*

**Three Songs**

*Texts by John Gracen Brown*

**18 I The music flows like poured wine**

The music flows like poured wine filling the glass,  
the music troubles and taunts the soul  
the music fills the soul with peace  
the beauty of the music rustles about the heart  
and stirs the soul  
the music touches the heart  
and spreads its peace within.

**19 II Loneliness lives along the way**

Loneliness lives along the way  
I feel it rise  
within the wilderness of the selves.  
Once loneliness was far away

and you danced about the wilderness of the  
selves.

The pale moonlight is shining  
over the depths of the land  
and within the night of the self.

**20 III The cold wind rushes up the river valley**

The cold wind  
rushes up the river valley  
Ah, to feel the wind brush up  
and sing once more against the sand.  
The wind blows and blows  
and the sharp edges of the soul crumble.



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For permission to reproduce the poems that are still in copyright, I am grateful to Alessandro Quasimodo for the three poems by his father, Salvatore Quasimodo, and to John Gracen Brown for his three poems. I regret that my research proved unable to locate the copyright-holder of the two poems by Eugenio Montale and apologise for reproducing them here without permission.

*András Farkas*

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