

DLA Thesis

Kiss Gergely Ádám

The influence of jazz and its effect on Martinů's art and style, in light of his
compositions related to the cello

Research Director: Fazekas Gergely, Phd

Liszt Academy of Music
Doctoral School 28 of Art and Cultural History Studies

Budapest

2022

I. Pre-conditions of research

Martinů composed nearly 400 works, yet he is still one of the lesser-known Western classical music composers of the world. One of the main reasons behind this could be regarded to the fact, that Martinů was on a banned list in his own country for a long time in the past. As a result of his lesser international recognition, there is still very little literature available in English and German, and as far as I know, no Hungarian-language study had been done on Martinů and his works before Míra Nagy's doctoral dissertation in 2019, which all has made collating information and materials for my research more difficult. Martinů's works could be examined from many angles, but for me it was the presence of jazz which caught my attention firstly and raised my initial interest in his music and his musical language. From that point, I decided to approach Martinů's music from this perspective in my dissertation.

II. Sources

The main sources I relied on during my work:

Miloš Šafránek: *Bohuslav Martinů: The Man and His Music*. Mrs. Božena Linhartová (trans.). New York: Alfred A. Knopf Inc, 1944.

Miloš Šafránek: *Bohuslav Martinů: His Life and Works*. London: Allan Wingate, 1962.

Brian Large: *Martinů*. London: Gerald Duckworth, 1975.

Deborah Mower: *French Music and Jazz in Conversation. From Debussy to Brubeck*. (Music since 1900). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.

F. James Rybka: *Bohuslav Martinů: The Compulsion to Compose*. Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2011.

Christopher Hogwood: „*Critical notes*.” In: Christopher Hogwood. (ed.): *Bohuslav Martinů – La Revue De Cuisine. Ballet pour six instruments (1927)*. Párizs: Éditions Musicales Alphonse Leduc, 2003, 85–96.

Christopher Hogwood: „*Preface*.” In: Christopher Hogwood. (ed.): *Bohuslav Martinů – La Revue De Cuisine. Ballet pour six instruments (1927)*. Párizs: Éditions Musicales Alphonse Leduc, 2003, xv–xxiv.

Jaroslav Mihule: *A Pocket Guide to the Life an Work of Bohuslav Martinů*. Polička: Municipal Museum and Gallery Policka, 2008.

Jeffrey H. Jackson: *Making Jazz French. Music and Modern Life on Interwar Paris*. Gilbert M. Joseph, Emily S. Rosenberg (ed.): *American Encounters/Global Interactions*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003.

III. Method

In my dissertation, I would like to show how jazz influenced Martinů's compositions, as part of this I will examine the artistic milieu surrounding Martinů in Paris (performers, ensembles, venues, recordings, as well as which composers and which compositions were composed at the time). In order to get a comprehensive picture, in the first chapter of this dissertation I will follow Martinů's life and the evolution of his compositional style up to his Paris years, since that era was the most determining period when it comes to jazz influence in his music (everything that can be linked to jazz style in his later pieces can be connected and traced back to this period). During my work, my focus and emphasis will be on the main subject of this thesis; how jazz music impacted Paris and Paris' musical life, based on and analysed from Martinů's compositions which use the elements of the jazz style.

Due to the large number of his works, this is a subjective selection of compositions which were either created specifically under the influence of jazz or from compositions that are using the characteristics of jazz. Naturally, besides choosing the works which are inspired by jazz, it was also important for me that my main instrument, the cello is featured and playing a significant role in the compositions as well.

IV. Results

Examining Martinů's works created specifically under the influence of jazz, it becomes clear to what extent the use of rhythmic elements increased in Martinů's compositions, as well as how he was mastering and assimilating different musical formulas in his pieces. Taking all these notions into account, several interesting areas can be observed both in *La Revue de Cuisine* and in the three cello sonatas as well.

Bartók indicated three possibilities in his answer to the question of how folk music can manifest itself into classical music and how folklore musical elements can be implemented by the classical music composer; in my dissertation, I will present Martinů's jazz-related works based on those ideas, divided and layed out in a table format.

V. The documentation of activities related to the topic of this thesis

1 May 2014, Montclair, John J. Cali School of Music, Jed Leshowitz Recital Hall. Martinů: *Sonata for Cello and Piano No. 2*, H. 286. with Steven W. Ryan (piano).

10 May 2014, Montclair, John J. Cali School of Music, Jed Leshowitz Recital Hall. Martinů: *Sonata for Cello and Piano No. 2*, H. 286. with Steven W. Ryan.

June 2016, Budapest, Weiner Leó Music School and High School of Music, Weiner Recital Hall. Martinů: *Sonata for Cello and Piano No. 2*, H. 286. with Farkas Zsolt (piano).

31 January 2018, Budapest, Liszt Academy of Music, Solti Hall. Martinů: *Sonata for Cello and Piano No. 2*, H. 286. with Farkas Zsolt.

June 2018, New National Excellence Programme, *The relationship of Frank Rybka and Bohuslav Martinů*.

14 March 2019, Budapest, Liszt Academy of Music, Solti Hall. Martinů: *Bergerettes*, H. 275. with Miranda Liu (violin) and Nagy Míra (piano).

March 2019, Budapest, Liszt Academy of Music, the master course of Francesco Dillon. Martinů: *Bergerettes* with Miranda Liu and Nagy Míra.

May 2019, Budapest, Liszt Academy of Music, the master course of Kelemen Barnabás. Martinů: *Bergerettes* with Miranda Liu and Nagy Míra.

9 February 2020, Budapest, Ádám Jenő Music School, Recital Hall. Martinů: *Bergerettes* with Miranda Liu and Nagy Míra.

24 February 2020, Budapest, Liszt Academy of Music, Solti Hall. Martinů: *Bergerettes* with Miranda Liu and Nagy Míra.