

19 October 2022, Budapest, FSZEK Ötpecsirta Salon

Programme:

- Dohnányi: Aria
- Tóth Péter: Trio
- Madarász Iván: 3 Off-Beat Dances
- Doppler: *Hungarian fantasy*
- Szigeti István: Nonsenses for flute and bassoon
- Bella Máté: *Phantasm*
- Fekete Gyula: Bassoon Concerto (1st movement)
- Doppler: Andante and Rondo

04/11/2022, Budapest, FSZEK Ötpecsirta Salon

Programme:

- Tóth Péter: Apocryphal Sonata
- Madarász Iván: *Colla parte*
- Sugár Miklós: *Spring letter*
- Dubrovay László: *Solo No. 7*
- Ott Rezső: „*tu veux jouer?*”
- Kovács Zoltán: Tango

22.14.2022, Kalocsa, Municipal Library

Commemorative event by Judit Apagyi - Haskó

22.01.2023, Kalocsa, Municipal Library

The Day of Hungarian Culture

DLA doctoral thesis

by

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The Development of Hungarian Bassoon Playing in the 20th Century:
From Petrovics to Dubrovay

Thesis leader: Oross Veronika

Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music

Art and cultural history

doctoral school

Budapest

2023

I. Background to the research

For almost 40 years, I have been particularly interested in contemporary music, including Hungarian contemporary bassoon literature. In 1979, as a student of the Béla Bartók Conservatoire and László Hara Jr., I first encountered the Passacaglia in Blues composed by Emil Petrovics, and since then I have played it for the composer on several occasions, analysing elements of the piece and, in some cases, even modifying them, for example, changing the dynamic specifications. This was the first step towards contemporary Hungarian bassoon literature and can be seen as a distant predecessor of this research. By getting involved in the Hungarian composer community, I worked with almost all Hungarian composers from the 1980s onwards, and in addition to the nearly 60 soloistic works composed for me (see the catalogue of works in the dissertation), I had the opportunity to consult in depth with Emil Petrovics, György Ligeti, Zoltán Jeney, Miklós Kocsár, Sándor Balassa, Kamillo Lendvay, Jenő Keuler and Máté Viktor. In addition to the solo bassoon repertoire, my thesis also deals with contemporary chamber and ensemble works, as I have been involved in ensembles such as Intermodulation, Componensemble and EAR, and later UMZE, and I myself founded ensembles dealing with contemporary repertoire such as Trio Lignum and the Corridor Bassoon Quartet. This almost daily contact with live music and composers, which continues to this day, provided the inspiration and knowledge for the choice of the topic and helped in the preparation, processing and organisation of the dissertation material.

The literature of the period, however, does not abound with literature on the bassoon, and there has been no publication of any kind dealing with the technical development of bassoon playing in Hungary. I can only refer to two foreign sources, which are in manuscript form in my personal collection: Pascal Gallois: *Die Spieltechnik des Fagotts (La technique de jeu du basson)*. (Bärenreiter, 2009.); and Sergio Penazzi: *Il fagotto altre tecniche: nuove fonti di espressione musicale*. (Milano: Ricordi, 1982.). This paper can be a starting point, a gap-filler for future research. The literature on chamber formations or major chamber ensembles (including the Budapest Wind Ensemble, the Hungarian Wind Ensemble, the Philharmonia Wind Ensemble, or the 180 Group, F.Z.CS, Componensemble), is important though limited in quantity in comparison to the subject. It consists only of journal articles, anniversary articles or reviews and interviews (including the reports of György Kroó and other music reporters, music aesthetes and music critics), some exceptional dissertations and studies such as Tímea Nagyné Fábrián Zoltán Jeney's legacy in Hungarian music, (DLA

A debut concert by the EAR ensemble.

Programme:

- Faragó Béla: Testimony - for soprano, bass and electronics
- Pintér Gyula: White - for basson and electronics
- Madarász Iván: Music Notes for Soprano and Flute
- Láng István: The tree - to a poem by Ápád Tóth - cantata for soprano and synthesizer
- Baráth Bálint: Kensho - for shakuhachi and electronics
- Sugár Miklós: *L.v.B. alio modo* - for piano
- Bánkóvi Gyula: Torn up rhythms - for bassoon and electronics
- Hollós Máté: Memory - chamber cantata

22.10.2021, Kalocsa, Municipal Library

Concert with pianist Nóra Gábor-Nagy on the occasion of the 210th anniversary of the birth of Ferenc Liszt.

22.03.2022, Kalocsa, Municipal Library

V. Early Blue Bird in the library.

15.10.2022, Budapest, Nádor Hall

Author's evening of Miklós Sugár on the occasion of his 70th birthday.

Programme:

- Cloud Variations - piano
- *Le moment d'un adieu* – CD
- *Models* – bassoon
- Songs to parts of poems by Béla Kondor - soprano
- A Winter Afternoon - CD
- Spring Letter - for bassoon and piano
- Stardust - soprano, guitar
- *L.v. B alio modo* – piano
- *3' 13"* – bassoon
- Two Latin Hymn Fragments - for soprano, flute, violin and piano

lack of literature thanks to the Liszt Academy of Music Library, although as I indicated above, this literature is particularly scarce. I made up for the shortage with interviews with the composers, conversations, joint analyses of their works, and the memory of nearly 2000 concerts in contemporary music over the past 40 years, as well as my personal notes.

Some of my concerts were given in the spirit of the theme of the dissertation:

06.10.2018, Budapest, Budapest Music Center, Concert Hall

A joint programme with the Budapest Music Center and the Eötvös Péter Contemporary Music Foundation. Final concert of the international masterclass of the Péter Eötvös Contemporary Music Foundation.

Programme:

- Aaron Holloway-Nahum: *Ezra's Nursery* – premiere
- Alex Nante: *Dynamis* – premiere
- Mozart: Serenade in B flat major (Gran Partita), K. 361

13.04.2019, Budapest, airport terminal

On April 13, 2019, music-loving students from the Darus School took part in a classical music concert organised by the Municipality and a lecture given by me at the airport terminal.

Programme:

- Pieces by Hidas, Kocsár, Tóth Péter, Madarász, Hollós and Kovács Zoltán.

17.12.2019, Budapest, Szabó Ervin Library of Budapest Ötpacsirta Salon

Programme:

- Tóth Péter: *O Magnum Mysterium*
- Madarász Iván: Canons
- Kocsár Miklós: Bagatelles
- Huszár Lajos: Bassoon quartet
- Duffek Mihály: Scherzo

22.01.2020, Budapest, Fészek Artists' Club

thesis) or Viktória Ozsvárt's study "The impact of the political ideology of the 1950s on Hungarian flute music". The biographies of the composers, their creative paths, development and concepts were mainly helped by the factual writings of the Hungarian Composers series, and the collected, summarizing works of György Kroó, Imre Földes, Anna Dalos, Márta Grabócz, as indicated in the bibliography. There are, however, artists and works for which no biography, monograph, collected volume, study or analysis of the work is available. At most the CV compiled by them or the interview with them, often only a manuscript, has helped my work. In the case of Emil Petrovics, his autobiography and archived concert catalogue, which I managed to obtain from his daughter, were the main support for the start of the thesis. As indicated in my dissertation, most of the works I have studied and analysed (for example, the Dubrovay wind quintets, the Octet, the Tihanyi and the Radiant works) are currently in manuscript, for lack of music editions, and I currently own a good part of them, the missing ones being gratefully received from the authors for the time of the research.

II. Sources

I considered the scores of the works of Petrovics, Dubrovay, Károlyi, Láng, Tihanyi and Sugár, of which the Petrovics Passacaglia, the Dubrovay Wind Quintets and the Octet were important, as primary sources, together with László Hara Jr.'s pencil notations by the composers during rehearsals. I have evaluated and recorded them for posterity in the scores and textual analyses of this thesis. In the case of Petrovics and Dubrovay, I have also looked at all the works that seriously involved the bassoon, i.e., soloistic works using bassoon, piano and smaller chamber formations, such as Petrovics's Wind Quintet and his opera *Lysistraté*, as well as both of Dubrovay's wind quintets, i.e. the Octet and the Cinque Pezzi. I also used my personal conversations and memories with Emil Petrovics, for example, within the rules of the doctoral thesis. His comments, corrections, suggestions and questions were very valuable to me. While writing the thesis, I had the opportunity to consult Eszter Petrovics, the composer's daughter, László Dubrovay, Miklós Sugár, László Tihanyi several times, and these interviews were a useful input for writing this paper. I owe them a debt of gratitude for allowing me to publish most of the manuscript scores individually.

Secondary sources were only readily available for Petrovics, thanks to his biography, *Self-Portrait - Without a Mask 1930-1966*, and Imre Földes' *The Thirties And his interview booklet: Conversations with Hungarian composers*. Unfortunately, literature about the other authors of the thesis could only be found in newspaper articles, record and concert reviews, printed or online interviews, apart from Anna Dallos' publication *Ajtón lakattal (Door with a padlock), Zeneszerzés a Kádár-kori Magyarországon (1956-1989) (Composing Music in Hungary during the Kadar-era)* and György Kroó's book *A magyar zeneszerzés 25 éve (25 Years of Hungarian Composition)*.

The composers' works are either from their own archives or from their official websites, or in other cases from the BMC's very valuable database (also online) and the catalogue of the Hungarian Composers series.

III. Methodology

Petrovics's deservedly well-known piece is the first soloistic bassoon work and is still challenging today. The Hungarian bassoon society has known and played it since the secondary school age, due to the fact that the piece was born under fortunate circumstances and was already a compulsory piece at the International Bassoon Competition in 1965, and in the nearly 40 years since then it has become a permanent piece in the curricula and also in the compulsory or optional repertoire of competitions. It is considered an epoch-making work, not only because of its popularity, but also because of its technical requirements, which were novel for its time. It was therefore the opening piece of my thesis. My aim was to take this as a starting point and present the most important moments of the period, through works and pieces, analysing their innovations and highlighting the development of Hungarian bassoon playing over the last 30-40 years. The line in the dissertation begins with some of the works that preceded the Petrovics piece, such as the early works of Attila Bozay, Ferenc Farkas, Tibor Kazacsay, Rudolf Maros, Jenő Takács and Imre Vincze from the 1960s. I have also highlighted some works from the post-Passacaglia era, which, on the one hand, brought new things into the bloodstream in terms of bassoon playing, or replaced the classical piano with new partners, i.e., brought a new sound with CDs and digitisation or represented a change in notation. Sometimes I approach each piece of music from a more distant perspective, i.e., with general music history and biographical data, also looking at the context of genre and instrumental history. This is so the reader can get as complete and

necessarily detailed a picture as possible of the composers and pieces of music, but without claiming completeness, so that my essay remains to the point. I have approached these analyses from the composer's own words (based on personal narratives and interviews) and from the performer's point of view, from the side of the history of interpretation.

IV. Outcome

The novelty of the thesis lies in the fact that I am the first to deal with the development of Hungarian contemporary bassoon playing in Hungarian literature and in doctoral dissertations. I have looked through 40 years of bassoon playing, not all of the 160 or so works, of course, but the ones that innovated, as well as the works that have gained a significant resonance and popularity and have been ground-breaking. In fact, it is unfortunate that no essay or publication deals with the development of this period in bassoon playing. This may be due to the lack of publications, to the composers' dissatisfaction with the manuscripts, to the personal relationship with the performer or to the concert promoters' alienation from contemporary music. Indeed, the rich catalogue of works at the end of the dissertation, which collects the aforementioned 160 works from 1960 to the present day, is a complement for the rich repertoire for wind quintet from the 1950s to the 1970s and 1980s, as well as the list which appears in the third footnote to the chapter on Dubrovay.

The purpose of my thesis is to provide a record to future generations of where we have come from, where we are going and where the future is heading to at the beginning of the 21st century and towards the middle of it. This thesis can perhaps give an idea of the amazing development of bassoon playing in the 20th century.

V. Documentation of activities related to the subject of the dissertation

The greatest help in preparing for the research was my library, which contains all the works listed in the bibliography of the thesis. The nearly 160 of what I call soloistic pieces, i.e.: bassoon solo, bassoon-piano, bassoon-CD-computer, bassoon-ensemble, were all within reach thanks to years of collecting, performing and giving concerts. I have performed all of the pieces, I have worked regularly with their authors for years, even decades, and I have the manuscripts of the unpublished scores in my home. Musicological literature on composers is also a significant part of my library, and I have made up for the