



Thesis of DLA dissertaion

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**SACHER-THEME**  
**12 CELLO PIECES COMPOSED FOR**  
**PAUL SACHER'S 70. BIRTHDAY**

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V. Documentation of the activity relating to the subject  
matter of the dissertation

One of the most complex of the twelve Sacher-pieces is the *Trois Strophes sur le nom de Sacher* by Henri Dutilleux. It has become one of the standard pieces of XX. century cello literature. I have performed it several times in concert. I mention a few occasions below. I have learned Berio's short addition to the series longer ago and recently added it to my repertoire again. The Sacher Variations by Lutoslawsky has also become an important part of the cello canon. I have performed it on several occasions as well. It is part of my goal to learn all twelve compositions in the near future.

Dutilleux: *Trois Strophes sur le nom de Sacher*

Lutoslawski: *Sacher Variations*

Luciano Berio: *Les mots sont allées...*

3. April 2011. FUGA Contemporary Art Center, Budapest

1. May 2011. Amsterdam Conservatory

Benjamin Britten: *Tema "Sacher"*

Luciano Berio: *Les mots sont allées...*

8. August 2005. Reformed Church, Balatonboglár

## I. Prelude to research

The name Paul Sacher is familiar to those living in the XXI. century, who work with or research the music of the last hundred years. This phenomenon is thanks to the existence of one of the most valuable collection of manuscripts at the Sacher Foundation established by a conductor, patron and entrepreneur of extraordinary capacities and talents. Here is to be found a lifetime's work and letters, documents of some of the main composers of the XX. century including the ones who composed a cello piece commissioned by Mstislav Rostropovich and dedicated to Sacher's 70. birthday.

The topic being rather new, the literature is yet scarce. It is the very Sacher Foundation that encourages musicologists to study the material they possess. The books and other publications by the Foundation are the main sources of material for my thesis. Biographies of the main composers of the Sacher-series are available, thus they are also useful addition to the source material.

In hungarian musicology the main subject has not yet been thoroughly explored, this gives an opportunity for further research. Internationally there have been two main works on the Sacher-pieces: Lisa McCormick and Ryane Dunnagan examine the series from two very different perspectives. These works serve as basis for my thesis but need addition and specification at some points: certain composers are mentioned just vaguely. I have supplemented these and continued the analysis of the music. An insight on cryptography, collective composition and homage serves as an important addition to the existing literature.

Since the topic is quite recent, it is necessary to reexamine the Sacher-theme from a fresh and different perspective.

## II. Resources

The main source is the music itself: the manuscripts and printed editions of the twelve pieces. Universal Editions published a facsimile volume of the whole series just shortly after they have been composed: this material is an ideal summary of the compositions. Several of the original pieces have been altered or extended: in each case I compare the earlier and final versions. Some composers added comments to their pieces, these serve as important hints for a better understanding of their scores.

All the available kinds of sources including interviews, movies, magazines, books, recordings have been used to present the dedicatee, the performer and the composers. The whole series is very rarely heard in its entirety but some fine recordings help to orientate among the various kinds of pieces and interpretation possibilities.

It is of great importance to distinguish and consider the authenticity of the vast information available. As much as possible, the scientific documents were favoured during the research process.

#### IV. Accomplishments

Paul Sacher and his legacy is inevitable for every swiss musician or which resides in Switzerland. Having studied at the Music Academy Basel which Sacher founded himself raised my attention towards the infamous person and his work. I have played several of the pieces dedicated to him and the idea of examining the cello works in connection with the patron and present them scientifically offered itself. What I have learned about the two major french and two unique swiss composers is noteworthy for hungarian musicology and the international cello scene likewise: I have tried to emphasize the importance of Dutilleux, Boulez, Huber and Holliger. Their pieces seem to be of the most important influence on cello repertoire for the effect of musical and literal predecessors and inspirations (Dutilleux), the development in composition (Boulez) and formal discoveries (Huber and Holliger).



### III. Methods of research

The structure of the above mentioned two works on the Sacher pieces were basically maintained, although a new paper would give the possibility to renew the form, during the writing process it became obvious that it is necessary to mention every composer and their relations to the main characters individually. This led to a rhythmically repetitive research, piece by piece, person by person.

The continuous growth of the amount of available literature on the subject demanded a modified method of writing: time to time I had to return to the already finished chapters to update information. Recent publications about Paul Sacher and the pieces written for him are mainly journals or websites. The present thesis wishes to raise awareness about important aspects of the Sacher-theme that have been overlooked or hadn't been published internationally.