LIGETI AND HUNGARY

ROOTEDNESS AND COSMOPOLITANISM

International symposium on the 90th anniversary of György Ligeti's birth

Program,
Biographies of Speakers
and
Abstracts

Budapest – Szombathely 12–14 July 2013

ORGANIZED BY



Archives and Research Group for 20th- and 21st-century Hungarian Music Institute of Musicology Research Centre for the Humanities Hungarian Academy of Sciences





Filharmónia Magyarország Nonprofit Ltd., organizer of the International Bartók Seminar and Festival

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"Lendület" Project of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences

Program

Friday, 12 July 2013

Institute of Musicology, Budapest

(Táncsics Mihály utca 7.)

11.00 AM

Guided tour in the Museum of Music History

12.00 M - 1.10 PM

Opening of the symposium and presentation to three archives of the Institute

László VIKÁRIUS (Budapest Bartók Archives)

Pál RICHTER (Folk Music and Folk Dance Archives)

Anna DALOS (Archives and Research Group for 20th- and 21st-Century Hungarian Music)

1.15 PM

Lunch

2.00 PM - 6.00 PM

Bus transfer to Hotel Claudius, Szombathely

Bartók Hall, Szombathely

(Rákóczi utca 3.)

8.00 PM

Opening concert of the Bartók Festival Works by Bartók, Ligeti, Eötvös and Kodály

Saturday, 13 July 2013

Savaria University Centre, Building C, Conference Hall, Szombathely

(Károli Gáspár tér 4.)

10.00 AM - 12.45 PM

Morning session: Roots and Personality

Chair: Amy BAUER

Richard STEINITZ: Scepticism and Curiosity: an Aesthetic of

Enchantment (keynote paper)

Anna DALOS: Ligeti and the Beginnings of Bartók Analysis in Hungary

-coffee break-

Bianca ȚIPLEA TEMEȘ: Ligeti and Romanian Folk Music: an Insight from the Paul Sacher Foundation

Frederik KNOP: Making It Home? The Natural Sciences as a Site of Belonging in György Ligeti's Music

1.00 PM

Lunch at Hotel Wagner (Kossuth utca 15.)

2.00 PM - 4.55 PM

Afternoon session: Works Chair: Richard STEINITZ

Amy BAUER: Genre as Émigré: the Return of the Repressed in Ligeti's Second Quartet

Zoltán FARKAS: The Finite Infinite: the Confines of Range and their Significance in György Ligeti's Compositions

Kyoko OKUMURA: Ligeti's *Atmosphères*: a Crystallization of his Multi-Colored Associations

-coffee break-

Márton KERÉKFY: Ironic Self-Portraits? Ligeti's *Hungarian Rock* and *Passacaglia ungherese*

Volker HELBING: Remembrance, Destruction, Emotion and Humour in Ligeti's Violin Concerto

5.15 PM - 6.50 PM

"Musik im technischen Zeitalter"

Television lecture by György Ligeti, first broadcasted by ARD on 25 February 1963 Louise DUCHESNEAU: Introduction to the screening Screening of Ligeti's lecture

Art Gallery, Szombathely

(Rákóczi utca 12.)

$8.00 \, \text{PM}$

Chamber concert on the 90th anniversary of Ligeti's birth Works by Bartók and Ligeti

Sunday, 14 July 2013

9.30 AM - 1.00 PM

Bus transfer from Hotel Claudius, Szombathely, to Budapest

Biographies of Speakers and Abstracts



Dr. Amy BAUER is Associate Professor of Music at University of California, Irvine. She received her Ph.D. in music theory from Yale University, and has published articles and book chapters on the music of Ligeti, Messiaen, the television musical, and issues in the philosophy and reception of modernist music. She has also given papers at national and international conferences on jazz, contemporary opera, spectral

music and cross-cultural issues in twentieth-century music. Her monograph Ligeti's Laments: Nostalgia, Exoticism and the Absolute (Ashgate, 2011) provides a critical analysis of the composer's works, considering both the compositions themselves and the larger cultural implications of their reception.

Genre as Émigré: the Return of the Repressed in Ligeti's Second Quartet

Dr. Amy BAUER (University of California, Irvine)

As Carl Dahlhaus noted, the string quartet paradoxically unites the intimate sphere of chamber music with "pure, absolute musical art." In the late Beethoven quartets this private realm became identified with formal innovation, giving rise to a new paradox by the mid-twentieth-century, in which the genre's function as a perpetual vehicle of progress became dependent on its history. Thus Ligeti's first quartet consciously assimilated and came to terms with the legacy of Bartók, while his String Quartet No. 2 (1968) addressed his own earlier work, (after success, scandal and a degree of security in his technical language prompted a retrospective turn).

Ligeti described the Second Quartet as his most "difficult" work up to that point. Despite the quartet's extremely abstract language it cemented Ligeti's position as a composer unafraid to draw from a wide variety of, in John MacCabe's words, "stylistic resonances and bases." This large number of "stylistic resonances" incited an equal number of scholarly responses, from Herman Sabbe's systematic, structuralist analysis to Harald Kaufmann's search for literary antecedents. Upon reflection, Ligeti admitted to "primitive" motivicmelodic allusions, but stressed the self-contained nature of the quartet: "My thinking of that time was completely musical." Yet ten years after its composition he admitted to Péter Várnai that the Second Quartet contains not only reminders of his Hungarian compositions, but a "dissolved manifestation" of the earlier quartet.

Such observations mark the second quartet as a moment of extreme self-consciousness in both Ligeti's personal history and that of the genre. Evidence of Ligeti's Hungarian works surface within the quartet as a return of the repressed, as it were, mirroring the status of the émigré composer within an increasingly politicized late-1960s avant-garde. In this paper I discuss those

elements in the Second Quartet which, through direct citation and oblique allusion, engage with both the Hungarian quartet, and Ligeti's historical models, foremost among those Bartók. I will also consider how the genesis and reception history of the quartet is bound up with that moment when European musicologists plumbed the 1960s avant-garde for signs of wider relevance.



Dr. Anna DALOS studied musicology at the Franz Liszt Academy of Music, Budapest, from 1993 to 1998; between 1998 and 2002 she attended the Doctoral Program in Musicology of the same institution. She spent a year on a German exchange scholarship (DAAD) at the Humboldt University, Berlin (1999–2000). She is currently working as a senior researcher at the Institute of Musicology, Research Centre for the Humanities of

the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. She has been a lecturer in the DLA Program of the Liszt Academy since 2007, and visiting lecturer at the International Zoltán Kodály Pedagogical Institute of Music, Kecskemét, since 2010. Her research is focused on 20th-century Hungarian music, the history of composition and musicology in Hungary. She published articles on these subjects, as well as short monographies on several Hungarian composers. Her book on Zoltán Kodály's poetics was published in 2007. In 2012 she won the Lendület' grant of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, which made possible the foundation of the Archives and Research Group for 20th- and 21st-Century Hungarian Music.

Ligeti and the Beginnings of Bartók Analysis in Hungary

Dr. Anna DALOS (Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest)

Béla Bartók became a national affair in Hungary after 1945. It was the young György Ligeti's intention to study with him at the Franz Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest, but Bartók died in New York on 26 September 1945. Bartók's death, however, made possible the canonization of his oeuvre, and Hungarian musicology immediately gave its full attention to collecting documents of his career, to researching manuscript sources, and to interpreting and analysing his works. Bence Szabolcsi, the leader of Hungarian musicological research and an excellent expert on Bartók, played a central role in this research, and considerably influenced the formation of Hungarian Bartók interpretation, for example the later works of László Somfai, György Kroó and János Kárpáti. Szabolcsi's Bartók seminars held at the Academy of Music were attended by progressive young musicians and musicologists, such as Ligeti, György Kurtág and Ernő Lendvai. Ligeti's and Lendvai's first Bartók analyses were born in this environment. My paper aims at introducing the context, the sources and literary-

analytical models of the young Ligeti's understanding of Bartók, which revealed itself in his articles 'Bartók: Medvetánc (1908)' (1948) and 'Megjegyzések a bartóki kromatika kialakulásának egyes feltételeiről' [Observations on the conditions of Bartók's development of chromaticism] (1955).



Dr. Louise DUCHESNEAU studied piano and musicology in Ottawa, Montreal, and at the University of Hamburg, where she lectured for many years (systematic musicology). From 1983 to 2005 she was György Ligeti's assistant, managing the general contact between the composer and the outside world. In 2006–7 she was member of musical director Kent Nagano's team at the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal. Since her return to

Germany in 2008, she has been working as a free-lance author and translator.



Zoltán FARKAS studied musicology at the Franz Liszt Academy of Music, Budapest, and graduated in 1987. Between 1987 and 2006 he was working at the Institute for Musicology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Between 2006 and 2011 he was director of Radio Bartók, the classical music channel of Hungarian Radio. Since 2011 he has been the intendant of the same institution. He is editor of an annual concert series of

contemporary music organized by Radio Bartók. His scholarly interests are focused on 18th-century church music and contemporary Hungarian music. He published studies on and reviews of first performances of György Kurtág, György Ligeti, Péter Eötvös, Zoltán Jeney, József Sári and András Szőllősy.

The Finite Infinite: the Confines of Range and their Significance in György Ligeti's Compositions

Zoltán FARKAS (Hungarian Radio, Budapest)

Reaching the confines of range and utilization of extreme registers seems to be a prevalent feature of Ligeti's music from his first compositions in the West until the late 1980s and 1990s. This phenomenon becomes almost omnipresent in the three books of Études pour piano (1985, 1988–94, 1995–2001). In the Études the 'endless' musical processes have to confront the limits of the keyboard. The moment of reaching the limits represents a climax (or anticlimax) of the individual pieces and serves as a decisive caesura in terms of musical form. These moments mostly coincide with the dynamic climax of the movement when the musical texture also reaches its utmost complexity. In this paper I try to unfold the formal variety Ligeti obtains in his compositions by reaching the

confines of range. Some aspects of compositional technique and the dramatic effect of this phenomenon are also to be discussed.



Prof. Dr. Volker HELBING studied flute, music theory, musicology and German studies in Hamburg, Freiburg and Berlin. During his second (and last) academic year at Hamburg he had the opportunity to visit Ligeti's composition class as a guest student. From 1995 to 2011 he held teaching positions in music theory in Berlin (Universität der Künste), Bremen and Frankfurt am Main, in winter 2005/6 also a deputy

professorship in musicology in Trossingen. Since 2011 he has been professor for music theory at the Hanover University of Music, Drama and Media. He published articles on 16th-, 18th- and 20th-century music and on French music theory in the 18th and 19th centuries. He received his Ph.D. in 2005 (Choreographie und Distanz, Studien zur Ravel-Analyse, published in 2008).

Remembrance, Destruction, Emotion and Humour in Ligeti's Violin Concerto

Prof. Dr. Volker HELBING (Hochschule für Musik, Theater und Medien, Hannover)

Ligeti's Violin Concerto has an astonishing effect because of an emotional intensity that appears to be rather unusual as compared to the majority of his works: By some means or other, nearly all movements refer to his Hungarian-Transylvanian origins, although these references are more or less distilled and masked by other, 'later' issues. Additionally, movements III–V are characterised by catastrophic culminations and by the expression of violence, existential fear, grief and agony. These characteristics suggest that only by the beginning of the 1990s Ligeti felt able to articulate and, by means of composition, to cope with such traumatic experiences that had to do with holocaust, Stalinist terror and the loss of his homeland, without giving away the aesthetic standards and the technical and stylistic standpoint he had reached by then.

In the Violin Concerto it was not only the achievements of the 1980s (stratification of rhythms, tempos and modes and the idea of a 'dirty' music among others) but also the concerto as a genre (or a concept) with its manifold constellations of roles that gave him the opportunity to articulate the complex and sometimes contradictory nature of his existence both as a survivor living in the diaspora and as an extremely curious composer open to influences of not only contemporary music but also historical musicology, ethnomusicology and natural sciences.

The starting point of my lecture is the hypothesis that the concerto deals with the aforementioned traumatic experiences via a kind of 'station drama'

conceived from the distance and on the technical and idiomatical basis of the late style. This hermeneutic-biographical approach not only allows us to describe the form of each single movement more plausibly than could be done by an abstract process-oriented method, but also enables us to understand the actual sequence of the movements – in spite of (or even due to) the striking contrasts between a hilarious and detached opening of the piece, a relatively harmless and eclectic second movement, two catastrophic or traumatic middle movements and a finale that presents fear, lament and violence from a humorous perspective.

The world that Ligeti strives to 'reconstruct' in his concerto is obviously not the 'innocent' world of his childhood, but a kind of *Kylwiria retrouvé*: The recollection of an always imaginative world, overgrown and refined by biographical, musical and scientific experiences assembled during half a century (a time span that, regarding music, has considerably been influenced by the composer himself.)



Márton Kerékfy studied musicology and composition at the Franz Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest. After graduating in 2007 he was Ph.D. student at the same institution. In 2011 he researched György Ligeti's music for five months in Basel on the grant of the Paul Sacher Foundation. The subject of his forthcoming doctoral thesis is going to be the influence of Eastern European folk music in Ligeti's oeuvre (supervisor:

Anna Dalos). He publishes articles and reads papers at musicological conferences internationally, and writes program notes, liner notes, as well as reviews for a number of periodicals. He received the Zoltán Kodály scholarship in 2009 and 2010. In 2010 he translated into Hungarian and edited Ligeti's selected writings. Since 2005 he has been on the staff of the Budapest Bartók Archives, and since 2013 he has been editor-in-chief at Editio Musica Budapest.

Ironic Self-Portraits? Ligeti's *Hungarian Rock* and *Passacaglia ungherese*

Márton KERÉKFY (Bartók Archives, Budapest)

In an interview given to Ulrich Dibelius in 1993, György Ligeti virtually excluded *Hungarian Rock* and *Passacaglia ungherese* from of his oeuvre, stating that the two harpsichord pieces had been intended only as ironic commentaries to discussions with his pupils at the Hamburg Hochschule, and as reactions to "the whole neo-tonal and postmodern movement." From today's perspective, however, it is hardly questionable that those two pastiches are integral to Ligeti's oeuvre, inasmuch as they anticipated some typical features, both technical and

aesthetic, of his late style, such as overt historic and ethnic references, latent tonality, the simultaneity of diatonic and chromatic materials, and a paramount interest in complex polyrhythmic structures.

What has not yet been sufficiently analyzed in these pieces is their "Hungarianness." Which features can be regarded as Hungarian, how are these related to other, culturally more distant, references, and what role are they playing in both pieces? What is the meaning of the distorted citations and "false quotations" of Hungarian folksongs? Is the "Hungarianness" of these pieces only a mask like the allusions to Baroque techniques and forms, as Dibelius suggested, or does it have a deeper meaning? Would it be too daring to interpret Hungarian Rock and Passacaglia ungherese as artistic manifestations of Ligeti's ambivalent attitude toward his roots, and eventually as ironic self-portraits?



Frederik KNOP is a musicologist and composer from Berlin. He earned a master's degree in musicology after having studied with Helga de la Motte and Christian Martin Schmidt at Technical University, Berlin. At the same time, he also received composition lessons by the Hungarian composer Robert Wittinger. While pursuing his Ph.D., he was a lecturer at the University of Hamburg from 2007 until 2010. During this time

he received a grant by the Paul Sacher Stiftung in Basel to research György Ligeti's last compositions (especially the *Hamburg Concerto* and *Sippal, dobbal, nádihegedűvel*). Knop has been teaching at the University of Hamburg, Leuphana University, Lüneburg, and most recently the University of Potsdam. His research interests include the compositional techniques and aesthetics of 20th-and 21st-century European and North American music as well as popular music production. He engages in several musical projects and maintains a mastering studio and performance space for new music in Berlin.

Making It Home? The Natural Sciences as a Site of Belonging in György Ligeti's Music

Frederik KNOP (University of Hamburg)

In recent years, the discourse on the music of György Ligeti has drawn attention to the fact that the interplay of rootedness and cosmopolitism played a major role in the creation of compositions that combine techniques from various regional, cultural and scientific sources. In this context, terms like "home" or "belonging" are employed to draw a connection to Ligeti's restless, unsettled biography – aspects such as the loss of his home, his native language, and close family are usually enhanced.

This paper, however, takes a somewhat different approach. It will trace the interdependence of three essential constituents of Ligeti's work by exploring the relation between his musical aesthetics, his compositional technique, and the natural sciences. My argument will be based on the assumption that a direct connection can be drawn between Ligeti's life-long fascination with scientific discourses and the ways in which he refused to settle on compositional and aesthetical securities. Instead, he was driven by the urge to continuously strive for renewal and further development. I will discuss in what ways Ligeti understood the natural sciences as a space that, by focusing on "objective" processes, transcended national, political and aesthetical borders and defied social expectations. What is more, the natural sciences created a framework of values, terminology, and methods that helped Ligeti not only to evolve as a composer, but also to shape a mindset that could indeed be considered an alternative and yet powerful site of belonging.



Kyoko OKUMURA is a doctoral student in musicology and a research assistant at the Graduate School of Letters, Osaka University, Japan. She is interested in the background, musical structure, and compositional process of György Ligeti's works. She visits the Paul Sacher Foundation, Basel, Switzerland, as a guest researcher multiple times a year. She is researching Ligeti's compositional memos, sketches, drafts, and correspondences

with particular focus on works after 1956, namely Artikulation, Atmosphères, Clocks and Clouds, San Francisco Polyphony, Nonsense Madrigals, etc. Ms. Okumura is currently writing her dissertation on the influence of Ligeti's electronic music on his cluster music of the 1960s and 1970s.

Ligeti's *Atmosphères*: a Crystallization of his Multi-Colored Associations

Kyoko OKUMURA (Osaka University)

Atmosphères (1961) by György Ligeti is a cluster work for orchestra. Ligeti had enthusiastically worked on electronic music at a studio in Cologne for three years after his 1956 exile. However, he left because he sought to describe his own multi-colored sonority through orchestral music.

Atmosphères reflects Ligeti's Hungarian past and his observations about his Western future. What sort of associations did Ligeti describe in the work? How did he compose it? The author investigated Ligeti's correspondence and sketches to clarify these questions.

Ligeti's correspondence shows that he had complicated and conflicting feelings before and after his exile. He was persecuted by the Nazis and he was prohibited access to Western avant-garde music by the socialist system in Hungary. He was an unbearably occluded situation. When he defected to the West, he encountered a new heterogeneous environment and soaked up knowledge. However, he longed for his forsaken homeland and family. Moreover, he vividly recalled his memories of childhood that he had a nightmare of spider's web and a daydream of his utopian "Kylwiria."

The sketches reveal that Ligeti's process consisted of four steps. (1) He divided the entire work into 21 sections and then wrote the plot for each characteristic. (2) He controlled the time schedule of the whole work, each section and each measure, by the second. (3) He made rhythmic sketches and then strictly controlled the number and combination of tones. (4) He used graphical sketches to operate the entire figure and tone color of clusters. Furthermore, as the author discovered, Ligeti used the golden ratio and Fibonacci numbers in time control. In addition, the work's "micropolyphony" was woven together by two dodecaphonic melodies. However, he refused to be ruled by a system; he half-obeyed his selected rules and half-deviated from them.

Ligeti was torn between dark nostalgic memories and the musical life of his future. *Atmosphères* is the crystallization of his conflicting feelings.



Prof. em. Richard STEINITZ is a composer, musicologist and former festival director. He is an Emeritus Professor of the University of Huddersfield, where he founded and was for twenty-three years Artistic Director of the internationally famous Contemporary Music Festival. He has also been an adviser to the Arts Council and many contemporary music organisations. He has written extensively about twentieth-

century music, broadcast widely, and continues to give talks and lectures on new music both in Britain and abroad. Steinitz's award-winning book on the composer György Ligeti, published in Britain and America in 2003, has just been reissued by Faber & Faber in paperback. In 2011 his comprehensive history of the festival, 'Explosions in November', including around 300 photographs and other illustrations, was published by the University of Huddersfield Press. He was awarded an OBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours of 1996 for services to music.

Scepticism and Curiosity: an Aesthetic of Enchantment

Prof. em. Richard STEINITZ (University of Huddersfield)

This paper explores the impact on Ligeti's music of two opposite character traits. On the one hand was a profound scepticism, intensified by experience – general, political and artistic – but which also stemmed from the constant reexamination of evidence and hypotheses characteristic of the sciences. This led Ligeti habitually to question received artistic norms as well as his own working procedures; notably to critique and ultimately reject the ideological stance of the post-war Western avant-garde with which he was at one time associated. On the other was a lifelong curiosity and appetite for fresh stimuli of widely varied origin, amounting to an almost childlike delight in new 'toys'.

The interplay between these attributes led occasionally to a problematic ambivalence – most evident in *Le Grand Macabre*. But their successful integration repeatedly re-energised Ligeti's art, through his frequent reformulation of creative priorities and ability to assimilate diverse influences into a coherent, unmistakably personal style.

I argue that, despite a rigorous approach to technique, Ligeti's guiding principle was the primacy of the ear, of imagined sound over calculation, of sensory effect over system, of newly heard discoveries over old routines. Together these constitute what I call 'an aesthetic of enchantment', resulting in music as richly inventive and original as any in the second half of the twentieth century. Furthermore, it allowed Ligeti to reinstate and increasingly indulge his penchant for melody, whose prominence in his later music distinguishes Ligeti from all his avant-garde colleagues.



Prof. Dr. Bianca ȚIPLEA TEME\$ is a musicologist and reader of music theory at Gheorghe Dima Music Academy in Cluj-Napoca. She holds separate degrees in musicology and in business management (M.B.A. granted by Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca), combining an academic career with her post at the Transylvania Philharmonic, where she is currently head of the Artistic Department. Her writings cover a wide range of topics, a

special emphasis being placed on contemporary music (Ligeti, Kurtág). Her books have been published in Romania, and her articles in several European countries and in the U.S.A. She has participated in conferences in Romania, as well as in Oldenburg, Vienna, Vilnius, Dublin, Rome, and Cambridge/U.K. She has been visiting professor at the University of Oviedo and at Istituto Mascagni, Livorno. She was awarded an Erasmus Grant at the University of Cambridge, a research grant from the Paul Sacher Foundation and a DAAD Scholarship at Humboldt University, Berlin.

Ligeti and Romanian Folk Music: an Insight from the Paul Sacher Foundation

Prof. Dr. Bianca ȚIPLEA TEMEȘ (Gheorghe Dima Music Academy, Cluj-Napoca)

The study aims to recover the Romanian dimension of Ligeti's oeuvre and to illuminate the long-lasting impact which the folk music of this country had on his compositions. Although Ligeti's links with his Romanian folk heritage remain unexplored – largely because this influence is not so immediately apparent in his pieces – an inspection of the documents held in the Paul Sacher Foundation in Basel offers a whole new perspective on this topic; the manuscripts provide a panoramic view of Ligeti's enduring relationship with Romanian music, from the early years of his youth spent in Cluj and, briefly, in Bucharest, to the very end of his creative activity.

As a Transylvanian-born composer, Ligeti was witness to a cultural melting pot of Romanian, Hungarian, German, Slovak, Jewish, and other ethnic influences. He therefore became familiar with the rich music of the region, becoming a musical "polyglot" at a very early age. At the Bucharest Folklore Institute he studied folk music from across the entire Romanian territory, which had palpable consequences during the first stage of his career as a composer, in which he wrote folkloric music, showing in a few pieces a strong relationship with his Romanian folk heritage. At the latter stage, Ligeti engaged with cross-cultural influences between Eastern- and extra-European music, leading to a highly original interplay of musical cultures. The multiple influences are filtered, the folkloric idioms deconstructed, giving way to a unique manner of toying with traditions and musical geographies, in which Romania remains as central a landmark as Hungary.

The abundance of references found in his late manuscripts kept in the Paul Sacher Foundation often bear unexpected yet relevant annotations of the rich aural source of folk music from Romania: "căluşari" (traditional dance from the Oltenia region), "sound of Romanian folk instruments," "bocet" (lament), "bucium" (Romanian alpenhorn), "Hora lungă," "Mocirița" (a song from the Maramureş region), "Romanian folk wedding songs."

On the 90th anniversary of Ligeti's birth, an examination of his Transylvanian spiritual roots as an organic part of the complex fusion of cultures in his artistic DNA can be seen as an affirmation of the composer's identification with his native territory.

Notes