

Ferenc FARKAS

CHAMBER MUSIC, VOLUME FIVE: WORKS WITH FLUTE AND OBOE

EARLY HUNGARIAN DANCES FROM THE 17TH CENTURY

ARIA E RONDO ALL'UNGHERESE

ALLA DANZA UNGHERESE

VARIAZIONI UNGHERESI

CANTIONES OPTIMAE

THREE BURLESQUES

THREE SONATINAS

EPITHALAMIUM

MEDITAZIONE

ARIO SO

András Adorján, flute
Lajos Lencsés, oboe, cor anglais
András Csáki, guitar
Balázs Szokolay, piano
Antal Váradi, organ

INCLUDES FIRST RECORDINGS

FERENC FARKAS Chamber Music, Volume Five:

Works with Flute and Oboe

<i>Early Hungarian Dances from the 17th Century</i> (1940s, rev. for flute and piano, 1987)	7:41
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2 II <i>Andante moderato</i>	2:19
3 III <i>Allegro</i>	1:54
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14 <i>Alla danza ungherese</i> (1934; adapt. Adorján for flute and piano, 2019)	4:30
15 <i>Aria e rondo all'ungherese</i> for flute, oboe and piano (1994)	7:29
<i>Three Burlesques</i> for piano (1940)*	5:46
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24 II 'Könyörgés' ('Imploration')	2:35
25 III 'Mária-ének' ('Song to Mary')	2:40
26 IV 'Ó Jézus, szűzen született' ('O, Jesus born of a virgin')	1:47
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*FIRST RECORDINGS

FERENC FARKAS: CHAMBER MUSIC, VOLUME FIVE – WORKS WITH FLUTE AND OBOE

by László Gombos

Ferenc Farkas was happy to recast his works in different versions for various performing combinations, often producing arrangements of his own pieces and welcoming similar initiatives from his fellow musicians. His orchestral movements often sound well played by chamber groups (string quartets or wind ensembles, for example), his mixed choruses with male or female choirs, and his *a cappella* choral works with organ or orchestral accompaniment. Often, the essentials of the music are hardly affected when the piano part is played on a harpsichord or organ, or the viola part on a cello, or the flute part on an oboe or a violin. This adaptability suggests the absolute musical conception of his works, where the structure, the movement of the parts and their relationship to one another are more important than the combination of instruments in which they are heard.

Of course, Farkas was well acquainted with the characteristics of the various instruments or voices for which he wrote. During his long lifetime (1905–2000), covering almost the entire twentieth century, he was considered one of the most knowledgeable composers in his country, someone who knew everything about music and musicians. He gained his unique professional knowledge from practical experience: at various points he was a chorus-master, conductor, orchestral pianist, répétiteur, recital accompanist, composer for film and theatre and conservatoire director, and he taught both general music and composition in music schools and at university. From 1949 to 1975 he was head of the Composition Department of the Budapest Academy of Music, where his students included almost all the major composers of the next generation, among them Zoltán Jeney, György Kurtág, György Ligeti, Emil Petrovics and Sándor Szokolay. From a young age, when he worked in

the film studios of Budapest, Vienna and Copenhagen, he was renowned for his ability to improvise in any musical style and with any musical forces.

His own musical personality, however, was close to that of the Baroque masters, for whom the perfect accomplishment of the composition was foremost, rather than highlighting individual traits and differences between instruments or narrating non-musical content. Another characteristic of Farkas was that he wanted to make his works available to the widest possible audience.

As a particularly well respected and sought-after composer in his homeland, with close professional ties to artists, ensembles, schools and other musical institutions, he was constantly presented with requests for compositions, which he was often able to meet by rewriting his existing pieces for the combination of musicians that his friends and commissioners wanted. At times, he completely reworked existing material; at other times he adapted the parts in certain places to suit the new performers, or authorised minor changes requested by the artist. In addition, on a number of occasions he suggested (or accepted the suggestion of his friends) which new instruments could optionally play each part. If the notes remain unchanged and the new performers play from the existing parts, one can't even talk about a transposition or transcription but only alternative solutions. For the most part, this album contains such pieces.

In spite of Farkas' many major theatrical, oratorical and orchestral works, it is an arrangement of short movements of early music, his *Early Hungarian Dances from the 17th Century*, that has been performed most often worldwide. It is, in fact, not a single work and its variants, but about one-and-a-half dozen related compositions under the same title and in three, four, six or even fifteen movements, for a wide variety of performing combinations. Its origin can be traced back to the early 1940s, when Farkas worked on the music of a Hungarian historical film, *Rákóczi nótája* ('Rákóczi's Song'). The action takes place during the War of Independence (1703–11) led by the Transylvanian prince Francis II Rákóczi against Habsburg rule. Farkas wished to convey the mood of the age with motifs from the period itself, and so he collected a large amount of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century music from libraries, mostly from

manuscript sources (among them the Vietoris Codex, Codex Caioni, Lőcse Tablature Book and Sopron Manuscript, all important repositories of music of the time).

Not only was the available material used in the film, but over the decades he made dozens of compositions from the dances, and each version can often be played in multiple instrumentations: piano, wind quintet, chamber orchestra, two flutes, two flutes and four guitars, etc. Farkas dressed the rudimentary Baroque and Classical pieces in new robes, creating suites of several movements and small ternary forms within the movements. Such refinement was not found in the music of the often amateurish and semi-educated Hungarian musicians from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; it was introduced by Farkas centuries later. In 1987 he produced a flute-and-piano composition for András Adorján, and three years later he orchestrated the accompaniment for a chamber orchestra. In the work, the alternations and returns of ten slow and fast dances form four longer movements. The first three movements – *Allegro moderato* [1], *Andante moderato* [2] and *Allegro* [3] – have a ternary (ABA) form; the final *Allegro* movement [4] is cast in a rondo-like structure.

Farkas composed three sonatinas for violin and piano, the first two heard here in versions for flute and piano and the third in a version for oboe and piano. The original violin-and-piano version of Nos. 1 and 2 was published in 1955 as *Due Sonatine* by Editio Musica Budapest, but their origins date back a quarter of a century. Indeed, they are among Farkas' earliest surviving works, since they were conceived between 1929 and 1931 during his Budapest vacation from Ottorino Respighi's classes at the Accademia di Santa Cecilia in Rome. The two works are typical of Farkas' youthful decades, with a light tone, clear handling of instrumental parts and adherence to archaic forms and structure; the effects of French and Italian Neo-Classicism are clearly recognisable. András Adorján reworked the violin parts of these two works for flute, basing his approach on a Farkas arrangement for flute of the third Sonatina (1965).

Sonatina No. 1 – *Allegro con slancio* [5], *Largo* [6] and *Presto* [7] – was written in August 1930 and, when published in 1955, was given the belated dedication: 'To the

memory of György Hannover'.¹ In the flute version, of course, the double-stopping of the violin, the chordal *pizzicati* of the first movement and the bariolage² techniques of the third movement were omitted. Some sections were raised an octave for better audibility, but the piece lost nothing of its effect.

Sonatina No. 2 – *Allegro molto* [9], *Andante* [10], *Scherzando* [11] – was written in January 1931, before Farkas travelled back to Rome to continue his studies with Respighi, and it was dedicated to the violinist Ede Zathureczky.³ With the powerful momentum, rhythmic play and Baroque features of the first movement, the piece can be considered as forming a pair with the previous work.

Between the two sonatinas a particularly beautiful song, *Gyógyulóban* ('Recovering') [8], can be heard. It is not a transcription, since the flute takes over the vocal part note for note. In the song, written in September 1982, Farkas set a poem by Ferenc Kis (1908–64), the slightly woeful but hopeful mood of which is perfectly matched by the sound of the flute.

The *Meditazione* for flute and piano of 1990 [13] consists of a single movement. In its character, structure and atmosphere, it is reminiscent of the lyrical slow movements of the turn of the twentieth century, but its style and harmony are the mature Farkas' own. András Adorján's earlier recording⁴ featured an alto flute, several tones deeper; the original composition can be heard in this recording.

Farkas was always proud of his Hungarianness, although for a time at the beginning of his career he kept away from folk-music arrangement. By the mid-1920s, an entire generation had followed Béla Bartók and Zoltán Kodály on the path of folklorism, but the young Farkas was afraid that those powerful masters might have too strong an influence on his individuality, and so he reached Hungarian folk-music only via a

¹Hannover (1907–35) was a brilliant Hungarian violinist, a friend of Farkas, who died at an early age. He had been one of the favourite students of Jenő Hubay, the concert-master of the Hungarian National Philharmonic Orchestra and a member of the famous Waldbauer-Kerpely String Quartet (Hungarian String Quartet).

² Bariolage involves playing alternating notes on adjacent strings.

³ Zathureczky (1903–59) was a student of Jenő Hubay, becoming his assistant in 1929. He was director of the Budapest Music Academy from 1943 to 1957, and for the last years of his life taught at Indiana University in Bloomington, where he died.

⁴ On Toccat Classics TOCC 0379.

detour. First, he drew inspiration from Italian Neo-Classicism, studied the culture of the Mediterranean peoples, and visited the coasts of Italy, France and Spain in a cargo ship. After he felt he had developed his own style, in the mid-1930s he embarked on a folk-music collecting trip in Hungary, to study the ancient traditions on the spot in small, rural villages, and over the following decades he made a number of arrangements, both from his own records and from the collections of others. Among them is *Variazioni ungheresi* (1963) [12], originally for two guitars, where Farkas employed a folksong from Zala County in southwestern Hungary as the basis of nine variations. In the course of the variations, the melody itself changes, so that it sometimes resembles other folksongs, and at other times it dissolves so thoroughly into the musical fabric that only its outlines remain. On this occasion András Adorján's adaptation of the piece for flute and guitar can be heard.

Alla danza ungherese [14] was written in 1934 for cello and piano, and entitled *Hétfalusi boricza-tánc* ('Boricza Dance from the Hétfalu Region'). Farkas soon reworked it for violin and piano, and then arranged the accompaniment for a cimbalom and a string orchestra. In 2019, András Adorján adapted the original version for flute. The Hungarian title is connected to a folk-custom: in the county of Brassó (now Braşov County in Romania), in that part of the countryside called Hétfalu (meaning 'Seven Villages'), a group of male youths comes together in the middle of December to practise dancing the four-part 'Boricza' dance; then, on the 28th of the month, in characteristic local dress, they make a tour of all the villages, proceeding from house to house. Gathering in an inn, they consume some of the food they have collected, and then the girls arrive and further hours of merriment with dancing ensue. The first part of Farkas' work (*Allegro moderato*) is a strict ternary-form (ABA) dance in E minor, which is followed by a fast second part in double tempo in C major, the structure of which suggests a sonata form without a development section (the first section is in C major, two other sections are played in the dominant, and then comes the return of all three in the tonic).

In composing his *Aria e rondo all'ungherese* [15] in 1994, a piece frequently played throughout Europe, Farkas used melodies from an unknown eighteenth-century composer. In the previous year he had attended a music festival in Knittelfeld, near Graz,

in southern Austria, where he was inspired by the playing of the violinists Albert Kocsis and Lore Schrettner to write a piece for two violins and string orchestra. The dedication on the sheet music is to Farkas' dear friend Gerard Goossens, director of Ascolta Music Publishing, which published the work. Later, at the request of Lajos Lencsés, he changed the part of one of the violins to the oboe. In this recording the flute and oboe take the solo lines, and the piano plays the accompaniment.⁵

Farkas' *Three Burlesques* for piano (1940) – No. 1, *Allegro* [16], No. 2, *Moderato, comodo* [17], and No. 3, *Allegro* [18] – at first sight belong in this programme of transcriptions and adaptations, but it is possible that this piano version published in 1949 (or a similar sketch for piano) was the original form and the source of the staged and orchestral versions. Back in December 1940 Farkas presented a Christmas play, with dancers and sets, from which a few years later he drew his *Marionette's Dance Suite* for orchestra. He then selected three short piano pieces from the musical material and brought them to life on their own. They are full of interesting ideas, exciting asymmetrical rhythms and gestures behind which stage movements can be sensed. In autumn 1946 – in the aftermath of the Second World War – Farkas was commissioned to establish a conservatoire in Székesfehérvár, a city 60 kilometres west of Budapest, and teaching began, under Farkas' direction, in February. The first public performance of the *Burlesques* was duly in Székesfehérvár on 8 February 1947, when Iván Waldbauer⁶ played them at the introductory teachers' concert of the new Székesfehérvár Music Conservatoire. Waldbauer also played the cycle on Hungarian radio, and in 1949 it was published by the Cserépfalvi Music Publisher (assigned in 1950 to Editio Musica Budapest).

The *Sonatina No. 3* for violin and piano was composed in 1959 and published in 1962. In 1965, at the request of the French flautist Alain Marion, Farkas reworked it for flute and piano, making a number of small changes to make the lead part more flute-like. That is what Marion played on Radio France, and it also featured in one of

⁵ The original version for two violins and string orchestra can be heard on Toccata Classics TOCC 0184, the version with oboe and violin solos on TOCC 0217.

⁶ Son of the famous Imre Waldbauer, first violinist of the Waldbauer-Kerpely String Quartet, which worked in close connection with Béla Bartók.

András Adorján's earlier recordings.⁷ In his version for oboe, Lajos Lencsés goes back to the original violin part, which is closer to the character and sound register of his own instrument, the oboe, in several places. The work has three movements: an opening *Allegro non troppo* [19], central *Andante moderato* [20] and a closing *Allegro* [21]. In terms of style, it can be considered rather retrospective in Farkas' *œuvre*, since it does not go beyond the musical devices of his Neo-Classical period, although it also displays the characteristic optimistic tone of much Hungarian composition of the 1950s. It is a well-constructed and valuable work in which the main theme of the first movement returns as the second theme of the last movement, strengthening the unity of the work as a whole.

Farkas' 'more modern' side, that is, where his style approaches contemporary sounds, is illustrated by the *Epithalamium* for oboe and organ (1973) [22], composed for the wedding of his son, András. András studied double bass in Budapest before choosing the profession of conductor and settling in Switzerland. The first performance of *Epithalamium* took place in the context of the marriage ceremony, played by the organ alone. The original manuscript specifies an organ as the accompaniment to a solo oboe, but the style of writing is distinctly piano-like. The heavy and mysterious, thickly layered chords of the opening bars are immediately repeated, and when they return twice more, they designate the formal structure of the work. Against them are set at times sighing, at times lyrically singing, motifs, which hide the letters of the names of the newly-weds, Françoise and András (also the dedicatees of the piece), symbolising their interwoven destiny.

The Turkish occupation of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries meant that Hungary suffered a considerable setback in its cultural development, and was left out of the stylistic evolution occurring in the rest of Europe. Farkas therefore considered it his mission to supplement Baroque, Classical or Biedermeier works that were missing from the history of Hungarian music. In the series *Cantiones optimaе*, for example, he provides four old Hungarian sacred melodies with organ (piano) or *ad libitum* string-orchestra accompaniment.⁸ For decades Farkas and his family spent their summers in

⁷ On Toccata Classics TOCC 0379.

⁸ The version with string orchestra was released on TOCC 0230.

Balatonlelle, on the southern shore of Lake Balaton. A short distance up the coast sits the village of Kőröshegy, and in 1968 the renovation of the late-mediaeval Catholic church there allowed the presentation of concerts. That inspired Farkas to music: his *Cantiones optima*e were performed in the church in July 1968, sung by Terézia Csajbók, with Endre Kovács on the organ. The composition makes use of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century sources. The text of 'Bátorítás a halál ellen' ('Encouragement against Death') [23] was written by János Szepteteki in 1555. 'Könyörgés' ('Imploration') [24] uses a poem of Bálint Balassi (1554–94), the most important Hungarian poet of the Renaissance, the melody of which was preserved in the seventeenth-century Codex Caioni. The popular 'Mária-ének' ('Song to Mary') by András Vásárhelyi [25] was taken from the *Cantus Catholici*, the first Hungarian collection of sacred songs to be printed; it was published in 1651. From a collection of the same name published in 1674, but independent from it, Farkas 'borrowed' the song 'Ó Jézus, szűzen született' ('O, Jesus born of a virgin') [26]. This recording presents the organ version, with the vocal lines performed by an instrument, as was often the case in Baroque practice; here Lajos Lencsés plays the oboe d'amore as best fitting the register.

Farkas was still in the middle of his studies at the Academy of Music when his *Arioso* [27] saw the light of day in 1926. It is a beautiful movement of a type with a long tradition, in which the lyrical melody of the solo instrument is accompanied by Romantic harmonies. The work was originally the slow movement of a lost viola sonata; according to the 1960 edition of Editio Musica Budapest, a viola or, one octave lower, a cello, can play the solo. It is played in this recording at the original register, on a cor anglais accompanied by an organ, which blends perfectly with the sound of the wind instrument.

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 PhD 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.

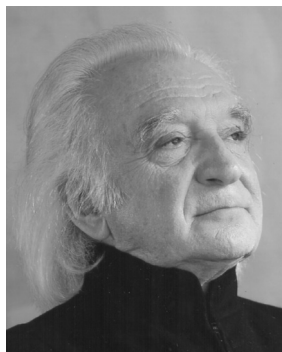
András Adorján was born in Budapest, grew up in Copenhagen and has lived in Munich since 1974. With more than 100 recorded albums and as the editor of a unique and extensive encyclopaedia, *Lexikon der Flöte*, published by Laaber Verlag in 2009, he is today one of the best-known and most prominent flautists of his generation.

As a laureate of several international flute competitions and the principal flautist of some important European symphony orchestras, he has been professor for flute at the Music Universities of Cologne and Munich.

András Adorján received the Jacob Gade Prize in Copenhagen in 1968, the Prize of the Deutsche Schallplattenkritik in 1988, was in 1996 awarded the Doppler-Ring of the Hungarian Flute Society and in 2007 the Premio di carriera of the Italian Flauta-Associazione. In 2018, he was honoured with the Lifetime Achievement Award of the American National Flute Association (NFA) and in 2019 with the Lifetime Achievement Award of the Chinese Flute Association (CFA).



Born in Dorog, in Hungary, in 1943, **Lajos Lencsés** studied at the Bartók Conservatoire of the Academy of Music in Budapest and at the Paris Conservatoire. Success at the Geneva International Competition in 1968 opened the doors of the world's concert halls to him. In 1971 he became principal oboe of the Radio Symphony Orchestra of Stuttgart, providing him with a base for his solo career, which has seen him excel also on the cor anglais and oboe d'amore. His broad repertoire embraces composers as disparate as Bach, Bellini, Britten, Cimarosa, Dittersdorf, Dutilleux, Françaix, Handel, Ibert, d'Indy, Jolivet, Koechlin, Martinů, Mozart, Nielsen, Poulenc, Franz Xaver Richter, Rosetti, Strauss and Vivaldi, and he has naturally championed contemporary Hungarian composers such as Sándor Balassa, Frigyes Hidas and Josef Soporini. He frequently gives master-classes. Over the past



three decades he has made more than fifty recordings, many of which have been awarded prizes, for labels which include Bayer, Capriccio, CPO, Hänssler Classic, Hungaroton and Musikproduktion Dabringhaus und Grimm. This is his fourth recording for Toccata Classics; the first also featured music by Ferenc Farkas (rocc 0217) and the second revealed the chamber music of a prolific Viennese contemporary of Mozart, Johann Georg Lickl (1769–1843): three oboe quartets, a cassation for wind quartet and a wind trio, all in their first recordings (rocc 0350); since then he has taken part in a programme of chamber music by Théodore Dubois (rocc 0362). He was awarded the Diapason d'Or in France in 1990, on which occasion he was described as 'one of the great oboists of our time'. The conductors under whom he has worked – in a concert career that spans Europe, the United States and Japan – include Sergiu Celibidache, Karl Münchinger and Sir Neville Marriner. In 2003 the Republic of Hungary honoured him in 2003 as a Knight of the Order of Merit.

András Csáki, one of the major guitarists of his generation, studied at the Liszt Academy of Music and then at the University of Southern California Thornton School of Music in Los Angeles; his main teachers were József Eötvös, William Kanengiser, Pepe Romero and Scott Tennant. During his student years he was the winner of several prestigious international competitions, in Tokyo (2008), Alessandria (Michele Pittaluga International Classical Guitar Competition, 2009) and Almería (International Julián Arcas Classical Guitar Competition, 2011). In addition to a solo career, he has dedicated himself to chamber music; giving the first performances of and disseminating guitar works by contemporary Hungarian composers is a particular interest. He has recorded several solo albums with Naxos. He gives master-classes in a number of countries in Europe, Asia and North America, and since 2009 he has been teaching at the Liszt Academy. In the same year he was awarded the Junior Prima Prize in the musical arts of the Prima Primissima Foundation, and in 2010 he received The Youth of March prize. He was the first recipient of the memorial plaque of Karola Ágai and László Szendrey-Karper in 2015.

www.andrascsakimusic.com



The pianist **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 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 given concerts and master-classes in over 40 countries across the world. His students have already 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. Since 2009 he has been a guest professor at the University of Graz, and professor of piano at the Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest since 1987 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).

www.szokolaybalazs.com



The organist **Antal Váradi** was born in Debrecen, in eastern Hungary, in 1975. He studied organ and sacred music at the Liszt Ferenc Conservatoire in his home-town until 1998, ending his studies with distinction in 1999. He then transferred to the Stuttgart Conservatoire of Music for further studies in music and the performing arts, graduating in 2003 with honours. He has taken master-classes with Olivier Latry, Lorenzo Ghielmi, David Titterington and Bernard Haas. He has won awards at a number of international organ competitions, among them Coldrano, Freiburg, Nuremberg, Schamberg and Zurich. He is the organist at the Holy Cross Church in Stuttgart-Sommerrain and répétiteur of the boys' choir Collegium Iuvenum Stuttgart. He has given concerts in Germany and abroad.





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