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*Soloists from the*  
**BUDAPEST FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA,**  
*with JENŐ JANDÓ, piano*  
*Introduced by Maestro IVÁN FISCHER*

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**TAMÁS ZÉTÉNYI, cello and lecturer**  
*Soloists from the* **BARD COLLEGE**  
**CONSERVATORY**

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The Franz Liszt Bicentenary Project

*Tuesday, October 25, 2011*

*Saturday, October 29, 2011*

*Coolidge Auditorium*

*Library of Congress, Thomas Jefferson Building*

*The Library of Congress*

Coolidge Auditorium

Tuesday, October 25, 2011 – 8:00 pm

***The Liszt Legacy and Béla Bartók***

**JENŐ JANDÓ, *piano***

Soloists from the Budapest Festival Orchestra :

**VIOLETTA ECKHARDT, GÁBOR SIPOS, ISTVÁN KÁDÁR,  
JÁNOS PILZ, MÁRIA GÁL-TAMÁSI, *violins*  
CECILIA BODOLAI, *viola* • RITA SOVÁNY, *cello* • ÁKOS ÁCS, *clarinet***

Introduced by **Maestro IVÁN FISCHER**

PROGRAM

Duos, *for two violins (excerpts)*, BB 104 Béla BARTÓK  
(1881-1945)

JÁNOS PILZ, MÁRIA GÁL-TAMÁSI

Rhapsody no. 1, *for violin and piano*, BB 94 Béla BARTÓK  
*Moderato*  
*Allegretto moderato – Più moderato –*  
*Allegro – Allegro molto – Vivacissimo*

ISTVÁN KÁDÁR, JENŐ JANDÓ

Contrasts, *for clarinet, violin and piano*, BB 116 Béla BARTÓK  
*Verbunkos (Moderato, ben ritmato)*  
*Pihenő (Lento)*  
*Sebes (Allegro vivace)*

ÁKOS ÁCS, ISTVÁN KÁDÁR, JENŐ JANDÓ

*Intermission*

Quintet, *for two violins, viola, cello and piano*, BB 33 Béla BARTÓK  
*Andante – Allegro –*  
*Vivace (Scherzando) – Moderato – Vivace scherzando –*  
*Adagio – Agitato –*  
*Vivace – Maestoso – Presto*

VIOLETTA ECKHARDT, GÁBOR SIPOS,  
CECILIA BODOLAI, RITA SOVÁNY, JENŐ JANDÓ

## ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Born in Nagyszentmiklós, Hungary in 1881, Béla Bartók demonstrated early a natural musical aptitude; by the age of four he was already able to play some forty songs at the piano. Young Béla's parents, both amateur musicians, encouraged their son's talent, and his mother began to give him formal piano lessons. Despite persistent childhood illness and the sudden death of his father in 1888 – which obliged the family to move frequently throughout his youth – young Béla continued to make rapid progress as a pianist; by the early 1890s, he had also produced his first compositions. The family's relocation to the city of Pozsony provided Bartók with many opportunities to perform and to pursue more advanced musical studies, contributing to his creative development. While still in Pozsony, he composed a number of works, including an early Piano Quartet in 1897, now unfortunately lost.

In 1899, Bartók moved to Budapest to attend that city's Academy of Music. He began piano studies with István Thomán (a pupil of Franz Liszt) and composition with János Koessler (whom he found uninspiring, prompting a compositional lethargy in young Béla). The vibrant musical life of Budapest, however, broadened his musical horizons through concerts, especially of contemporary works (i.e., of Liszt, Wagner, Brahms, Richard Strauss, etc.); Bartók recalled attending a concert in 1902 where he heard Strauss's symphonic poem *Also sprach Zarathustra* for the first time, which "roused [him] as if by a lightning stroke," and rekindled his desire to compose. He soon began to produce his first mature compositions under the influence of these contemporary composers: the virtuosic piano works *Rhapsody*, op. 1, and *Scherzo*, op. 2, indebted primarily to the works of Liszt; a large scale symphonic poem, *Kossuth* (1903), patterned after Strauss's tone poem *Ein Heldenleben*; and a Piano Quintet (1903-04; revised intermittently until 1920), composed in a style indebted to Liszt, and intended as a performance vehicle for Bartók himself at a time when he still anticipated pursuing a career as a concert pianist.

By his graduation from the Academy in 1903, Bartók had indeed already established a reputation as a formidable pianist. Trained largely in the pianistic tradition established by his countryman Liszt, he had an innate understanding of, and deep admiration for the work of his predecessor. His final examination, a performance of Liszt's *Rhapsodie espagnole*, was by all accounts a brilliant success that achieved notoriety far beyond the walls of the Academy. For the next few years, Bartók cultivated a career as a concert pianist, performing throughout Europe; within three years, however, he had accepted an invitation from the Budapest Academy to join its staff as piano professor.

A chance encounter with the folk music of his country – having overheard a Transylvanian-born maid singing a folk song while working in an adjacent room – awoke within Bartók a profound desire to explore the indigenous music of his own culture. (His efforts differed markedly from those of Liszt, whose concept of Hungarian music – i.e., as exemplified in his *Hungarian Rhapsodies* and other "nationalistic" works – was erroneously based on that of the Romani, or gypsies, and only rarely on actual Magyar folk music.) The exhaustive research undertaken by Bartók in this area had a profound affect on the compositions that he began to produce, which fused the precepts of Western art music with the indigenous music of Eastern Europe, resulting in an original and vital means of musical expression. Had Bartók not proceeded to produce one of the most significant bodies of musical compositions of the twentieth century, he would nevertheless still be remembered as one of history's greatest

ethnomusicologists, and one whose depth of scholarship remains a revered example even today.

Béla BARTÓK : *44 Duos*, for two violins (1931-11)

In December 1930, the German violin pedagogue Erich Doflein approached Bartók to seek his authorization to arrange several pieces from Bartók's series of didactic piano works, *For Children* (1908-09), for two violins. Bartók, whose lifelong interest in creating pedagogical works for young music students and amateur performers would eventually produce the 153 separate brief works of the *Mikrokosmos* series (1926-39) as well as the *For Children* series – instead offered to collaborate with Doflein in creating new works for this combination. Over the course of the following two years, Bartók contributed separate pieces to Doflein's violin method books; by 1933, the collected *44 Duos* were published in their entirety.

At a 1932 concert in which some of the *Duos* were performed, Bartók clarified the educational intention of these works, comparing them with his earlier *For Children*: “In their first few years of learning, students should be familiarized with works that possess the artless simplicity of folk music as well as its melodic and rhythmic peculiarities.” Unlike the earlier *For Children* series, however, the diversity of ethnicities represented was much wider in the *Duos*, with actual Slovakian, Rumanian, Ukrainian, Serbian and Arabic folk songs represented beside Hungarian melodies. Only two of the works in the *Duos* are original, but even then, Bartók's profound assimilation of indigenous Hungarian song produced works of an entirely characteristic folk idiom. With the two voices of the violins to contend with, however, it was necessary for Bartók to enrich each work with additional material extrapolated from the characteristics of each musical style represented in the *Duos*.

Bartók was sufficiently pleased with the *44 Duos* that he even prepared piano solo arrangements of some pieces from this series. It would be inaccurate to regard the *Duos* as simply “educational music,” however; despite their spare, simple style, many features of Bartók's musical language – for example, the continual variation of their musical material and free use of chromaticism – are nevertheless still present, albeit reduced to their essence, indicating another step in the evolution of Bartók's compositional thought. The lessons offered by the *Duos*, incidentally, were apparently of benefit as much to students as to the composer himself, as the more idiomatic and masterful string writing of Bartók's works for strings that followed the *Duos*, most notably his Fifth String Quartet (1934, commissioned by Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge and premièred at the Library of Congress in 1934) and Sixth String Quartet (1939), aptly demonstrate.

Béla BARTÓK : *Rhapsody no. 1*, for violin and piano (1928)

In a letter dated August 26, 1928, Béla Bartók wrote to his mother, “I was diligent again during the summer and wrote... a piece for violin with piano accompaniment of about twelve minutes. This is an arrangement of folk dances...” The following few weeks saw the completion of a second brief work which, like the first, was intended for performances at concerts of Bartók's own works, and to be performed by Bartók at the piano, along with any of the several eminent Hungarian violinists of his acquaintance. Although Bartók detested concertizing (long since having abandoned his plans to become a concert pianist), the purely practical advantages of performing his own works in order to enhance his reputation as a composer was not lost on him – hence the creation of smaller, versatile and congenial works

to be included in various performing situations. To that end, he composed his two *Rhapsodies* for violin and piano, subsequently creating versions of both for violin and orchestra, and even arranging the first *Rhapsody* for cello and piano.

Like the *44 Duos*, the two *Rhapsodies* are based on actual folksongs; those featured in the *Rhapsodies* were collected by Bartók between 1910 and 1914 in Transylvania (at that time part of Hungary). As the folk melodies used as the basis for the *Rhapsodies* were in fact actually collected from peasant violinists, the *Rhapsodies* are unique in Bartók's *œuvre* by his having retained the instrument of the original source in these compositions. Much of the folk performance idiom has even been retained by the composer both in the violin part and in the use of the *verbunkos*, a traditional Hungarian instrumental and dance form consisting of an alteration between slow and fast sections, exhibiting martial "dotted" rhythms, and which originated, curiously, as a means to attract and recruit soldiers into the Imperial armies; the form was used and popularized by Liszt in his *Hungarian Rhapsodies*.

The *Rhapsody no. 1*, dedicated to violinist Joseph (József) Szigeti, was (owing to Szigeti's unavailability) actually first performed by violinist Zoltán Székely (the dedicatee of the *Rhapsody no. 2* as well as of the Second Violin Concerto of 1938) with Bartók at the piano, at an all-Bartók concert in London on March 4, 1929. Although Szigeti and Bartók first performed the work together in December of that same year, Szigeti was the soloist in the first performance of the orchestral version of the *Rhapsody no. 1*, held in Königsberg (now Kaliningrad) on November 1, 1929, conducted by Bartók's friend and colleague, Ernő Dohnányi. The concision of its structure and the wealth of melody presented within it (the work makes use of six separate folk songs) have, despite the relative rarity of performances of the work, made it a favorite among audiences.

Béla BARTÓK : *Contrasts*, for clarinet, piano and violin (1938)

The very existence of Bartók's *Contrasts* may be credited in large measure to Hungarian-born American violinist Joseph (József) Szigeti, who had been acquainted with Bartók since their student days at the Academy of Music in Budapest. When jazz clarinetist Benny Goodman decided, in 1938, to commission a brief, six-minute work for clarinet, violin and piano in two movements – a "slow" one and a "fast" one, each of which would ostensibly fit neatly on two sides of a complete 78rpm long-playing record – to showcase his own talents, it was Szigeti who recommended that Bartók compose the work. Fortunately for posterity, Goodman agreed to Szigeti's recommendation.

*Contrasts*, in its initial two-movement format was completed in less than a month in September 1938, and performed in New York four months later. But Bartók was dissatisfied with the work's balance, and the following year added an even slower movement between the two existing ones. Szigeti recalls (in his memoirs, *With Strings Attached*, 1953) the letter that Bartók sent to Goodman along with the completed score, which read in part: "Salesmen usually deliver less than what is expected from them. But there are exceptions, though I know people are not likely to be pleased with the contractor's largesse if he delivers a suit for an adult instead of the dress ordered for a two-year-old baby." Although not conforming to Goodman's original conditions, the work's three-movement version was nevertheless readily accepted by its commissioner – even though the resulting work extended to nearly three times the specified length, and necessitating that the work's recording be released on two discs! The work, in its final three-movement form, was first performed in April 1940 by

Goodman and Szigeti, accompanied at the piano by Bartók himself, who was then enjoying a successful concert tour of the United States that brought him and his colleagues, notably, to the Library of Congress's Coolidge Auditorium.

The first movement of *Contrasts*, based on the traditional Hungarian *verbunkos* form, exhibits a proud, noble and elegantly restrained idiom that belies the form's military origins. The movement is notable for the cadenza for clarinet solo near its conclusion. The second movement, "Pihenő" (literally, "resting"), is an introspective statement containing elements of Bartók's familiar "night music" style, where mysterious stirrings emanate from the depths of an unquiet darkness. Although the slowest of the work's three movements, the "Pihenő," where violin and clarinet lines mirror each other, contains the work's most tersely stated music. Far from being an afterthought, scholars have demonstrated that this subsequently added movement, based on motifs present in the rest of the work, contains the most extensive development of the work's component musical material. The third movement, "Sebes" (literally, "rapid"), opens with an allusion to a village fiddler tuning (or rather, attempting to tune) his violin. The movement, marked "Allegro vivace," turns calmer in its central section ("Più mosso") before resuming its initial tempo; a virtuosic cadenza for the solo violin is soon heard before all the instruments join to conclude the work in a brilliant (albeit slyly humorous) manner.

The literal "contrasts" of the very different timbres of the violin, clarinet and piano are emphasized in the work, steadfastly resisting attempts to be combined into a uniform texture. Jazz-inspired gestures (perhaps in homage to Goodman) are juxtaposed in the work with elements from indigenous Magyar folk music, creating a compelling and unique musical work that biographer Paul Griffiths describes as partaking "of both the popular styles of the violin rhapsodies and the more esoteric manner of the [string] quartets."

Béla BARTÓK : *Quintet*, for two violins, viola, cello and piano (1903-04; revised 1920)

Composed in 1903 and 1904, Béla Bartók's *Quintet* for piano and strings holds a pivotal position in its composer's works and stylistic development. It was the last work of Bartók's early period, at a time when he still embraced the Romantic nationalist style inherited from Franz Liszt. The work, composed in four sections to be played without pause, was premièred in Vienna in November 1904 by the Prill Quartet, and with Bartók himself at the piano.

It is significant to note that after completing the *Quintet*, Bartók wrote no more chamber works for the next four years. This period was marked by professional and personal disappointments in Bartók's life, such as the abandonment of his plans to pursue a career as a concert pianist, and an unrequited love for violinist Stefi Geyer, for whom he composed his First Violin Concerto in 1908. His personal Hungarian nationalist sentiments had also begun to embrace a more international perspective as well, an indication of Bartók's continuing maturation both as an individual and as an artist. But foremost, it was a period during which Bartók's first folk music collecting journeys had begun, the result of which redefined his entire musical language.

Despite the profound shift in Bartók's musical expression that followed the composition of the *Quintet*, the composer evidently still thought highly enough of this early work to include it in later concerts (it was programmed in the same 1910 concert that featured the première

performance of his First String Quartet, one of the first works to be composed after Bartók's engagement with folk music), and even to devote his energies to revising the work for performance in 1920. By that time, however, as his musical style had changed so dramatically, the accolades that Bartók received for this early work during this 1920 concert actually enraged him – so much so that he nearly destroyed its score!

The large scale *Quintet*, composed in four movements, initially appears to adhere to a specifically Romantic aesthetic inherited from Liszt: it is composed according to a traditional four-movement structure; its organic unity is assured by the use of reoccurring “motto” themes to delineate distinct sections within the work. But Bartók's treatment of this material is uniquely his own: the use of related Hungarian-style themes link the first and last movements, indicative of a tightly organized formal structure; the appearance of asymmetrical rhythm; the continual repetition and variation of themes; the flexible use of tonality – all stylistic features that would soon become familiar elements of Bartók's expressive language, and all of which may already be discerned here in one of its composer's earliest works.

*Kevin LaVine*  
*Senior Music Specialist*

#### ABOUT THE ARTISTS

**Iván Fischer** enjoys an international reputation as the Music Director of the renowned Budapest Festival Orchestra, which he, along with Zoltán Kocsis, founded in 1983. With members drawn from the most skilled musicians in Hungary, the Budapest Festival Orchestra has been shaped by Fischer into a world-class orchestra, as evident from the many awards and accolades it has received for its over forty recordings in a wide range of repertoire (most notably of works of Bartók), its successful concert tours of the world's most prestigious venues, and, at home, through its varied public programs in support of Hungarian musical culture.

Born in Budapest, Fischer's initial musical studies were in piano, violin, cello and composition. Later studies of cello and early music in Vienna led to an assistantship with Nikolas Harnoncourt, a pioneer in the resurgence of historic musical performance practice. Fischer's career was launched after having won the Rupert Foundation conducting competition in 1976, and he soon found himself in demand as guest conductor with such orchestras as the BBC Symphony, the London Symphony Orchestra (which he conducted during its world tour in 1982) and, in his American conducting debut, the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra in 1983.

That same year, he helped to establish the Budapest Festival Orchestra, developing numerous innovative means to facilitate the dissemination of classical music to a broader public (through festivals, children's concerts, open-air concerts, children's concerts, opera performances, commissioning new works, etc.), as well as to improve the quality and conditions of the orchestra members themselves (solo competitions, chamber music opportunities, etc.). To quote Fischer himself, “Only an orchestra of true artists – making music as a highly disciplined team – is able to realize the dreams of the composers and to pass on an uplifting experience to the audience, touching all listeners deep in their hearts.” To judge from the international acclaim enjoyed both by the Budapest Festival Orchestra and

by Fischer himself, it is a philosophy that has served both well, to the benefit of our shared musical culture.

After having been named as Principal Guest Conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra here in Washington, DC in 2006, Fischer was, the following year, named the orchestra's Principal Conductor until 2009. Fischer continues to serve as guest conductor with the world's most prestigious ensembles and opera houses. His efforts have been recognized through numerous awards, among them the Kossuth Prize, awarded in 2006 by the Hungarian Government, and his designation as a Chevalier des Arts et Lettres by the French Government. Most recently, Fischer has been named Music Director of the Konzerthaus Berlin and Principal Conductor of the Konzerthausorchester Berlin. He has also been nominated as "Artist of the Year" by Gramophone Magazine, one of the highest honors extended to classical musicians.

Hungarian pianist **Jenő Jandó** began his advanced studies of the piano at Budapest's famed Franz Liszt Academy of Music. After having won prizes at the 1970 Beethoven Piano Competition at age eighteen, the Hungarian Piano Concours in 1973, and the Sydney International Piano Competition in 1977 (first prize in chamber music), Jandó's professional career was further enhanced through his engagement in the late 1980s by Naxos records as of the first Eastern European artists whose recordings were disseminated in the West. The success of Jandó's first recording for Naxos, the complete piano sonatas of Beethoven, established at a stroke the reputations of both Jandó and the Naxos label, the latter now regarded as one of the most successful record companies of all time. Jandó has subsequently recorded for Naxos Mozart's complete piano sonatas and concertos, Bach's entire *Well-Tempered Clavier*, Haydn's complete keyboard sonatas, and the complete piano music (including the three piano concertos) of Bartók. Other recordings by Jandó include concertos of Grieg, Schumann and Rachmaninoff, as well as piano music of Liszt, Schubert, Brahms, and Chopin - in all, over sixty recordings featured on over two hundred CDs. Jandó is also well-known as a vocal accompanist and as a chamber music recitalist, and is a professor at the Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest.

Violinist **Violetta Eckhardt** serves as the concertmaster of the Budapest Festival Orchestra. At the age of eighteen, Ms. Eckhardt won Hungary's National Youth Violin Competition, allowing her to continue her studies at the Franz Liszt Academy of Music. Recipient of awards from the Jenő Hubay and József Szigeti Violin Competitions as well as the Budapest Festival Orchestra's Sándor Végh Competition in 2009, Ms. Eckhardt is also active as a chamber music performer, and has appeared on recordings of works by composers Johann Christian Bach (with the Camerata Budapest) and Harold Truscott on the Naxos label.

**Gábor Sipos** performs in the first violin section of Budapest Festival Orchestra. A native of Budapest, Mr. Sipos attended the Béla Bartók Secondary Music School and the Franz Liszt Music Academy. He was also a prize winner at the Jenő Hubay Violin Competition in 1991, the year of his graduation from the Liszt Academy. In addition to his career as an orchestral musician, Mr. Sipos is active in performing chamber music, including with the Auer String Quartet, of which he is a founding member.

Born in Marosvásárhely, Romania, **István Kádár** began to study the violin at age five. A period of study in Bucharest and performing as a violinist in several orchestras in Germany was followed by a return to violin studies at the Liszt Academy in Budapest. A former concertmaster with the Hungarian Symphony Orchestra, Mr. Kádár joined the Budapest



Festival Orchestra in 1992, and presently performs in the orchestra's first violin section. He has also performed as soloist with the orchestra, and was a winner of the orchestra's Sándor Végh Competition in 2007. Mr. Kádár is also an active chamber musician, and often performs folk music with his colleagues from the Budapest Festival Orchestra.

In addition to being a member of the Budapest Festival Orchestra's viola section, **Cecilia Bodolai** is also very active in the area of chamber music, as violist with the acclaimed Budapest-based Danubius String Quartet, acclaimed for its recordings of repertoire ranging from Mozart and Boccherini to Brahms, and for its complete string quartets of Villa-Lobos. Her recordings of chamber music appear on the Hungaroton, Naxos and Marco Polo labels.

Cellist **Rita Sovány** won her first national violoncello competition in Hungary at the age of eleven, and her second by the age of sixteen. She subsequently pursued her cello studies with Miklós Perényi at the Liszt Academy in Budapest. After having graduated from the Liszt Academy, Ms. Sovány became a member of the Budapest Festival Orchestra's cello section, and is also a regular performer in chamber music groups, and in the orchestra's chamber music series.

**Ákos Ács** is solo clarinetist with the Budapest Festival Orchestra. Having completed his studies at the Béla Bartók Conservatory in Budapest, he graduated from the Franz Liszt Music Academy in 1991, and that same year was awarded a scholarship from the Budapest Festival Orchestra, becoming a member of the orchestra the following year. In addition to regular chamber music performances, Mr. Ács has also been featured numerous times as soloist with the BFO and other orchestras, as well as in recordings of works for clarinet on the Naxos and Channel Classics labels.

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*The Library of Congress*

Coolidge Auditorium

Saturday, October 29, 2011 - 2:00 pm

***Gray Clouds : Late Chamber Music of Franz Liszt***

A Lecture-Demonstration by

**TAMÁS ZÉTÉNYI, cello**

**SABRINA TABBY, SCOT MOORE, violins**  
**DÁVID TÓTH, viola • ANNA BIKALES, harp • ZSÓLT BALOGH, piano**

Presented in cooperation with the Bard College Conservatory

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PROGRAM TO INCLUDE :

Angelus! (Années de pèlerinage, Troisième année)

R.W. - Venezia

Am Grabe Richard Wagners

Unstern : sinister, disastro

Die Zelle in Nonnenwerth (Elegia)

Nuages gris

Schafflos

Frage und Antwort

O du, mein holder Abendstern  
(transcription of Richard Wagner's Tannhäuser)

La Lugubre gondola I, II

**Tamás Zétényi** presents a program developed during a year-long residency as Visiting Hungarian Fellow at Bard College (Annandale-on-Hudson, NY), and through his research with the Library of Congress's extensive holdings of material related to Franz Liszt. This event includes a discussion and performances of harmonically visionary transcriptions and chamber pieces – elegies, prayers and meditations – that extend the boundaries of Western tonality and foreshadow music written a century later.

Mr. Zétényi was born in Budapest, Hungary, and began playing the cello at the age of five. After winning the János Starker Competition in 2004, he has continued his studies at the Franz Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest, in Berlin, and at Bard College.

Mr. Zétényi has performed as a solo recitalist throughout Europe as well as soloist with many distinguished orchestras, among them the Danube Symphony Orchestra and the European Union Youth Orchestra.

Focusing on chamber music performance, Mr. Zétényi has performed widely in the United States with the Kalmia String Quartet. His most recent project, featuring young Hungarian musicians in chamber music performances both in the concert hall and in live broadcasts on Hungarian National Radio, has received rave reviews both in Hungary and abroad.

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