

# 2023-2024 season



OCTOBER

## FESTIVAL OF HUNGARIAN GEMS series

Saturday, 7 October 2023

Liszt Academy

15.00 Grand Hall

### Festival of Hungarian Gems – Opening concert

Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2

László Dubrovay: Love, love

Ádám Kondor: The Nightingale and the Rose.

Lehár: Concertino for Violin and Orchestra

Featuring Attila Fekete (tenor), Orsolya Kaczander (flute), Csaba Klenyán (clarinet), Barnabás Kelemen (violin)

Concerto Budapest

Conductor: Keller András



“Even if I compose pieces that will find the audience easily, my aim was more than simply amusing people. I wanted to conquest their hearts and intrude deep into their souls” wrote Franz Lehár. The maestro’s virtuoso and romantic Concertino, composed when he was quite young, can only be heard rarely. He composed it in 1888 during his violin studies in Prague. Ádám Kondor’s The Nightingale and the Rose is a double concerto of three movements with flute and clarinet solo. It refers to a recurring motif of the classical Irani love poetry, the love of the nightingale and the rose. László Dubrovay’s orchestral song cycle Love, love is a “double Hungarian treasure piece”, thus, it makes one associate it with the title of the programme series

itself. This work is homage to the Hungarian poet, Sándor Petőfi who was born 200 years ago. The composer selected less known, folksong-like poems by the poet apart from the one that serves as the title of the cycle.

**30% discount in October!**

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17.00 Solti Hall

### István Pál “Szalonna” and his orchestra

Members of the Band: **István Pál “Szalonna”** prime violin and singing, **Eszter Pál** singing, **Tamás Gombai** violin, **Attila Gera** wind instruments, **Gyula Karacs** viola, **Sándor Ürmös** cimbalom, **Róbert Doór** double bass



The Band, celebrated its 15th anniversary in 2020, has been an outstanding ensemble in the Hungarian folk music life for the past decade. They play captivating authentic tunes from the Carpathian Basin at concerts spreading the beauty of Hungarian folk music all over the world. The Band is a regular performer of noted national art events, festivals, plays in the biggest concert halls of Hungary and on television. They have performed with huge successes throughout the world in Europe, America and Asia. Their main ambition is to

preserve and sing traditional Hungarian folk songs together with the participants in their ever-expanding folk camps, through this achieving Zoltán Kodály's intentions and endeavours. They are honoured by love of the audiences all over the world. "Szalonna" and his musicians are noted talents of all fields of folk music, they are virtuoso masters of their instruments. Besides the violin, the cimbalom has a leading role as well as the wind instruments supplemented by a robust accompanying section.

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### **19.30 Grand Hall**

#### **Festival of Hungarian Gems – Closing concert**

Bartók: Dance Suite BB 86

Sándor Veress: Concerto for Violin

*-Intermission-*

Bartók: Concerto for Viola BB 128 (the viola part was adapted to cello by Miklós Perényi)

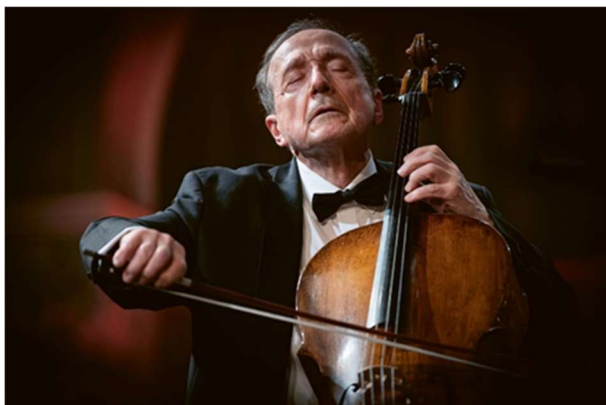
Kodály: Psalmus Hungaricus

**Barnabás Kelemen** violin, **Miklós Perényi** cello, **Szabolcs Brickner** tenor

**Hungarian National Choir** (choirmaster: **Csaba Somos**)

**Concerto Budapest**

Conductor: **András Keller**



A hundred years ago, on 19th November, 1923, the 50th anniversary of the unification of Pest, Buda and Old Buda was celebrated with a monumental, festive concert. This was the occasion when the world-premiere of three pieces took place that had been commissioned by the city council from three outstanding composers of the time: Bartók, Kodály and Dohnányi. According to contemporary reviews, while the audience received Dohnányi's Festive Overture with modest applause, Bartók's Dance Suite was considered incomprehensible. It was only Kodály's Psalmus Hungaricus that made the heart

of the audience – whose soul was torn apart by the loss caused by the War, the Soviet Republic and Trianon – throb. Between the two emblematic pieces two unique and rarely heard concerti will be played. The Concerto for Violin by Sándor Veress was composed when the composer lived in Hungary. It was addressed to Sándor Végh, who played the first, two-movement version. This work is also special from music historical point of view, because between the two World Wars Bartók was the only Hungarian author to write a concerto for violin. Numerous studies and monographs have been written on Bartók's unfinished piece, the Concerto for Viola of which only drafts remained, and its different completions, viola and cello versions. Now the audience will hear the world-premiere of a cello solo adaptation based on the the new reconstruction of Miklós Rakos published in 2016.

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**Saturday, 14 October 2023, 19:30**

**Grand Hall, Liszt Academy**

Mozart: Piano Quintet in E flat major, K. 452

Beethoven: Piano Trio in D major, op. 70, no. 1 („Ghost“)

*-Intermission-*

Messiaen: Quartet for the End of Time

**Debargue Lucas** piano, **András Keller** violin, **László Fenyő** cello, **Csaba Klenyán** clarinet, **Béla Horváth** oboe, **Bálint Mohai** bassoon, **Bálint Tóth** horn



“I consider this piece to be the best one I have composed...” wrote Mozart to his father enthusiastically about his Quintet in E flat major after its premiere. “I wish you had heard it!” The piece – composed for a unique ensemble that consists of a piano, an oboe, a clarinet, a bassoon and a horn , was quite novel with its wind parts being generously extravagant. No wonder that it enchanted the audience of the premier. Moreover, it also enchanted Beethoven,

who took inspiration for his op. 16 Quintet from his predecessor. The well-known nickname of the Trio in D major (op. 70, no. 1) by the maestro born in Bonn is, of course, not originated from the composer, but from Carl Czerny whose overheated imagination is well-known: “The character of the Largo, which should be played extremely slowly, is spooky and gruesome like a spirit from the underworld. Like the first apparition of the Ghost in Hamlet...” However, not too much imagination is needed to feel Messiaen’s Quartet for the End of Time to be spinechilling. And not only because of its title and music, but also because of the circumstances under which it was composed: Messiaen together with three of his musician friends was a Silesian prisoner of war in 1940-41 when he was working on the piece. The vision that the northern lights and the constant starvation together with sentences from John’s Book of Revelation that he resonated on evoked, made him compose this eight-movement work for his friends. It was first performed for 5000 people in the prisoner of war camp in January, in terrible cold weather.

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**Saturday, 21 October 2023, 19:30**  
**Grand Hall, Liszt Academy**

Beethoven: Egmont Overture, op. 84  
Beethoven: Piano Concerto in G major, no. 4, op. 58  
*-Intermission-*  
Tchaikovsky: Symphony in E minor, no. 5, op. 64

**Nikolai Lugansky** piano  
**Concerto Budapest**  
Conductor: **András Keller**



The Hungarian Revolution and War of Independence in 1956 were bound together with Beethoven's Egmont Overture, which could be heard almost looped on the radio during the events. Therefore, the opening piece of our concert in October commemorates the Revolution. In Goethe's play the protagonist, the Count of Egmont, a Dutch nobleman led the Flemish War of Independence against the Spanish

oppression, and at the end, he failed. The tone of struggle of the maestro born in Bonn also appears in his Piano Concerto in G major, which is probably his most lyrical, romantic and original piece. This stage is "inside" – to refer to the Prologue of Bartók's The Bluebird's Castle. The torment of the human soul (orchestral recitativo) struggles with the redeeming and relieving love (the cantilena of the piano) or as we can read it in one of Beethoven's early monographies, it is Orfeo's pleading against the cruel, headshaking denial of the underworld. In Tchaikovsky's Symphony in E minor the emotional scale declines even more. The leitmotif-like, recurring knock of fate is "a full yielding to the indecipherable order of fate or destiny" as the composer said. Although it contradicts somehow this thesis sentence, there is a huge range of rich characters and varied musical thoughts to be enjoyed. The always changing appearances of the fate motif are rather mementos and warnings that interrupt the events.

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**Friday, 27 October 2023, 19:30**  
**Bartók Béla National Concert Hall, Müpa Budapest**

Schumann: Genoveva – Overture, op. 81  
Saint-Saëns: Havanaise, op. 83  
Saint-Saëns: Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso, op. 28  
*-Intermission-*  
Mahler: Symphony in G major, No. 4

**Polina Pasztircsák** soprano, **Teo Gertler** violin  
Conductor: **Gábor Takács-Nagy**



Mythology, Mediterranean colours, and literature... Based on a theme from German mythology, Schumann's only opera, *Genoveva*, was performed on only a few occasions, which brought depression down on the composer not for the first time in his life. Unlike the bleak overture to the opera, which was written much earlier than the libretto, was played throughout Europe at numerous concerts. The exotic Mediterranean and Cuban rhythms made a huge

impact on contemporary French composers. The *Havanaise* and the *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso* are two pieces for solo violin accompanied by an orchestra. The first and most authentic interpreters of the pieces were probably the Cuban Rafael Díaz Albertini and the Spanish Pablo de Sarasate. The cheery mood continues in Mahler's serene and most frequently played *Symphony No. 4*. His first three symphonies focus on questions of human and divine being, while his fourth depicts life in the heavens from the vantage point of a child. Both its origin and the way to understand the piece guide one to Mahler's deep affection for the poems of *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* (The Boy's Magic Horn), that is, his affinity for the naive romanticism of an earlier era and a world where there is no concern except the eternal question: "Does he also love me?"

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## NOVEMBER

Saturday-Sunday, 25-26 November 2023

### **Concerto Cello Fest 2023**

2-day Cello Festival of the Concerto Budapest

The programs: Click the [LINK!](#)

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## DECEMBER

**Saturday, 9 December 2023, 19:30**

**Grand Hall, Liszt Academy**

Glinka: *Ruslan and Lyudmila* – Overture

Rachmaninov: Concerto for Piano in F sharp minor, No. 1, op. 1

*-Intermission-*

Tchaikovsky: *Symphony No. 1 in G minor (Winter Daydreams)*, op. 13

**Mihail Pletnev** piano

**Concerto Budapest**

Conductor: **Gábor Takács-Nagy**



Glinka's *Ruslan and Lyudmila* is an opera based on a poem by Pushkin. Moreover, it is one of the first emblematic pieces of the Russian classical musical style. Its more popular part is the explosive and energetic Overture, the main theme of which makes use of the jubilant chorus of Act 5. At the same time, the love theme of Ruslan's aria also appears played by the low string instruments. The next pieces are two from the first harvest, both of which are rarely

played Russian orchestral works. Enchanted by Grieg's piano concerto, Rachmaninov composed his first Concerto for Piano at the age of 17. This piece differs much from his second and third concerti. Although the first lacks outstanding melodies, it surprises the audience with its youthful vividness and drive. Mendelssohn and Schumann, both famous western contemporary composers, inspired the 26-year-old Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 1. His former professor, Anton Rubinstein, sent it back to the composer to correct and re-compose it after vehement criticism. The piece was performed only much later with huge success. Critics appreciated the orchestration and its pure Russian tone. "Although it is still immature in many respects, it is more meaningful and better than any of my more mature pieces," Tchaikovsky stated in one of his letters with the favouritism of a man talking about his first child.

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**Thursday, 14 December, 2023, 19:30**  
**Béla Bartók National Concert Hall, Müpa Budapest**

Péter Eötvös: *Triangel*  
Ravel: *Introduction and Allegro*  
Berio: *Sinfonia*

**Isao Nakamura** percussion, **Neue Vocalsolisten**  
**Concerto Budapest**  
Conductor: **Fabián Panisello**



"Percussion soloists inhabit their own little universe: unique instruments and peculiar techniques... *Triangel* is composed in a way that provides the musicians with the opportunity to use their individual creativity. The ensemble divided into four groups reacts partly in a fixed way and partly spontaneously to the music played by the soloist. This piece discovers cadenza techniques that were organic parts of concerti about a hundred years ago," writes Péter Eötvös about the *Triangel*. The soloist for the world premiere in 1993 was the same

Isao Nakamura the audience of Müpa Budapest will also hear tonight. Berio's *Sinfonia*, composed for the 125th anniversary of the New York Philharmonic in 1969, does not lack pessimism, either. Composed for eight voices and an orchestra, the piece depicts an abstract and grotesque cultural history through the various kinds of music it quotes. The diverse sources of the text (speech, whispers

and shouts) range from Claude Lévi-Strauss and Samuel Beckett (excerpts from novels) to Gustav Mahler (instructions to performers from full scores).

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**Friday, 22 December 2023, 19.30**  
**Grand Hall, Liszt Academy,**

Tchaikovsky: Meditation (Souvenir d'un lieu cher), op. 42

Tchaikovsky: Concerto for Violin in D major, op. 53

*-Intermission-*

Tchaikovsky: Swan Lake – Suite, op. 20a

Tchaikovsky: The Nutcracker – Suite, op. 71a

**Kristóf Baráti** violin

**Concerto Budapest**

Conductor: **András Keller**



Christmas is coming and so are flavours... and tales... In this period of the year, The Nutcracker plays the leading role, so the orchestral suite will crown our Tchaikovsky programme. Before that, the violin will take centre stage with two related pieces, the Meditation and the Concerto for Violin in D major that follow each other intentionally: originally, the gorgeous instrumental cantilena was meant to be the slow movement of the

Concerto. However, the Meditation became a piece on its own and became popular as the first part of Souvenir d'un lieu cher. The “beloved place” referred to in the title is Brailov, the Ukrainian estate of Nadezhda von Meck, a generous patron who had a platonic relationship with Tchaikovsky. This was the place where the composer was able to spend a few peaceful weeks composing, and that is what the dedication of the piece also refers to: “To B\*\*\*”. Although Tchaikovsky was a highly skilled composer of theatre music genres, such as operas, ballets and incidental music, it was his ballets that were of the highest significance in his time, and these are the stage works that are still performed most frequently today. Nevertheless, as ballets cannot be performed all the time, the composer considered compiling an orchestral suite: “The other day Swan Lake came to my mind. I want to prevent my music from being forgotten as it does have some respectable aspects,” he wrote to his publisher. This is probably how both of his orchestral suites were born.

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**Concerts of the 2023-24 season: Click the [LINK](#)**