Performance practice in Hungarian folk music and its relationship to the Style Hongrois

Teresa Vinci

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Performance Practice in Hungarian Folk Music and its Relationship to the Style Hongrois

A dissertation
-and-
CD: “Never Far Away...”

This dissertation is presented for the degree of Master of Arts (Performing Arts)

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Edith Cowan University
School of Music, Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts
2019
ABSTRACT

This study investigates style and performance practice within the oral traditions of Hungarian folk music, and explores intersections with the nineteenth-century idiom style hongrois. Interviews, lessons, and workshops were undertaken as part of a practice-based immersive research experience, and comparisons with the style hongrois made via analysis of scores and recordings of Jenő Hubay (1858-1937). The research strives towards an ‘Historically Informed Performance’ specific to these styles, and explores how they can inform each other. Findings are presented through a dissertation and a CD recording “Never Far Away...” comprising the researcher’s violin performance as leader of an Hungarian folk band.
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my supervisors, Associate Professor Jonathan Paget and Dr Helen Rusak, for their continued guidance and support throughout my studies. I am also deeply grateful to Péter Árendás, Laurence Jackson, Rudolf Koelman, Csaba Ökrös, Mark Richards, Pál Richter, Vilmos Szabadi, and Erika Tóth. The knowledge, experiences, wisdom, and passion that they generously shared through interviews and violin lessons, have shaped this project in meaningful ways. Acknowledgment also goes to all musicians who collaborated in making the CD “Never Far Away...”, in particular Peter Sackett, József Kajcsa, and Bendegúz Bányai; it is always a joy to make music together. Finally, thank you to my family and friends, for their constant love, support, and encouragement.

Teresa Vinci
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I. CHAPTER ONE

A. INTRODUCTION

This research project evolved from a passion for both classical music and Hungarian folk music, and a desire to hone my skills and understanding of these musical styles to a higher level. As a classical musician, I have always been drawn to compositions with exotic idioms, especially those of the style hongrois, and works with a Hungarian flavour, such as those by Béla Bartók (1881-1945). I have been intrigued about the relationship between the classical music tradition and folk music, and how these folk idioms have influenced the compositional style of several composers, as seen in their works. This curiosity has always been so strong that, prior to the commencement of this project, I had already been studying Hungarian folk music for several years, undertaking study trips both internationally and nationally, whenever the opportunity to learn from prominent Hungarian musicians presented itself. This research project provided the opportunity to further my knowledge and consolidate my understanding in both practical performance and a research manner, whilst also allowing me to share my journey and experiences for personal and professional outcomes. This research study has encouraged an exploration of the performance practices of both musical styles, and how an understanding of Hungarian folk music can aid a more authentic interpretation of compositions in the style hongrois; a connection with which I have been intrigued for some time.

A research trip to Hungary facilitated interviews with experts in Hungarian folk music and the style hongrois, valuable violin lessons to refine my skills and performance style, and inspiration through attendance at music performances. The benefits of this research trip are evident in the results of this project, providing valuable insights contributed by the interviewees who informed the dissertation, and the performance output of a CD of Hungarian folk music.

In researching this topic, violinist and composer Jenő Hubay also came to my attention, presenting as a significant contributor to the style hongrois repertoire, and an important figure in Hungarian music. Upon further investigation, it appeared that little had been written in English about Hubay, and his compositions rarely performed today; it is for this reason that I selected Hubay’s composition Scènes de la Csárda No.5 “Hullámzó Balaton”, Op.33 as a Case Style Analysis, detailing characteristic traits of the style hongrois, and intersections with Hungarian folk music.
B. AN OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH TOPIC

1. CONCEPTUAL OVERVIEW

The following diagram (see Figure 1) is a conceptual overview of the research topic and illustrates the relationship between different musical styles. It clearly depicts the connection between Hungarian folk music, Romani music, and the Classical music tradition, which, combined with the verbunkos repertory and verbunk dance music, informed the style hongrois. Although several composers approached the style hongrois from the classical tradition, it is important to explore the other relevant musical styles, as composers often found inspiration in a variety of exotic sources and idioms. An awareness of the interconnectedness between musical styles, as well as an understanding of their performance practices, helps to shape an authentic and ‘Historically Informed’ interpretation of works in the style hongrois.

Figure 1. A Conceptual Overview of the Research Area

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1 Definitions of these terms are explored in Chapter Two.
2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The questions central to this study are:

1. What are the performance practices associated with violin playing in Hungarian folk music? What are the performance practices associated with violin playing in the style hongrois? Is there a link?

2. How can an understanding of Hungarian folk music inform the performance of works in the style hongrois (as illustrated through the music of Jenő Hubay)?

3. DESCRIPTION OF CENTRAL RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This research study is an exploration of the performance practices associated with both Hungarian folk music, and the nineteenth-century musical style, style hongrois. It searches for common links between these musical styles, and questions whether an understanding of Hungarian folk music can in fact inform authentic interpretations of compositions in the style hongrois, as illustrated through a Case Study Analysis of Hubay’s work, Šènes de la Csárdá No.5 “Hullámzó Balaton”, Op.33. The wider relevance of this study relates to the growing field of academic study of ‘Historically Informed Performance’, and critical analysis of early recorded performances. Through interviews, in-depth research of the literature, and analysing recordings, this study explores the performance practices of Hungarian folk music and the style hongrois, and how an understanding of these can contribute to an ‘Historically Informed Performance’. The significance of Hubay as a noted violinist and composer is discussed through analysis of his recordings and scores of his compositions.

4. SIGNIFICANCE AND JUSTIFICATION

As Hungarian folk music is an oral tradition, this research study required an holistic approach and exploration outside of the written literature, thus resulting in an immersive research trip to Hungary. In Hungary, research took the form of violin lessons, observation of performances, and interviews with Hungarian folk and style hongrois music experts. It is possible that these experiences could contribute to an understanding of the literature by documenting the experiences and knowledge of

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learned musicians and musicologists who have been instrumental in maintaining this folk music
tradition in recent decades. The interview data complements the existing literature by providing a
musician’s point of view, with specific reference to the performative application of this information,
which in turn informed the performance output of this project, a CD of Hungarian folk music. The CD
features original arrangements and presentations of folk melodies learnt from prominent Hungarian
folk musicians.

This research study contributes to the already extensive literature on the *style hongrois*, by
offering a Case Study Analysis of Hubay’s composition *Scènes de la Csárda No.5 “Hullámzó Balaton”,
Op.33*. The analysis not only explores the characteristics and performance practices associated with
the *style hongrois*, but offers original insight into the connection and similarities the composition
shares with Hungarian folk music. These insights are informed by the interview data, as well as
personal experiences of studying Hungarian folk music, demonstrating how an understanding of
Hungarian folk music can enrich one’s understanding and interpretations of compositions in the
*style hongrois*. The analysis, which is explored in the final chapter, draws on and integrates a variety
of sources. It is a culmination of the research study, linking the interview data, creative performance
output, Hubay’s contribution to the *style hongrois*, and the existing literature to approach an
analysis and interpretation which is ‘Historically Informed’.

Hubay, as a notable (but relatively under-researched) contributor to the *style hongrois*
repertory, is used as an example of how deeply embedded and widespread the *style hongrois* was in
the nineteenth century. Despite his prominence and achievements in Europe, Hubay is relatively
unknown today; there is little written about him in English, his compositions are rarely performed,
and his recordings have not had the scrutiny they deserve. A more rounded understanding of
Hubay’s violin performance and compositional style can be gained through analysis of his recordings,
which in turn, can inform and influence future performances of his compositions.

The most enduring examples of the *style hongrois* in the violin repertoire, are *Csárdás* by
Vittorio Monti (1868-1922), *Zigeunerweisen* by Pablo de Sarasate (1844-1908) and *Tzigane* by
Maurice Ravel (1875-1937); these are widely performed to this day. However, this research study
presents for examination works by Hubay, which are by comparison lesser known. An excerpt of
Sarasate’s famous violin show piece, *Zigeunerweisen, Op.20*, which is indicative of the *style hongrois*,
is shown in EXAMPLE 1.
It is impossible to express in words the manner of performing this Composition. The interpretation is to be free and the Character of Zingara (Gipsy) Music improvised as much as the ability of the performer will admit.

One of the principal aims of this research is to explore the performance practices of the style hongrois, in order to achieve an ‘Historically Informed Performance’ and an authentic representation of this style, as the inscription openly encourages. This is explored through the lesser-known compositions of Hubay, whose writing in the style hongrois resembles that of Sarasate, as seen in EXAMPLE 2.

\footnote{Pablo de Sarasate, \textit{Zigeunerweisen, Op. 20} (New York: Carl Fischer, 1895), 2.}
Even at a first glance of the excerpt above, it is apparent that Hubay’s compositional writing style shares strong similarities with his contemporary, Sarasate. The passage is technically difficult and displays elements of the style hongrois, such as rapid scale passages, ‘gypsy-like’ ornamentation, and an element of improvisation, as the caption in EXAMPLE 1 openly encourages. The presence of these elements alone is not what creates the style hongrois; it is the inter-relationships between them which evokes the style. This is explored further with specific reference to the compositions of Hubay, whose works have not had the scrutiny that they deserve. This research also demonstrates the benefits of acquiring knowledge of Hungarian folk music and Romani music, in order to approach an interpretation which is ‘Historically Informed’, and which reflects and replicates the sights and sounds that influenced composers during that historical period.

5. **STRUCTURE OF DISSERTATION**

The following chapter (Chapter Two) encompasses a Definition of Terms, Literature Review, Methodology, and Methods/Procedures. The Literature Review explores the literature pertaining to Hungarian folk music, style hongrois, Hubay, performance practices, and an exploration of the intersections between folk, verbunks, and the style hongrois.

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Chapter Three contains the Interview Summary Report, detailing the experiences and data from interviews with four Hungarian folk music experts (Group One), and four violinists with considerable expertise in the style hongrois (Group Two). These insights, in addition to the literature surrounding the research topic, shaped the following chapters and informed the performance output, a Hungarian folk music CD, entitled “Never Far Away...”.

Chapter Four explores the creative component of this study, a CD of Hungarian folk music. This chapter contains critical reflections on making the CD, the recording process, and personal experiences in learning traditional Hungarian folk music. Three Case Studies provide a closer examination of the performance practices associated with Hungarian folk music, with a Critical Notes and Reflection section detailing pertinent information on each track of the CD. The CD itself provides tangible examples of the performance practices associated with Hungarian folk music, as well as the information shared in the interviews given by respected musicians and musicologists.

Chapter Five demonstrates the essence of the style hongrois through a Case Study Analysis, whilst also highlighting strong links, intersections, and similarities to Hungarian folk music. It showcases the violin composition Scènes de la Csárda No.5 “Hullámzó Balaton”, Op.33, by Jenő Hubay, whilst also bringing to the fore the Romani musicians from whom composers found great inspiration.

Chapter Six draws all these chapters together in a Conclusion, summarising the results of this research study and the unique contribution it provides to the existing literature.
II. CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

Chapter Two is an exploration of the existing literature relating to this research topic and the Methodology which shaped this research journey. The following is a Definition of Terms which are pertinent to this dissertation.

A. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Hungarian folk music

Hungarian folk music, or Magyar Népzene, refers to the oral tradition of traditional folk or ‘peasant’ music, including the verbunkos, csárdás, and nóta. This term also covers related styles of traditional folk music from Hungarian minorities living in modern-day Slovakia, central Romania (Transylvania), and Moldova. Bartók and Kodály, avid researchers of Hungarian folk music, defined it as “the unwritten music surviving in the peasant tradition”.6

- Instrumentation differs depending on the dialect or region, the most common being the string band, featuring the violin, brácsa, and bógó.
- Brácsa refers to the 3-stringed viola with a flat bridge, which facilitates triple-stops on each chord; featured in Transylvanian music.
- Bógó refers to the double bass which has three gut strings and utilises a variety of bows, such as a long classical bow and a variety of short bows.
- Táncház refers to an informal Hungarian folk dance event.

Romani music and musicians

Romani music refers to the music of travelling ‘gypsy’ musicians, the Romani people, predominantly found in Europe, but also the Middle East and South Asia.7 In English, the term ‘gypsy’ is avoided as it is racially insensitive, instead adopting the term Roma; there are many other names used throughout Europe, such as zingari (Italy), Tsingani (Central and Eastern Europe), gitans (France), and ciganos (Portugal).

In reference to the Romani people, several different names and spellings, such as Rom, Roma, Romany, rrom, and rromani, are interchanged depending on the country or language area.

Whilst Roma is the term often used, including by the Council of Europe and other organisations, some subgroups of Romani do not self-identify with this term, preferring the word Romani (plural Romanies). Accepting and respecting this reasoning, the term Romani will be used throughout this study.

The term ‘gypsy’ carries a derogatory connotation, alluding to inaccurate depictions and negative imagery, which were established in past works of literature. For these reasons and those mentioned above, whenever and wherever possible, the word ‘gypsy’ has been avoided in this dissertation with exceptions when quoting other authors or sources. There are instances where the word ‘gypsy’ has been used in the interviews; however, this is meant with no disrespect, and merely employed for ease in understanding concepts where language may have been a barrier. Whilst there is considerable awareness and literature surrounding the term ‘gypsy’, it seems the same level of understanding surrounding this term is not yet evident beyond the academic sphere in Australia. The term has been used in, for example, titles of businesses, cafés, clothing stores, and music ensembles. The other instances in this dissertation where the term ‘gypsy’ has been used, has been to reflect a more colloquial context, where the term style hongrois has not been known or recognised.

The term ‘gypsy orchestra’ refers to the ‘gypsy’ band ensemble which typically comprises violin, viola, double bass, and cimbalom.

**Style hongrois**

The term style hongrois describes a “style used by western art music composers when attempting to recreate or evoke the Hungarian (or gypsy, as the two were for so long generally assumed to be synonymous) presence in their own works”. There are two factors which contribute to this unique style: the verbunkos repertory, which includes verbunkos, nóta songs and csárdás, and the performance techniques of the Romani musicians, which became inseparable from the music itself. The style hongrois came to fruition through Romani ‘café’ performances and had great appeal for audiences at the time; it was subsequently adopted by composers in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, most significantly Liszt and Brahms. Perhaps the most famous examples are Liszt’s Hungarian Rhapsodies and Brahms’ Hungarian Dances, which are still widely performed today. The excitement, atmosphere, exoticism, and accessibility of this style was contagious, and consequently inspired composers to use these exotic Romani idioms in their compositions.

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8 Ian Hancock, *We are the Romani people* (Great Britain: University of Hertfordshire Press, 2002), xviii-xx.

Verbunkos

Verbunkos refers to the Hungarian national musical style of the nineteenth century. It is a style of traditional Hungarian dance music which dates back to the late seventeenth-century and is danced by men, showing off their agility and fitness. When the Hungarian Army was formed in 1715, Romani musicians were often paid to play and dance the verbunkos as a recruiting tactic, as a means to inspire young men to enlist in military service. The origins of the verbunkos repertory are varied, as detailed by Szabolcsi in the following passage:

Around 1760 the “verbunkos” appeared, the characteristic accompaniment of the recruiting ceremony. The “verbunkos” sources, not yet completely known, include some of the traditions of the old Hungarian popular music (Heyduck dance, swine-herd dance), certain Levantine, Balkan and Slav elements, probably through the intermediation of the Gipsies, and also elements of the Viennese-Italian music, coming, no doubt, from the first cultivators of the “verbunkos,” the urban musicians of German culture. A few early “verbunkos” publications and the peculiar melodic patterns found in the instrumental music of all peoples in the Danube valley, show clearly that the new style owed its unexpected appearance to some older popular tradition. The abyss of centuries was suddenly bridged over and the bourgeoisie hurriedly and with enthusiasm took over something from the lower social strata. The language of the “verbunkos” was full of national characteristics, that is of melodic turns accepted all over the country, and the “verbunkos” stood as a symbol for all this. Its support meant association with the Hungarian people. And indeed, it was here that the decisive turn took place. At the end of eighteenth, and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries, the towns opened their doors to the new Hungarian music. They surrendered to it, acquired the knowledge of the new language and placed their Western performing ability and cultural forms into the service of Hungarian music.

Szabolcsi outlines the success of the verbunkos, the public’s acceptance and embrace of this national musical style, and its adoption by several composers. It evolved from an old popular tradition into the music of the Hungarian aristocracy. Later forms of the verbunkos grew to include nóta songs and csárdás, with all forms of the verbunkos reliant on the characteristic and charismatic performance style of the Romani musicians for success.

Verbunk

The term verbunk refers to the Hungarian folk dance tradition connected with Hungarian folk music.

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Nóta

The term nóta describes folk-like art songs that mix elements of both the verbunkos and Viennese styles, later referred to by Bartók as the “new style of Hungarian peasant music”. Coming into existence around the middle of the nineteenth century, the nóta songs were a response to German art songs, satisfying the public demand for patriotic Hungarian melodies. Nóta songs were welcomed by both educated and uneducated Hungarians, as they reflected the Hungarian mentality and sentiments much more than the instrumental verbunkos music, which was viewed as music of the aristocracy, performed only by professional musicians and influenced by Western Europe. These literary songs portrayed a sense of patriotism and also stimulated national literary classicism, mixing both verbal and literary elements. Nóta songs exhibited folk elements but differed from folk melodies in that they were composed and featured a strong harmonic base, with harmonisations rooted in the taste of the original audience. These audiences delighted in the excitement of Romani performances and had become accustomed to their characteristic abrupt chordal shifts and non-functional use of harmony which accompanied the nóta melodies.

Sárosi explains the connection between the nóta songs and Romani musicians, without whom nóta songs would not have found such great success. Nóta were composed according to the exotic Romani idioms and, in terms of harmonisation, the style became dependent on the clearly recognisable harmonic formulas that ‘gypsy orchestras’ employed. He states that “while the best Hungarian folk songs cannot take accompaniment by a traditional gypsy orchestra, Hungarian popular song expressly calls for it, and is incomplete without it”. These nóta songs, a patriotic music which all could relate to, achieved great success as they encapsulated the mentality and tastes of the audience, while being attractively presented by the enigmatic Romani musicians.

Csárdás

The term csárdás refers to the style which developed from the late verbunkos style, displaying similarities in both form and rhythm, and also encompassing features of the nóta song style. It typically has two sections, Lassú (slow) which displays feelings of pride and grief, and Friss (fast), featuring fast semiquaver passages and quick tempi. A popular form, the csárdás was a staple of the ‘Hungarian Gypsy’ repertory which thrived in the 1850s and 1860s, becoming the “centre of popular Hungarian instrumental music”. Violin virtuoso Márk Rózsavölgyi, was the “leading dance composer and for more than a decade headed the stylistic endeavours of the late “verbunkos” and

14 Ibid., 57.
15 Szabolcsi, A Concise History of Hungarian Music, 63.
of the slowly (since 1835) developing “czardas” literature”. The csárdás had great appeal to audiences of the time and was adopted by several composers, showcasing the expressive and impressive performance abilities of the Romani musicians who performed their music.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review examines a broad range of sources that are most pertinent to this research study. The areas for discussion include: 1. Folk Music; 2. Style Hongrois; 3. Hubay; 4. Performance Practice; and 5. Exploration of the Intersections of Folk, Verbunkos, and the Style Hongrois.

1. FOLK MUSIC

Several books, covering a broad range of topics and in extensive detail, have been published about Hungarian folk music. Folk melodies have been documented and analysed with regard to form, rhythm, meter, structure, interplay of text and melody, instrumentation, and performance style. Also discussed are the origins of folk music, its characteristics, and the role it plays in the lives of the peasant societies.

Bartók published books on his findings of folk music in which he discusses the old and new styles of Hungarian folk music. He explores the essence of what ‘peasant music’ is, how this style could be preserved and stay true to old traditions, or how it could be influenced to imitate the disposition of the upper class who encountered this music. In the early twentieth-century, there was a split between generations of Hungarian musicians. The older generation (which included Hubay) were still “absorbed in the delightful national traditions of the last century” whilst the younger generation (which included Bartók) were interested in a more modern musical idiom that embodied the essence of the Hungarian people. Béla Bartók Letters is particularly insightful, giving an insight directly into his relationships and perceptions of other musicians, his passions and goals, and an overall impression of his character. Bartók, along with Kodály, believed that the Hungarian people and their capabilities were largely undiscovered, and consequently they decided to research and record folk music. This music captured and expressed the characteristics and historical traditions of their people, which they in turn, used as inspiration to create a “varied and universal musical

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16 Szabolcsi, A Concise History of Hungarian Music, 63.
18 Szabolcsi, A Concise History of Hungarian Music, 82.
idiom”. The literature written by Bartók is extensive and provides key information on the performance practices associated with Hungarian folk music, offering a strong foundation towards approaching authentic interpretations. Bartók thoroughly documents which songs he recorded with a strict set of criteria including instrumentation, village/region, number of melodies from that region, who collected the melodies, and who sang the melodies (including women and soldiers). He also noted properties of the melodies, such as the number of syllables per line, rhythms used, type of scales, and use of pauses. Many melodies are notated and marked with ornamentation, with specific reference to portamento and grace notes.

Like Bartók, Kodály wrote *Folk Music of Hungary* exploring the different types of songs he recorded, their function, and the instrumentation used. He also differentiates between the popular art-song, a mid-nineteenth-century form sung by the masses in Hungary and “learnt by ear in popular theatres, from popular singers or gipsy bands”, and the old song tradition of peasants. The folk-culture of Hungarian peasants has been associated with Hungarian life for hundreds and even thousands of years. Much like the books documenting folk songs, there are books dedicated to Hungarian dance. These discuss the social occasion for each dance, which region they originate from, who dances a particular dance, and what costumes are worn.

Sárosi’s *Folk Music*, which offers vital contributions to this study, explores folk music as an oral tradition, its history, notable ethnomusicologists, differences in style between ‘old’ and ‘new’ Hungarian folk song, the intersection with popular ‘nóta’ melodies, and the experiences of collecting folk tunes. Sárosi studies the use of songs for different occasions, for example, drinking songs, soldiers’ songs, laments, and celebrations, and how these songs are linked to dance. The main three dances he discusses are the Swineherd Dance, Verbunkos, and Csárdás. The variety of instruments (such as the violin, cimbalom, zither, and tarogato) and their origins are discussed, as well as the role they hold within the folk band setting, and their purpose within this music tradition, that is whether they are used for songs and/or dance. Sárosi also discusses the emergence of Romani bands, their characteristic performances in restaurants, improvisational qualities, and performance style; all of which inspired composers and audiences alike.

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20 Bartók, Béla Bartók Letters, 84.
21 Bartók, Hungarian Folk Music.
23 Ibid., 14.
24 Ibid., 15.
26 Sárosi, *Folk Music*. 
Additional sources pertinent to the research are sheet music books of Hungarian folk music, which represent and document a variety of musical regions and dialects. These music books have been compiled by musicians and ethnomusicologists who are dedicated to the preservation and sharing of this music tradition. Several melodies are notated in each book, detailing valuable information regarding ornamentation, form, style, and progression of melodies. As Hungarian folk music is an oral tradition, these books are used as a guide or reference when learning new melodies and consolidating ornamentation.

2. **STYLE HONGROIS**

The *style hongrois* was largely used by composers in the nineteenth century, including Liszt, Brahms, and Hubay, and had great appeal for the audiences of that period. As described in the Definition of Terms, the *style hongrois* describes a “style used by western art music composers when attempting to recreate or evoke the Hungarian (or gypsy, as the two were for so long generally assumed to be synonymous) presence in their own works”. 27 There are several sources that explore the use and features of the *style hongrois* in compositions, as well as the link between the classical and Romani traditions. A framework outlining the elements of the *style hongrois* is discussed below and can be found in *The Style Hongrois in the Music of Western Europe* by Bellman (1993) and *Ignoble and Irresistible: The Gypsy Presence in Violin Music 1865-1925* by Michaelis (2006). Other sources of interest include theses by Baer, 28 Balacon, 29 Ciarla, 30 and Head, 31 which investigate interpretation and analysis of compositions in the *style hongrois*.

*The Style Hongrois in the Music of Western Europe* by Bellman (1993) explores the musical origins of the *style hongrois*, noting early examples in the music of Haydn and continuing to compositions by Weber, Schubert, Liszt, and Brahms. He discusses the ‘gypsy’ and the stereotypes that accompany this term in literature and popular culture, as well as what is characteristic of the *style hongrois* and which composers employed this style. Bellman also wrote an article, “Performing Brahms in the *style hongrois*”, which explores the *style hongrois* through recordings of renowned

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performers prevalent at this time. Various historical performances of Brahms’ *Hungarian Dances* are analysed in relation to the performance practices characteristic of the *style hongrois*, the emulation of the enigmatic Romani performance style, liberties taken in interpreting the compositions, and the limitations of notation. Bellman’s exploration of the Brahms recordings offers “both actual proof that there was a *style hongrois* performance style that largely eluded musical notation and a clear example of how it worked”. Performances by Joseph Joachim, Leopold Auer, Arthur Nikisch, Bronislaw Huberman, and others are explored; these valuable insights are further supported by CD recordings which accompany the article.

*Ignoble and Irresistible: The Gypsy Presence in Violin Music 1865-1925* by Michaelis (2006), along with Bellman’s book, addresses the origins of the verbunkos repertory and the importance of the Romani performance style, which together culminated in a new national style for Hungary, the *style hongrois*. Also outlined are the elements that comprise the *style hongrois*, which include:

- Form
- Harmony
- Melodic Materials and the Gypsy Scale
- Rhythm
- Gypsy Effects: Pedals and Drones, Ornamentation and Improvisation, Slides and the Emulation of the Voice, and, Pizzicato and Virtuosic Effects

This framework addresses elements relevant to both compositional style and performance practice (and its performative application). Through a performative approach and insight, this research study contributes knowledge to the literature with regards to interpreting compositions in the *style hongrois*, in particular those of Hubay, whose music is explored in this dissertation.

*A Concise History of Hungarian Music* by Szabolcsi (c1964) outlines the different periods in music history, and explores how this affected Hungarian composers, musicians, and cultural life in Hungary. Several musical examples are given to further illustrate these points; most significant examples relate to the *style hongrois*, verbunkos repertory, and ancient Hungarian folk melodies. Pertinent to this study is the popular art song or *nóta* called “There is but one lovely girl...” composed by Elemér Szentirmay, alongside the folk song variant recorded by Bartók; this tune is now

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33 Ibid.
34 Michaelis, "Ignoble and Irresistible," 16-22.
extremely famous as it is quoted in Sarasate’s *Zigeunerweisen*, as well as Hubay’s *6 Poèmes hongrois*, and Lehár’s *Ungarische Fantasie*.

In examining the *style hongrois*, many violinists identify the big ‘gypsy’ show pieces in the classical violin repertoire as *Csárdás* by Monti, *Tzigane* by Ravel, and *Zigeunerweisen* by Sarasate, but beyond these frequently played classics, there are not many others easily recalled. A search on IMSLP\(^\text{36}\) (an online database of sheet music) to survey which music in the *style hongrois* was available, resulted in 71 relevant compositions. The criteria used for the search included that the work must feature violin, be musically and technically demanding, and exhibit characteristics of the *style hongrois* or ‘gypsy’ style. Discounting prominent composers such as Johannes Brahms, Franz Liszt, and Béla Bartók, it is fair to say that the majority of composers are relatively unknown and their works are rarely performed. Of the 71 compositions found on IMSLP, 16 were composed by Hubay. This recognises his significance as a composer and advocate of the *style hongrois*, yet his works are rarely performed and there is little written about him in English. Hubay was a notable exponent of compositions in the *style hongrois*, composing 14 character pieces titled “Scènes de la Csárda”, *Ungarische Rhapsodie*, and a handful of works based on Hungarian variations.

The IMSLP search draws attention to the numerous composers, such as Hubay, who with their compositions, have fallen out of the performed repertoire and been largely forgotten. It is for this reason that Hubay’s *Scènes de la Csárda No.5 “Hullámoz Balaton”, Op.33* has been selected as a Case Study Analysis for this research project; this is discussed in Methodology.

### 3. HUBAY

Hubay, a prominent figure in this era, was a notable violinist and composer, and also “the founder of the world-famous Hungarian violin school and chamber music practice”.\(^\text{37}\) Hubay composed over 200 pieces for violin, but over time, his compositions have fallen out of the regularly performed violin repertoire. In the latter half of the 1990s, there was a renewed interest in Hubay by musicologist László Gombos.\(^\text{38}\) This resulted in ‘The Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences’ financing his research, and subsequently, the launch of the “Jenő Hubay Foundation” and the establishment of the website. According to the Foundation ([www.hubay.hu](http://www.hubay.hu)), in Spring 1999, several unpublished works by Hubay were found in the Széchényi National Library, and in 2000, the inaugural ‘National Jenő Hubay Violin Competition’ was held at the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music, Budapest. The Foundation website has a Discography of violinists performing Hubay’s works and

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\(^{36}\) International Music Score Library Project (IMSLP), [online database], last modified March 31, 2015, [http://imslp.org/wiki/Main_Page](http://imslp.org/wiki/Main_Page).


also documents performances of his works. The website has not documented new entries since 2001, except an advertisement for the ‘International Szigeti-Hubay Violin Competition’ in 2007.

Considering the significance of Hubay as a violinist, composer, and pedagogue, there has not been a great deal written about him in English. The Grove Music Online entry lists only seven articles/books on Hubay and all are in Hungarian or German; a handful of these books were written by Gombos.

*Early Recorded Violinists* by Askin (1996) provides biographical information on Hubay and acknowledges his influence on the Hungarian Violin School, as well as giving an analysis of his recordings. Vibrato, dynamics, portamento, and bow technique are all discussed, and it is noted that Hubay was “one of the first violinists to use portato in the recording era”.\(^{39}\) While Hubay’s style was influenced by the German and Franco-Belgian schools, there is also a distinctive Hungarian quality to his playing and compositions. Askin notes that “Hubay’s technique may also be compared to that of Gypsy violinists, because his vibrato and playing habits have very important stylistic similarities”.\(^{40}\)

Further to this, Parson’s thesis *Stylistic Changes in Violin Performance 1900-1960: With Special Reference to the Hungarian Violin School* (2005), discusses the syllabus and pedagogy of Hubay in Budapest, and explores the expressive devices, such as fingering, vibrato, rhythm, and tempo, used by violinists in the twentieth century. He investigates stylistic changes of the Hungarian Violin School with reference to many written and recorded sources, and notes the importance of recordings, concluding that “recorded sources have a vital and significant contribution to make to the field of twentieth-century performance practice”.\(^{41}\) Whilst there is mention of Hubay’s violin playing, or comparisons to his contemporaries, this is an area which has not been exhausted in the literature. An invaluable source of information on Hubay’s playing can be found in the recordings he made.

Even though Hubay did not travel to Australia, one of his most famous students, Joseph Szigeti, gave several performances in Australia which have been documented in newspaper articles. Several articles mention Hubay as a “great violinist and composer”,\(^{42}\) document which of Hubay’s compositions were being performed, and there is also a wedding announcement from 1894 when he married Countess Rosa Cebrian.\(^{43}\)

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\(^{40}\) Ibid., 135.

\(^{41}\) John Lewis Parsons, "Stylistic Change in Violin Performance 1900-1960: With Special Reference to Recordings of the Hungarian Violin School," (Ph.D., The University of Wales College of Cardiff, United Kingdom, 2005), summary.


Hubay is regarded as an important figure yet there is still much to be explored regarding his compositions and influence on performance style in the late nineteenth-century.

4. PERFORMANCE PRACTICE

There are several important sources which discuss the performance practices of violin playing in the late nineteenth/early twentieth centuries, laying a good foundation for this research. Most relevant to this research study are articles and theses by Brown and Parsons, which explore a broad range of topics relating to violin playing and stylistic developments of the period, such as vibrato, portamento, and bow strokes. Additional information on violin related performance practice and technical issues can be found in discussions by Stowell, Menuhin, and Beament. Also related to this research study are theses by Sender, Taylor, and Walden, which explore the Hungarian folk tradition, how it influenced composers during this time, as well as providing a guide to interpreting these compositions ‘authentically’. General background information regarding performance practices and stylistic developments in the late nineteenth/early twentieth centuries can be found in the work of Holoman/Winter/Page, Burton, Finson, Kerman, Brown/Sadie, Winter, and others.


45 Parsons, “Stylistic Change in Violin Performance 1900-1960.”


In addition, primary source documents from the period and particular violin methods by prominent players contain useful information on the *style hongrois*. These include treatises by Wieniawski,58 David,59 Ševčík,60 Joachim/Moser,61 Flesch,62 and Auer.63 In the context of this research however, a detailed report of these primary sources is not practical. However, there has already been significant investigation of their findings in other secondary literature; such as discussions by Stowell,64 which explore these pedagogical sources and their subsequent influence on violin playing in the late nineteenth-century.

As mentioned previously, the investigation of performance practices in this research study is made through analysis of historic musical recordings of music by Hubay, and other practitioners of the *style hongrois*, as well as exemplars of Hungarian folk music. In constructing analytical observations, the work of important pioneers in the analysis of musical recordings is taken into consideration with important sources in this endeavour including Bowen,65 Day,66 Haynes,67 Cook/Clarke/Leech-Wilkinson/Rink,68 Philip,69 Da Costa,70 and Fabian.71

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5. EXPLORING THE INTERSECTIONS OF FOLK, VERBUNKOS, AND STYLE HONGROIS

This research study contributes to the field of ‘Historically Informed Performance’ with regards to Hungarian folk music and the style hongrois, striving to explore the performance practices, gestures, and ideas which create an authentic performance in these musical styles. Underpinning this research is the belief that an understanding of Hungarian folk music can further enrich one’s approach and interpretation of compositions in the style hongrois. This is strengthened by the shared history and culture of the Hungarian and Romani styles, and that both styles developed concurrently, often intersected, and complemented each other. Furthermore, of significance is that there is also crossover in identifying Romani and folk elements in compositions; whilst certain compositions may have titles such as “Hungarian Dance” or “Gypsy”, often elements of both styles are present. This is complicated further by the nomadic nature of the Romani musicians who travelled from country to country, village to village, performing music from a cross-section of different cultures.

In this way, it is difficult to define, and unwise to assume, that composers of the style hongrois such as Liszt and Hubay, were influenced solely by Romani musicians and Romani music, and not also by Hungarian folk music. Boasting a vast repertoire and famed improvisation skills, it is likely that the Romani musicians performed Hungarian folk music in some form, making these village melodies accessible to composers and people living in the cities. Just as it is beneficial to study and observe the performance practices of violin playing in the late nineteenth-century, as well as characteristic Romani gestures when approaching compositions of the style hongrois, the notion of observing folk music practices also has merit. Hungarian folk music shares a common history, culture, and performance platform with several works of the style hongrois, as well as several similar performance practices, therefore, respect and an open attitude to an understanding of this music is warranted. It is fair to conclude that composers were exposed to both styles, either directly or indirectly, and these ideas shaped their compositional styles, whether in subtle or profound ways.

These sentiments are echoed in the following quote by Sárosi, taken from his book Folk Music, where he discusses the importance and relevance of folk music as an ongoing tradition, not merely as music belonging to past ancestors. Sárosi’s attitude towards seeking knowledge of Hungarian folk music, and actively learning about this culture, resonates with this research study which supports the belief that it is not enough to have a “spontaneous sense” of this music.

A disproportionately large number of people are under the mistaken belief that an inborn, spontaneous sense is enough to find one’s way in folk music. But with this narrow approach they will never recognise what there is of their own past in the music of their grandparents and great-grandfathers, if indeed they encounter it at all. With this approach, starting from their present musical culture, they would consider any possible remnants of the past preserved in old traditions as belonging to the “natives” of a foreign country, instead of their own people. Performers, as long as they can safely count on the ignorance of their audience, can be
perfunctory on the concert platform. This is why folk music programmes are often tedious. The golden reserve of culture is missing from behind the "colourful folk" surface.\footnote{Sárosi, Folk Music, 6.}

Sárosi discusses the value of Hungarian folk music and the importance of delving into its history, an idea which is also applicable to this research study in searching for an authentic interpretation of compositions in the style hongrois. To approach these ‘gypsy-style’ masterpieces solely from a score, without considering the rich Hungarian culture and history of both Romani musicians and Hungarian folk musicians, would be remiss. Certain phrases such as “narrow approach” to folk music, and associating this music to “natives of a foreign country, instead of their own people”, shine a light on important issues within this project. By identifying Hungarian folk music as an old or past culture, separate from Western art music, we are denying the place it held in influencing composers and people of the time. In recognising the value, importance, and relevance of Hungarian folk music, especially when approaching works of the style hongrois, a greater understanding of style can be achieved, filling gaps in knowledge.

The framework of the style hongrois as discussed by Bellman depicts compositions which embody the flair of Romani performers, combined with roots in the verbunkos repertory. The verbunkos, dating back to the eighteenth century, is an old recruiting dance which was played by Romani musicians in order to lure young men to enlist as soldiers in the army; it was believed a good dancer would be a good soldier. Prior to the establishment of conscription in 1849, it was a tactic of the Austro-Hungarian imperial army to inspire young men to enlist, demonstrating their dignified and virtuosic dance moves to the fiery performances of Romani musicians. However, there are earlier examples of the verbunkos in Hungarian folk music, which only later developed into music of the Hungarian aristocracy through the virtuosity and performances of famous Romani musicians, such as János Bihar (1764-1827) and János Lavotta (1764-1820). This suggests a common link or overlap in history between the two styles, and once again, the difficulty in distinguishing whether composers such as Hubay were inspired by what was Romani, or what was folk oriented, or indeed a mixture of the two styles. In Hungarian folk music and dance, the verbunk is danced by men, often with virtuosic displays of boot slapping and fancy foot work, displaying pride and prowess. The verbunk later developed into the csárdás, which is perhaps the most iconic dance linked with Hungarian folk music; it is danced by couples. The framework of the csárdás was also adopted by several composers as a compositional form and many composed ‘Csárdás’ in the style hongrois, which is characterised by a slow Lassú and fast Friss structure. This progression is embodied in Hungarian folk music with dances naturally progressing from slow to fast, highlighting yet another link between the style hongrois and Hungarian folk music.
Several composers such as Liszt, Hubay, and Brahms, were known to love Romani music and often frequented the Romani musicians’ part of town. These influences and inspirations are highly evident in their compositions. The Romani musicians lived a nomadic lifestyle, travelling through the villages of Transylvania and Hungary, learning and performing new music to suit their ever-changing audience. In this sense, it is fair to conclude that the Romani musicians could have performed Hungarian folk music in some form, offering these idioms and ideas to interested composers.

Furthermore, in these times, there were also misconceptions about what Hungarian folk music was, with ideas that nóta melodies and Romani music were the true folk music of the Hungarian people. It is only now, through the ethnomusicological pursuits of researchers and musicians, such as Bartók and Kodály, that it is clear what the traditional Hungarian folk music is, which melodies originate from which village, or whether a melody is in fact composed, making it a nóta melody.

The notion surrounding what is folk and what is Romani, as well as public perception of these ideas, arose in an interview with Hungarian folk musician and specialist, Csaba Ökrös. He discussed the misconception that people (and by extension, possibly earlier composers), believed the music heard on the radio was that of the Hungarian people: however, this was ‘plastic folk’; it was not Hungarian folk music, but nóta and ‘gypsy-style’ pieces. Ökrös details how the ‘old people’ were so accustomed to what they knew and believed, that the original Hungarian folk music was so foreign to them, it could have been “Chinese folk music”.

...Hungarians copied the Russians, but these things were not real, they made the clothes and said, ‘this is traditional’ but it wasn’t traditional, they just said that they were. It was plastic folk (not authentic). There was a very famous ensemble in Moscow, a state folk ensemble, but their costumes were plastic, nothing was original, and the Hungarians copied this. In 1976, some folk dance teachers went to Transylvania, where they looked at the Hungarian folk music, and they tried to bring it home, to spread it to the Hungarian children...people like Béla Halmos tried to give this original folk music to the people...Old people got used to this Russian copy, ‘plastic tradition’, and they didn’t want to change their lifestyle to this new thing, it was a new thing to play original folk music. So, these dance teachers and people had to convince the young, the youth, they had to make young people like this music and know (understand it). Old people thought it was Romanian folk music, they thought the originals were on the radio. They were absolutely foreign melodies and tunes. These old people didn’t know the Hungarian music at all, it was like Chinese folk music to them, but it was the original and they didn’t know it...73

Ökrös brings to light significant ideas pertinent to this topic, showing not only a crossover in styles, but also the public perception and confusion around defining what is ‘gypsy’, or ‘folk’, or even ‘Hungarian’, in relation to what information was available at this time. This extract refers to Ökrös’ early experiences of learning Hungarian folk music in the late 1970s and the resistance he encountered when sharing this knowledge with older generations who did not recognise authentic

Hungarian folk music. For many years, people could have heard Romani music in cafes, restaurants, and on the radio, and identified this as Hungarian folk music, perhaps there was even confusion. In this way, there is certainly no harm in acquiring extra knowledge of Hungarian folk music and contextual information, when interpreting compositions in the style hongrois, as this forms a more well-rounded view of the styles and music which inspired composers of that period.

Discussions regarding “what is gypsy and what is folk music” in certain compositions, can likely arrive at the conclusion that there was a combination of influences. These ideas arose in an interview with style hongrois expert Vilmos Szabadi, who expressed that composers were always experimenting with new idioms, and curious to explore the roots of Hungarian music and culture, finding ways to portray these ideas in their music. An excerpt can be seen below -

I think he (Hubay) was also good at experimenting, like Liszt, looking at the roots of the music. Because at that time, there was an indication of searching how deep our Hungarian or art music notes are rooted in the mother soul and whether it’s gypsy music or something else? Because at that time, no one knew, like Bartók later who went out collecting songs and folk music, but he was right after that stream of Hubay, and especially much later than Liszt.74

Bartók’s search for the true identity and music of the Hungarian people was a shift away from earlier composers, such as Hubay, who identified this ‘gypsy’ style as Hungarian. It is hard to say that these earlier composers, like Liszt and Hubay, were only inspired by Romani musicians but not Hungarian folk music, because it is likely the Romani musicians drew on Hungarian folk music traditions. It is most probable that composers were exposed to a mixture of both styles, as the distinction between the two became clearer later, with the research and field recordings of Bartók.

In this way, a deeper understanding and knowledge of Hungarian folk music can inform the interpretation of works in the style hongrois, achieving a more well-rounded approach to style in both a research and practical sense. An insight into the minds of composers and the music which inspired them, helps performers to uncover idioms in their compositions, filling gaps in knowledge, and ultimately finding greater meaning in their music.

In a practical sense, much can be gained by learning and playing folk music, as it offers a very different understanding of how the music is constructed, functions, and is performed, providing a holistic solution. However, not playing folk music does not exclude others from gaining a deeper understanding into these compositions and composers, as there are other mediums in which it can be experienced. We are very fortunate in contemporary society that advances in technology and global connection can result in recordings being readily available online and freely accessible from all around the world. Not only is there an abundance of performances and recordings of Hungarian folk

74 Vilmos Szabadi, interview by Teresa Vinci, April 21, 2017, Appendix, xxiii.
music available, there is also old archival footage of village musicians, including the original field recordings that inspired Bartók’s *Romanian Folk Dances*. Recordings such as these are invaluable resources which provide historical context, and access to a past world of sound, illuminating possible connections between Hungarian folk music and the *style hongrois*.

Da Costa’s book *Off the Record* discusses performance practices and the Urtext Mentality, and explores the significance and importance of early recordings as a source of information when aiming to embody sounds of the past. Whilst many insights are offered, Da Costa references Taruskin’s stance where performance practice aims to create a bridge between old written texts and scores, with the ideas and soundscapes of what may have been heard in a typical performance at the time. Therefore, listening to early recordings of Hungarian folk music and Romani music provides historical context, which in turn, informs more profoundly the performances in the *style hongrois*. Da Costa states that “there is certainly no harm in being informed. Clearly, the more we are informed, the more equipped we are to make informed choices and to fill in the gaps in our knowledge”.

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76 Peres Da Costa, *Off the record: performing practices in romantic piano playing*, xxvi.
C. METHODOLOGY

1. METHODOLOGICAL LITERATURE

This study uses a combination of methodological approaches, which include:

1. Research-led practice/ Practice-led methodology
2. ‘Historically Informed Performance’: Hungarian folk music, and the style hongrois
3. Semi-structured Interviews
4. Personal journaling
5. Analysing musical recordings

This research project involves methods that are research into practice, for practice, and through practice. Smith and Dean state in Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts that “creative work in itself is a form of research and generates detectable outputs” and that “creative practice can lead to specialised research insights which can then be generalised and written up as research”. The combination of the existing literature and its relationship to previous experiences studying Hungarian folk music evoked two lines of active enquiry: a series of interviews with exponents of Hungarian music and violinists familiar with the genre; and a research trip to Hungary in order to explore in greater detail the performative aspects of these music genres, by the inclusion of cultural experiences at concerts, masterclasses, conventions, and museums. These aspects were linked, in that interviews and violin lessons were undertaken in Hungary as well as in Australia.

The creative process plays a crucial role in this research study as it seeks to integrate the information conveyed during a Research Trip to Hungary, violin lessons, interviews, and recordings, along with the insights uncovered in the literature. As part of this project, a CD of Hungarian folk music is presented to demonstrate the knowledge and skills attained, relating to the performance practices of Hungarian folk music, and several shared performance practices with the style hongrois. Similarly, interviews with four professional exponents of Hungarian folk music, and interviews with four violinists with considerable performance expertise in the style hongrois, inform the creative and analytical exponents of this project. These semi-structured interviews (see Appendix for full transcripts) support the literature, and allow for a performer’s insight into works of the style

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hongrois, which is further explored through a case study analysis of Jenö Hubay’s Scènes de la Csárdá No. 5 “Hullázmó Balaton”.

This study is grounded by knowledge of past practices, which in turn aids the interpretation and analysis of works in the style hongrois, and Hungarian folk music. The analysis of recordings focuses on the performative qualities and the performance practices that are associated with these musical styles. The performance practice issues (and their performative application) explored include ornamentation, vibrato, portamento, expressive tempo modification, fingerings, and bowing.

A principle aim of this study is to explore the performance practices of Hungarian folk music, and the style hongrois, and what procedures contribute to making a ‘Historically Informed Performance’ specific to these unique styles.

Historically informed performance procedures have become popular over the past fifty years. Music of the Baroque period has arguably received the greatest attention, and musicians are now aware of issues related to the number of singers in Bach’s choir, the use of period instruments, and expressive elements such as tempi, tone color, and articulation. However, performance practices of the nineteenth century have been slower to make their way into the mainstream.78

There has been focus in recent years on performance practices of the Romantic period, with several sources discussing the social changes of the time, and a shift to virtuosic displays in violin playing. For instance, issues discussed by Stowell79 in “Strings” in A Performer’s Guide to Music of the Romantic Period, include; instruments and their accessories, portamento, vibrato, bow grips, bow strokes, multiple stopping, and performance directions. While there is constantly growing knowledge of the performance practices of the Romantic period, this study seeks to focus directly on the performance practices relating to specific performing styles; Hungarian folk music and the style hongrois.

It is also important to note that much of the investigation of performance practices is appropriated through the interview data, in addition to the literature and the analysis of musical recordings, which are taken as historical documents for study. The analysis of historic recordings is a relatively recent field, and there are no clear methodological pathways. However, the work of pioneers in this field will be used as exemplars in guiding the parameters of this study’s analytical observations.

2. METHODS/PROCEDURES

This research project involved multiple stages and a variety of approaches, in order to produce optimal results. A conceptual diagram (see Figure 2) of the methodological procedures and the outcomes, illustrates the interconnectedness of each process, and how these processes informed the final result. Figure 2 is seen below:

![Conceptual Diagram](image)

**Figure 2. A Conceptual Diagram of the Methodological Procedures and Outcomes**

This research project comprised of several tasks in order to explore the topic fully, including a research trip to Hungary, and the recording of a Hungarian folk music CD. The Hungary Research Trip allowed for data collection through interviews with Hungarian folk music and *style hongrois* specialists, conducted within a semi-structured format; five interviews were conducted in Hungary and three were conducted in Australia. In addition to this, the research trip also entailed several violin lessons, attendance at performances across both musical styles, observation of classes at the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music, conversations with knowledgeable musicians, museum visits, and attendance at cultural events, such as táncház evenings and the Táncháztalálkozó (táncház convention).
The Hungary Research trip proved an integral part of the research project and the main avenue for data collection, providing invaluable information, ideas, and insights into the research topic. Prior to the trip, several violinists, musicians, and musicologists were contacted to arrange violin lessons and interviews. During the three-week period, five interviews were completed and six violin lessons undertaken, encompassing classical, folk, and Romani performance styles. Upon returning to Australia, transcripts were made and sent to participants to amend within a two-week period; these can be found in the Appendix.

The interview questions are an extension of the central research questions of this study, designed to support the literature, whilst also providing pertinent, original, and personal insights into the research topic. To explore this topic fully from a balanced perspective, two interview groups were formed, each comprising of four expert participants. Group One consists of four Hungarian folk music specialists, musicians, and musicologists, all dedicated to the preservation and sharing of this musical tradition and culture. Group Two consists of four violinists, all high-calibre and respected classical musicians, with considerable expertise in the style hongrois. Through their combined understanding of Hungarian folk music, the style hongrois, Hubay, performance practices, and music history, a greater perspective was gained to address the central research questions, and support the literature surrounding this topic.

The CD entitled “Never Far Away…” was recorded by the researcher with local band Hot Paprika, and is the culmination of studying and learning Hungarian folk music over the past decade. It is largely informed by violin lessons undertaken on the ‘Hungary Research Trip’, information from the interview data, and numerous recordings, as well as personal knowledge and past experiences. In preparation for the CD recording, several rehearsals were undertaken, as well as thoughtful discussion on the construction of each track, to offer original arrangements of the folk melodies. The CD was produced in Perth, Australia in 2017, comprising of eight tracks; five were recorded in 2017, and three were live recordings from past performances. “Never Far Away…” was launched on Friday 1st September 2017 at the Hungarian Community Hall in Mount Lawley, Perth, and followed with a series of live performances at events around Perth.

The dissertation is framed through the lens of the researcher, who is a professional classically-trained violinist and passionate Hungarian folk violinist; studying with prominent Hungarian folk bands for the last eleven years. This research study is an exploration of the style hongrois, featuring a case study analysis of Hubay’s composition Scènes de la Csárdá No. 5 “Hullámzó Balaton”, however it is also framed through knowledge and personal experience of Hungarian folk music, providing a bridge between these different musical styles. This research study also investigates how an understanding of Hungarian folk music can enhance one’s knowledge and
inform one’s approach towards interpreting compositions of the style hongrois. Interview data and quotes support the body of literature on these musical styles, whilst also providing pertinent ideas and discussion throughout the exegesis.

This research project seeks to delve into works of the style hongrois and consider how to approach an authentic interpretation which aligns with the performance practices of this style and time in history, whilst also fulfilling the composer’s intentions. It also looks to the Romani musicians, and body of Hungarian folk music that inspired so many composers, and explores how an understanding of these performance styles and their own performance practices, can further enrich interpretations of works in the style hongrois.
CHAPTER THREE: INTERVIEW SUMMARY REPORT

INTRODUCTION
This research project seeks to delve into works of the *style hongrois* and consider how to approach an authentic interpretation which aligns with the performance practices of this style and time in history, whilst also fulfilling the composer’s intentions. This study also looks to the Romani musicians and Hungarian folk music that inspired so many composers, and explores how an understanding of these performance styles and their own performance practices, can further enrich our interpretations of works in the *style hongrois*. As fashions and musical tastes have changed over time, as well as expectations of perfection in performances due to the recording age, the performance result could differ greatly to when these compositions were first performed. There were different approaches to violin playing categorised as “Violin Schools”, the famous three being the Russian, German, and Franco-Belgian Schools, however, culture, history, and heritage are determining factors in interpretation too. Of course, in interpreting music, everyone has a different approach and this can be more about the individual musician, their personality, and ideals, than any Violin School or nationality.

To explore this topic fully from a balanced perspective, two interview groups were formed, each comprising of four expert participants. Group One consisted of four Hungarian folk music specialists, musicians, and musicologists, all dedicated to the preservation and sharing of this musical culture. Group Two consisted of four violinists, all high-calibre and respected classical musicians, with considerable expertise performing in the *style hongrois*. Through their combined understanding of Hungarian folk music, the *style hongrois*, Hubay, performance practices, and music history, a greater perspective was gained to address the central research questions, and support the literature surrounding this topic.

The interview questions are an extension of the central research questions of this study, designed to support the literature whilst also providing pertinent insights into the research topic. Full transcripts can be found in the Appendix.
A. GROUP ONE

Four renowned Hungarian folk music specialists were selected for interviews for this research project based on their breadth of knowledge, performance experience, and passion for preserving this musical culture. Group One consisted of Hungarian folk music specialists, musicians, and musicologists, who not only perform with renowned and respected folk bands in Hungary and Australia, but several are also lecturers in the Folk Department at the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music in Budapest, Hungary. The interviewees selected were Péter Árendás, Csaba Ökrös, Mark Richards, and Pál Richter.

Péter Árendás

Péter Árendás is a senior lecturer at the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music, specialising in folk viola and folk string chamber music, as well as a musician in renowned Hungarian folk band, Tükrös. He has taught at many schools and lectured in music history, musicology, folk music and dance throughout Hungary, and at its inception in the 2007/8 academic year, Árendás was appointed as the Program Leader in the Folk Strings Department, at the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music. In 1986, Árendás founded the Tükrös Folk Music Ensemble which has achieved great success, boasting countless performances in Hungary and Europe, several CD recordings, as well as successful tours to Australia and the USA. Árendás has also been a member of the Budapest Dance Ensemble, Honvéd Dance Theatre, and the Gázsá Band, with whom he has released several CDs, featured in theatre plays and films, as well as toured Europe, Japan, North-America, Mexico, and China. Árendás has undertaken regular folk music research trips to collect music in Transylvania and Szabolcs-Szatmár county, and from 1997-2001, was a member of the “Last Hour” program at the Fonó Buda Music House, where he collected, systemised, documented, and categorised approximately 1200 CDs of recorded material. In addition to this, Árendás is also the Musical Director (since 1998) of the ‘National Dance House Festival and Fair’ and ‘Dance-House Folk Music CD series’, juror at national folk music and dance competitions, a regular contributor at Folkmagazin, guest lecturer at the Hungarian Heritage House, and revises books for publication.

Csaba Ökrös

Csaba Ökrös is a respected Hungarian folk violinist, violin teacher in the Folk Department at the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music, and composer. Ökrös began learning Hungarian folk music in 1976 through research trips to Transylvania, where he recorded and studied instrumental folk music under the guidance of Zoltán Kallós. In 1986, Ökrös founded the Ökrös Ensemble, which achieved
great success through performances in Hungary and abroad, including cross-cultural collaborations with several symphony orchestras in the USA. Ökrös was also a member of the Honvéd Dance Theatre, and violinist in Téka Ensemble (2007-11), which toured Perth, Australia in 2010. Ökrös has an impressive discography of Hungarian folk music, mostly recorded with the Ökrös Ensemble, as well as several world music CDs. Ökrös is also a composer who contributes to movie scores, theatre pieces, and plays. He won the Composer’s Award in Szentendre, Hungary in 2008, and the Kodály Prize in 2007.

**Mark Richards**

Mark Richards is the violinist in Sydney-based Hungarian folk music band, The Transylvaniacs. Richards studied classical violin for 10 years throughout his school life, and in 1982, joined the Forrás band, where his exploration of Hungarian folk music began. The band was committed to learning from pure and traditional sources, emulating authentic field recordings. Richards undertook several study trips to Hungary where he learnt from respected musicians Béla Halmos, Márta Virágvölgyi, and Levente Székely. In 1993, Richards formed the Transylvaniacs with local musicians, and the band has achieved great success across Australia, giving regular performances at national festivals and cultural events. Richards has had the opportunity to learn from several renowned Hungarian folk bands such as Tükrös, and Téka at music camps in Australia, studying closely with esteemed violinists, Attila Halmos and Gergely Koncz.

**Pál Richter**

Pál Richter is the founding Head of Folk Music Department at the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music in Budapest, Hungary. He has degrees in Civil Engineering and Musicology, in addition to a PhD from the Franz Liszt College of Music. Richter has extensive teaching experience, specialising in the ‘Relationship of Folk and Composed Music’, musicology, solfege, music theory, and music history. In 1994, Richter joined the ‘Hungarian Academy of Sciences Institute for Musicology’, and has been acting Director since 2012. He is also a member of the ‘Public Body of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences’, and the ‘Scientific Council of the Institute for Musicology’. Richter has an impressive résumé of publications, including books, numerous studies, critique essays, reports, on-line publications, articles, and CD booklets. Richter is also a guest lecturer throughout Hungary and Europe.
Group One – Interview Questions

Each interviewee was asked a set of questions within a semi-structured format, exploring Hungarian folk music through the eyes of musicians, and musicologists, who have dedicated their lives to the preservation, education, and sharing of this musical culture. The interview questions support the literature on Hungarian folk music by discussing the performance practices associated with this style, as well as stylistic differences evident between dialects. Through exploration of the performance practices and characteristics of Hungarian folk music, it is possible to uncover pertinent information which will aid future interpretations that draw on this folk music idiom. It also helps to create an image of past times, imagining a soundscape from years preceding, and allows us to fill gaps in knowledge. In addition, an exploration of the interviewees’ past and present experiences with Hungarian folk music, allows for a deeper connection and insight into the inner workings of this culture. The following questions were used to facilitate a semi-structured interview:

1. **What has been your involvement with Hungarian folk music/how long have you been playing?**

2. **Is the music different from village to village? If so, how?**

3. **Is improvisation used or are melodies usually played a certain way? Is there space for individuality?**

4. **What is unique about playing Hungarian folk music? (Eg. Technique, ornaments, pulse, purpose of music)**

5. **In your lifetime and experience, has the music changed/evolved or has tradition been successfully maintained?**

All interviews were recorded on an iPad and laptop, and transcribed at a later date.

**1. What has been your involvement with Hungarian folk music/how long have you been playing?**

Each interviewee shared personal experiences of how they first discovered Hungarian folk music, of their inspirational teachers, and their subsequent journeys in performing and researching this rich tradition. Below are short backgrounds and quotes summarising these anecdotes from the interviews.

At 16 years of age, Ökrös received a cassette of Hungarian folk music and was immediately intrigued to learn more about this music tradition, and his heritage; previously, he had been studying classical violin. This fascination quickly led to research trips to Transylvania, where Ökrös studied with prominent musicians and ethnographers, such as Zoltán Kallós, Béla Halmos, and
Ferenc Sebő. He formed great relationships with these musicians and other like-minded people, appreciating the value of the táncház culture, and was inspired to create bands and dance companies in their image.

When I got into the folk circles, I asked the people, ‘where can I learn more about this folk music?’. Béla Halmos gave me an address in Transylvania, ‘go there and you will learn’. That address was Zoltán Kallós’ address, and he was the heart of the folk music, he was everyone’s teacher. When I went there, he asked me, ‘who are you, what are you looking for?’ So Zoltán was my guardian angel, my professor, my master who guided me along the way. After that, I made a company in the same image that he was, and then when I travelled home, I had brand new relationships everywhere in Transylvania, because they were a big dance company in Kolozsvár, where these traditional folk dance meetings were held. I had built up a lot of relationships.80

Ökrös also shared his experiences of the political situation at this time (late 1970s), and how his recordings and research were often confiscated by police at the borders, as this material was ‘prohibited’ and viewed as ‘dangerous’. These obstacles made Ökrös more determined to share this newfound information, music, and culture with others, achieved by organising táncház where everyone was welcome, not just professional dancers. An excerpt from Ökrös’ interview is seen below:

Also, there were some politics, in that time, discussing Transylvania and original folk culture was prohibited, so the young people tried to rebel in this way. The government was very severe and in schools, they didn’t teach that Hungary was dividing to part and giving it to other countries, it was Socialist. It was dangerous when people went to Transylvania and they hear, ‘he speaks the same language as me, this is my original, this is where my roots are’. They were very watchful on the borders, the books and newspapers or any news didn’t change between the two countries. So, when we went to Transylvania and collected the folk music, we recorded it on cassettes, but on the border, the police took it away because it was prohibited and dangerous. But this made us more eager, more enthusiastic. The people started to spread these folk-dance meetings for amateurs, not professional dancers or those who know a lot about the culture, no they were just people who liked to dance and wanted to know about the original music.81

Árendás attended the Secondary Grammar School in Budapest, which had a special faculty in the 1980s that allowed all students to learn either Hungarian folk music or dance for two years. Already studying piano, Árendás decided the hurdy gurdy would be an easy option, but after being invited by his teachers to a táncház, he was quickly inspired to learn brácsa. Árendás became fascinated by the music, and through constant encouragement and advice from his teachers, he travelled regularly to Transylvania, which he found ‘so inspiring’. The following is a quote from Árendás describing an early exploration into learning Hungarian folk music.

80 Csaba Ökrös, interview by Teresa Vinci, April 25, 2017, Appendix, vi.  
81 Ibid.
The members of Téka were very good teachers because they told me to go to the villages, go to Transylvania, to Romania, because there are old musicians and you have to know them, and you have to learn from them first hand. And I went to Transylvania and I started to collect folk music, it was so inspiring.\footnote{Péter Árendás, interview by Teresa Vinci, April 26, 2017, Appendix, i.}

Árendás formed the Tükrös ensemble, playing regularly at táncház, and performing with dance groups around Hungary and abroad. In addition to performing, teaching, and collecting music in Transylvania, Árendás achieved a degree in Classical Music (as there was no folk degree), which later led to a teaching position at the Liszt Ferenc Academy Folk Department, at its inauguration in 2007.

Richter achieved a degree in Civil Engineering before shifting his attention to Musicology. Richter worked in the ‘Hungarian Academy of Sciences Institute for Musicology’ in folk music collection, where he was creating a database of folk music, and researching the border territories between art music and folk music. Below is an excerpt from Richter’s interview detailing his research work at the Institute for Musicology:

...then I went to the Institute for Musicology and there I could join the work in the database of the folk music collection. At that time, it was the beginning of the 90s, and for the time it was quite a big project. The office that I began to deal with was not only music history but folk music too. One of my topics of research is the border territories between art music and folk music and what kind of sources we have from music history, from the old time, and the melodies and music material which can be found in these sources could help folk music or folk music relations.\footnote{Pál Richter, interview by Teresa Vinci, April 21, 2017, Appendix, xiv.}

Richter was instrumental in the formation of the Liszt Ferenc Academy Folk Department, having become a trusted advocate, researcher, and teacher of folk music.

Richards offers a unique insight into this music tradition, as being part of a diaspora, his experiences are quite different to the other interviewees. Like Árendás and Ökrös, Richards had a background in classical music before learning of Hungarian folk music. He joined a band in Sydney, Australia, which learned closely from archival recordings, and he undertook several study trips to Hungary in order to explore the music further. Richards also participated in several music camps in Australia where prominent Hungarian folk bands, such as Téka and Tükrös, have served as the teachers.
2. *Is the music different from village to village? If so, how?*

All interviewees explained that there are several different regions and dialects in Hungarian folk music, resulting in variation on many different levels in the music. This could mean differences in instrumentation, ornamentation, melodies played, lyrics sung to the melodies, performance style, and types of dancing. In addition to these variations heard in the music, the interviewees expressed that variation was also evident between musicians, in both their capabilities and personalities, and whether these musicians served only one, or perhaps several villages. These sentiments are illustrated below through an extract from Richards’ interview:

> Hungarian folk music can be divided up into different broad regions for example Mezöség, Kalotaszeg, or Székelyföld. However, within these regions there can be significant stylistic differences from village to village – or more correctly from musician to musician. Some villages had their own band, sometimes bands served a number of villages. Each musician brought their own style, however within certain regional norms...So I think it’s really a lot more to do with individual musicians and interacting with that group of people who are living there at that time, creating whatever happens. So, I think that’s the really driving force.  

Furthermore, Richter expressed that variation was also a result of the geography and history of the clan, and the circumstances, challenges, and difficulties that the people faced.

> It depends on which part of the Hungarian language area, for example in Transylvania, because of the geography of the clan and the history of the clan, circumstances of different people, there are many differences between the repertoire and the style of performing music, not of course from village to village, but we can say small territories...

In this way, depending on the language area, the music can differ on many levels, with variations evident from village to village, and from musician to musician, as explained by Árendás:

> …you can see the differences in every level, in the people level, in the region level, in the dialects, in one dialect there are smaller regions, in the whole Carpathian basin, the instruments level, so it’s a very complicated question. I can talk about it for hours.

This notion of different dialects is also reflected in the literature by Sárosi, who details Bartók’s observations regarding the homogenous nature and characteristics within Hungarian folk music. Bartók also draws attention to how the musical regions differ in terms of dialects, just like in language, which can be seen in the following quote:

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84 Mark Richards, interview by Teresa Vinci, April 4, 2017, Appendix, ix.
85 Pál Richter, interview by Teresa Vinci, April 21, 2017, Appendix, xiv.
86 Péter Árendás, interview by Teresa Vinci, April 26, 2017, Appendix, ii.
After his most extensive collecting tours, Béla Bartók concluded as early as around 1920 that the music of the Hungarian people, in its essential characteristics, is homogenous throughout Hungarian-speaking territory. Bartók also drew attention to dialects in Hungarian folk music, similar to those that divide vernacular speech. He marked out four great regions of musical dialects: Transdanubia, Upper Hungary (that is the region north of the Danube and the Tisza Bends), the Great Hungarian Plain, and Transylvania, in which he also included Bukovina. Since 1920 the Hungarian folk-music collection has multiplied many times over, and, partly in the wake of exploration in further regions, an abundance of new melodic types and variants has come to light. A considerable advance has also been made in the knowledge of musical customs, instruments and instrumental music. In his characterisation of the dialect regions, Bartók only considered the so-called old-style folk songs; we have much more extensive and varied folk-music at our disposal, which allow for further specification within these regions.\textsuperscript{87}

Sárosi also notes the advances made in the literature since Bartók’s contributions, with a deeper knowledge of different dialects, instruments, instrumental music, and musical customs available today.

Instrumentation is a point of variation between dialects, and whilst the string band is the most popular instrumentation in the Carpathian basin, several other instruments and combinations exist. Árendás highlighted that financial limitations were also a factor for variation, and realistically, the music that people listened to was often a result of what they could financially afford. This could mean perhaps only one or two musicians, or maybe a whole band, resulting in further differences between dialects, as demonstrated below in the following quote from Árendás.

The string band is the most popular in the whole Carpathian basin, but for example, in the south area of Hungary nowadays, there in the villages there are no string bands. In that region, the hurdy gurdy and clarinet are the most popular instruments because the people that lived there were very poor, so they had no money to pay for a whole band, just the hurdy gurdy and the clarinet, just two people, that was enough. So, for example, if you play the music of the south region of Hungary, the instruments there are these ones. The south area of Transdanubia for example, the country of the long flutes, hoszzi furulya. Or the Uplands, Slovakia, the bagpipe was very popular. The bagpipe was popular everywhere, but for example in Transylvania, where the most string bands were working, approximately 200 years ago, the string bands became popular and then the bagpipe was over, the bagpipe music.\textsuperscript{88}

This quote depicts how the financial limitations and circumstances of people in a village had an impact on the music that was played, influencing the degree of variation seen in the dialect. Certain instrument combinations, such as the ‘hurdy gurdy and clarinet’, were prevalent in poorer areas, whilst other regions had a thriving culture boasting a string band.

The performance style, ornamentation, and harmonies are also ways in which the music can differ between villages, or dialects. Richards discusses the presence of the ‘körülírás’,\textsuperscript{89} a continuous

\textsuperscript{87} Sárosi, \textit{Folk Music}, 62.
\textsuperscript{88} Péter Árendás, interview by Teresa Vinci, April 26, 2017, Appendix, ii.
\textsuperscript{89} Musical examples explaining the ‘körülírás’ and its functionality are found in EXAMPLE 6 and EXAMPLE 7 in Case Study 2: Magyarpalatka.
turn-like ornament which is prominent in several Transylvanian dialects, but not heard in music from Hungary and Felvidék, which features appoggiaturas, mordents, trills, and wide vibrato. This is evident in the following quote:

...I think that the technique on the fiddle, the ornamentation that they call körülírás, it’s where you go up and down around a central note. This is only found in Transylvanian music, not music from Hungary...I’ve never heard that anywhere...I think that is pretty unique. And that is very expressive because it can be very fast like in Kalotaszeg, or it can be quite slow, so körülírás is really quite expressive. I think that’s a key one for Transylvanian music. In music from Hungary or Felvidék (Slovakia) they don’t use this. They have a very wide vibrato and use cuts (mordents) and trills which is more like other folk musics.  

Richards details the expressive nature of the körülírás, which can be performed slow or fast, depending on the dialect. Even though this ornamentation is shared by several Transylvanian dialects, variation is still evident between dialects, with regards to the speed and execution of the körülírás ornament.

Árendás highlights that the performance style between villages can also vary, as well as the harmonies played in the brácsa and bass parts. Some dialects feature complex harmonies and a wide selection of chords are utilised, changing on each beat, whilst other dialects are simpler, utilising only major chords, or static accompaniments acting as pedal drones. Árendás illustrates this point below:

So, the style how they play is different. Different ornaments in the violin, different harmonies in the kontra (viola), for example in the middle area of Transylvania, the viola players use just major chords, not minor chords, just major chords, no 7th chords. In Kalotaszeg, they use many more chords, major, minor, 7th chords, diminished, this is the other difference.

Of course, there are several universal features of Hungarian folk music which draw similarities between dialects too, such as similar scales, pentatonic roots, modes, melodic structure, and common melodies. In addition to this, Richter highlights the importance of musical accompaniment for dancing, as well as accompaniment for folk customs, which often have a religious connection. This is illustrated by Richter through the following quote:

Of course, there are some universal elements or features of Hungarian folk music. For example, in the music itself, when we analyse the music we can find similar scales, similar melodies, similar tunes. For example, Transdanubia, in Moldva, between them there are more than 1000km, these kinds of similarities such as pentatonic melodies with fifths and sixths structures, modes and of course there are similarities in the folk customs and the musical accompaniment of these kind of customs, which usually belong to religious occasions;

90 Mark Richards, interview by Teresa Vinci, April 4, 2017, Appendix, x.
91 Péter Árendás, interview by Teresa Vinci, April 26, 2017, Appendix, ii.
Christian mostly, but of course, we have some customs which have other roots before Christian time.92

Another common link between different dialects is the importance of social interaction between musician and dancer/listener, which is in fact, a significant influence in determining what music will be performed. The music is strongly linked to dance and cultural traditions, and on a social level, people identify with the music; they identify with the musicians, and the band, and build a special relationship. This is illustrated in the following story from Ökrös, who describes how new experiences changed the performance style of a soldier:

In the old times, they didn’t have the opportunity to leave their own village. One good example was when a musician became a soldier and travelled, when they got home they brought their experiences into the music also. But after time, he converted back to the old style because he had to play the way people wanted to hear, the traditional way.93

Returning to his village after travels, the soldier was not able to express his new interpretations of the music, as “he had to play the way people wanted to hear, the traditional way”; this story further highlights these ideas of social interaction in the Hungarian folk music tradition.

In the same vein, Ökrös shared another interesting story of his experience playing at a wedding where the bride and groom originated from different villages, and each brought their own band to play music at the wedding. This story is seen below:

A good example is when I went to a wedding and the bride was from one village and the groom was from another, and they both brought their own band. One of the bands played the other village’s music, and they didn’t enjoy it, they didn’t know it, they were just 2km away from each other. For them, it was totally different. Transylvania is very complicated because of Hungarian and Romanian locals, the villages that are only 2-3km from each other, they play the same tunes and the same music, but the Hungarian and the Romanian people say ‘no, that is their music and I won’t dance’, there was peace but they can recognize the difference. In Transylvania, the music meets. There were no politics in it, it’s just tradition, people got used to their tunes and they recognize the other.94

This story is an example of the strong social connection between the musicians and dancer/listener in this rich music tradition. As Ökrös describes, it is not a matter of politics, unrest, or musical ability, it is simply “just tradition”, and people growing accustomed to the personal connections they have formed. This further illustrates the significance of social interactions, regardless of the dialect, region, or language area.

92 Pál Richter, interview by Teresa Vinci, April 21, 2017, Appendix, xiv.
94 Ibid.
3. Is improvisation used or are melodies usually played a certain way? Is there space for individuality?

All interviewees agreed that there is improvisation in Hungarian folk music and opportunity for individuality; however, this is within a prescribed framework according to the musical tradition. Ökrös expresses that variation is “in the instinct of the authentic musicians”, and whilst they improvise, it is within the tradition and the style of that village dialect. Below is an excerpt from Ökrös’ interview:

The variation here is basically in the instinct of the authentic musicians. There is always variation. We talked about these differences between the music of the villages and the regions, yes improvisation is very important and it is used, but one person from one village stays within the tradition of that village. So, the tradition made its own style, in every village, in every region.⁹⁵

Like Ökrös, Árendás stresses that tradition means knowing the style of the music, and the style of the past musicians, and honouring this. However, there is still space for individuality and personality, and so, small changes can be made to the music. Árendás explains how in the past, musicians often stayed in one village their whole life, and so the style and improvisation became so natural, like a mother-tongue that they could “speak perfectly”. In comparison, today, musicians must know the style and repertoire of many different villages. These sentiments are evident in the following quote from Árendás:

...tradition means that I have to know the style, how older musicians, my parents and grandparents play, but I have a personality, so some small things I can change. The melodies are the same because the people in the village ask for the same melodies, from me, or my father, or my grandfather. So, I can't figure out a brand-new melody. The tradition means, that in this village, Joszi bácsi's (term of endearment for a respected elder) favourite melody is this so I have to play this melody, not a different melody. But how I play it, I can change it in a small way. I have to know the style from the older musicians, my teachers, but if I know the style very well...and it's very important to understand, the musician in the village, in his whole life, he plays just in one style. So, it was easier for him because that was the music that they played, that was the style. Now, us in Budapest, we have to know the style of Gömör, Kalotaszeg, Mezöség and so on, but for a village musician, the style was normal. So, they knew the style perfectly, like a mother language, but as you say or as you speak, you can make your own sentences, in your mother language that you speak perfectly.⁹⁶

Árendás continues by explaining how musicians use improvisation within the string band, and what changes can be made to the music, whilst remaining true to the traditional style. These ideas are illustrated below:

⁹⁶ Péter Árendás, interview by Teresa Vinci, April 26, 2017, Appendix, ii.
So, it’s the same in music, so I know the style perfectly and I can use it. This means, for example if I’m a violinist, it is an improvised thing that I start a melody and then I can decide which is the next one or the next one. It’s interesting for a viola or a bass player because I have to know all melodies and when we start playing, I don’t know which melodies the violin player will choose. And it’s an improvisation, ‘okay I’ll play the first melody 3 times, no 4 times, and then I change melody and play it 2 times, maybe go back to the first melody, or take a third melody’. It’s an improvisation. The other one, I’m a viola player, so one melody doesn’t just have one way to be harmonized, so I can play it like this, or I can play the same melody with a slightly different harmony. It’s the same with the bass, it’s like the violin, so I have to know the style, I mustn’t figure out some special chords, it has to be in the style. So, in the style, I can choose which chords I want to play, ‘okay now I’ll play these chords, or these chords, or these chords’, because when you listen to the original recordings, and listen to the viola player, they don’t play the same chords every time. So, this melody you can play AADDAAEEA or you can play AA7DDAE7EAA for example. But there are many variations, so I can choose and I can decide what kind of chords I will play, and the bass player can decide what kind of notes he will play with my chords, and if we know the melody and if we know the style, it’s not a problem. I play this version and he plays this version, because it fits together.97

This extract explores the ways in which the musicians use improvisation, such as the progression and number of melodies improvised by the violinist, the chord progressions and harmonisations played by the brácsa, and the accompanying bass-line played by the bass player.

Richards and Richter express that Hungarian folk music features “lots of improvisation”, however, it is within a prescribed framework and not free like in jazz or Romani performances. The music is constructed by joining a series of melodies together in succession, and moving through different tempi and pulses; the primás (leader, often violinist) will decide how many times to play each melody, which melodies they will play and in which sequence, the ornaments they employ, and the length and speed of each set of music. In this way, improvisation is widespread, and variation is evident from musician to musician, as described by Richards; “say you take two violinists from the same village, and they will both play different ways. But improvisation is within a very prescribed framework I suppose”.98

Richter highlights the opportunity for individuality and freedom in ornamentation, however, he stresses there are still certain patterns that these ornaments must follow. He also mentions the individuality present in performance style and that some musicians are easily recognisable by their sound, even if only heard through recordings. Richter also discusses the freedom of singing different lyrics to the vocal melodies, another form of improvisation.

Being an oral tradition, Hungarian folk music is performed without music scores, allowing for a personal connection with the dancers and audience. In this way, improvisation is facilitated and the music can unfold organically. This has a strong correlation to the performance style of Romani musicians; however, improvisation plays a larger role in Romani music as dancing does not dictate

97 Péter Árendás, interview by Teresa Vinci, April 26, 2017, Appendix, ii-iii.
98 Mark Richards, interview by Teresa Vinci, April 4, 2017, Appendix, ix.
the flow of music. The following quote from Sárosi highlights the social connection between performers and listeners; although this quote specifically references Romani musicians, the sentiments are also applicable to Hungarian folk musicians.

The majority of urban gypsy musicians by now read music fluently (while in the past century, and indeed in the first half of the present century, relatively few of them could read music). They learn part of their repertoire, together with the accompaniment, from scores, but they never use printed music before audiences, as this would be incompatible with their tradition. Scores would raise a barrier between them and the listeners, it would take away the informality of their music, its nimble flexibility in adapting to the mood of the occasion – that is improvisation.99

These sentiments consolidate the importance and prevalence of social interactions in the Hungarian folk music tradition, which are not only facilitated through improvisation, but also encourage improvisation. Sárosi’s ideas also highlight the similarities and intersections between Hungarian folk music and Romani music, which is a relevant point for discussion throughout this research study.

4. What is unique about playing Hungarian folk music? (Eg. Technique, ornaments, pulse, purpose of music)

Ökrös explains that Hungarian folk music has two heritages, Asia and Europe, with both influences evident in the music and dancing style. He expresses that as new styles of Hungarian folk music emerged, the older styles did not disappear from the repertoire, but rather, combined with the new. These sentiments are seen in the following quote from Ökrös:

Béla Bartók said every nation has its own traditional way of life, their language, their culture, their speech, and music. The older style of the Hungarian folk music, approximately 500 years ago, it was the first. We have a style, and we have new styles again and again, but our old styles didn’t disappear, they just fade into the new, so they exist at the same time and together they change.100

Richter explains that accents are prevalent in this music and relate to the Hungarian language, which is unique, with no related languages surrounding the area. This is witnessed in every level of Hungarian folk music; in the singing, in the playing style of musicians, and in the dancing. Richards lists several unique features of Hungarian folk music, including the prevalence of the csárdás rhythm, ornamentation, instrumentation, the focus on the ‘off-beat’, and folk technique. He states that the csárdás rhythm is possibly the most unique feature as it “has an asymmetry to it

99 Sárosi, Folk Music, 152.
which can change”, varying from village to village, and draws attention to the significance of the ‘off-beat’ rhythm, which is prevalent in both slow and fast music. These sentiments are reflected in the following quote from Richards:

I think probably the most unique thing is the csárdás rhythm, and that’s a really unique rhythm...It has an asymmetry to it which can change. That’s one thing that changes from village to village even if you’re playing the same tune with similar ornamentation, in that village they might feel the second beat a little bit more, or it’s further apart, or longer. So that’s probably one fundamental thing that makes Hungarian music different. But then I think that the technique on the fiddle, the ornamentation that they call it körülírás, it’s where you go up and down around a central note. This is only found in Transylvanian music, not music from Hungary...I think that is pretty unique. And that is very expressive because it can be very fast like in Kalotaszeg, or it can be quite slow, so körülírás is really quite expressive.101

Richards also highlights an ornament unique to Transylvanian music called the ‘körülírás’; a continuous turn around a central note. Ornamentation is a complex feature in Hungarian folk music, most evident in the violin playing, and can vary between different regions. Several ornaments such as trills, mordents, and appoggiaturas are also found in other types of folk music and classical music, however, the körülírás is a significant point of difference, and extremely expressive; the körülírás itself can also vary in speed depending on the dialect.

This notion of ornamentation is also reflected in the literature by Sárosi, who explains that ornamentation is the result of “century-long development and refinement”, and one must be familiar with the instrumental folk culture to apply them in an authentic way.

To dress up vocal music into good instrumental music calls for a rich store of musical solutions typical of the instrument and its function, ornaments and formulae. These are not individual inventions extemporised on the spot, but the outcome of a century-long development and refinement, the outcome of collective creation, as are the loveliest old folk songs. An expert use of all these, for instance by the Szék musicians (Transylvania), turns every melody played by them into a typical “Szék music”. In the same way, pieces played on the Hungarian bagpipe and flute, and even the much younger, tasteful folk zither performances, have each their own stock of characteristic devices. Those who wish to play instrumental folk music and perform folk song melodies in a traditional instrumental style must get to know them and how to apply them – in short get to know instrumental folk culture.102

Sárosi expresses that ornamentations are not improvised, or “extemporised on the spot”, rather they belong to a rich musical tradition. In order to ornament a melody, one must be familiar not only with the ornament and its formulas, but also with the instrument, its function within the music, and the performance style.

101 Mark Richards, interview by Teresa Vinci, April 4, 2017, Appendix, x.
102 Sárosi, Folk Music, 145.
Richards draws attention to the different instrumentations that have been employed over the years in Hungarian folk music, with the string band being significant, although a relatively modern instrumentation, filtering from their use in classical music. He mentions the use of the 3-stringed brácsa (viola) in Transylvanian music, which features a flat bridge, facilitating triple-stops on each chord. This instrument is unique and visually engaging, as the posture is different to the classical hold; the brácsa is rotated 90° clockwise, and the bow moves along the strings in a vertical ‘up and down’ motion, unlike the usual horizontal ‘right to left’ motion. Richards mentions that the technique in the violin also differs in Transylvanian music, requiring a flat wrist (left hand touching the neck of the violin), which differs from the classical posture. This facilitates slides and ornamentations, such as the körülirás, as expressed in the following quote:

...if you want to play Transylvanian music, and particularly bring that kind of ornamentation that we were talking about, it’s pretty much impossible to go with a classical hold, you need a flat wrist. A flat wrist also allows you the movement, to do certain slides, it allows you to do the things that I think you need to do.\textsuperscript{103}

Árendás discusses features such as technique, performance style, rhythm, and the practical nature of Hungarian folk music. He explains how musicians use the bow to emphasize rhythms within the melody, “so not rhythms of the melody, but rhythms which fit with the dance, with the steps”, and how this emphasis must be the same between all instruments. Like Ökrös, Árendás expresses that melodies have changed little by little over generations, but always becoming more beautiful. An excerpt from Árendás’ interview is seen below:

The ornaments help the rhythm, the ornaments help to make the melody more beautiful. The bow that we use helps us to play louder, because 100 years ago there were no microphones. So, if there was a wedding and there were 300 people, the musicians had to play loud enough for people to hear it and be inspired to get up to dance, because they were village people, they were tired, they worked whole days, so if the band played very soft, it didn’t work. So, one unique feature is how they play, how they use the bow, how they play rhythms in the melody, so not rhythms of the melody but rhythms which fit with the dance, with the steps. If you play the violin in a dance melody, your emphasis must be absolutely the same as what the viola and bass player plays, so they help each other. What isn’t needed in this music, is not in the music, so I love it, it’s very practical.\textsuperscript{104}

Árendás’ description depicts several unique aspects relating to the performative application of Hungarian folk music. The use of a folk bow to facilitate a louder sound, in addition to the whole band playing ‘rhythms in a melody’ in sync, consolidates the importance and prevalence of unique rhythmic features in Hungarian folk music. This idea will be explored further in Chapter Four.

\textsuperscript{103} Mark Richards, interview by Teresa Vinci, April 4, 2017, Appendix, x.
\textsuperscript{104} Péter Árendás, interview by Teresa Vinci, April 26, 2017, Appendix, iii.
5. In your lifetime and experience, has the music changed/evolved or has tradition been successfully maintained?

Several bands and musicians are dedicated to preserving and ‘protecting’ Hungarian folk music and its cultural traditions, ensuring that the music tradition is shared with anyone who is interested. Árendás holds this philosophy and conveys that Hungarian folk music is just as relevant today as it was hundreds of years ago, as the sentiments, thoughts, and feelings of the people, are the same. He believes it also has purpose in today’s society as the music is used for táncház, and it is a culture which is inclusive and belonging to all people, not intended to be untouched in a museum. An excerpt from Árendás’ interview is seen below:

...I think it’s very important to keep these traditions and to show it, it’s a perfect thing. It doesn’t mean we have to be in the past because now we live in these days. Some of the young people and students say, ‘wow, folk music and folk tradition must be in the museum, it’s very interesting, it was 100-200 years ago, but nowadays it’s a different world’. But I think that’s not true because we can use the same music in a táncház, that’s why the táncház is such a fantastic thing. Before the 1970s when the folk music was just in the museum, a few dance teachers made some programs for dancers. But the táncház movement is very strange because it showed that you can do it, not just watch other people do it, but you can learn these steps and you can use it. And from that, it’s not someone else’s culture, or some old man’s culture, it’s your own. So, if I learn to play the folk music, it doesn’t mean I have to play something that 200 years ago someone played, no, it becomes my own music. It means, it works in 2017 like in 1917 or 1817.

Árendás highlights the importance and success of the táncház, which allowed this music and dance culture to become a living culture, not one preserved in a museum. He continues by explaining why new fashions, such as adding modern instruments into the folk setting, are not necessary, as depicted in the following quote:

So, I think, if now we figure out, okay the folk music is much better with saxophone and synthesizer and jazz piano, there are new fashions. This is the new fashion, and this is the many hundred years’ traditions, and it worked, so why do you want to add the brand-new fashions? Folk music is okay without these new fashions. So that’s why it gets better. For example, Bartók Béla went to the villages, collected the music and then he understood how that music works, how folk music works, and that music helped him to compose fantastic pieces. But Bartók knew the classical music, the baroque music, the romantic music, everything, and what he did, it became a new art. If you listen to Bartók’s music, the folk music is in that, and the classical tradition is in that, and it’s okay, it’s no problem, because he did something new that had not been done before him. But to say, ’I play the traditional folk music with saxophone and synthesizer because we are in 2017’, why, it won’t be better because you use saxophone. It’s perfect music, it’s a perfect, natural, very practical music and it’s not easy to learn it, if you want to learn it absolutely correctly, it’s very hard.

106 Ibid.
Árendás and his band Tükrös, strive to study and learn this music authentically, and to uphold the tradition as it was shared with them by their teachers. He believes there is no need for the music to be reimagined or improved through the addition of modern instruments, or through new fusion genres, as it is already “a perfect thing”. Árendás also stresses that to learn Hungarian folk music correctly, mastering the complex nuances specific to each dialect, is in fact very hard; the music does not need to be improved as it is already fulfilling and challenging to perform. In comparison to this view, Richards is sceptical about the degree to which the ‘folk revival’ musicians are preserving the music, and in fact, questions which version of the music they are seeking to maintain. He stresses that musicians in the village were constantly changing and evolving too, which makes it confusing to know which recordings to emulate, or which point in their performance life to mimic; “they change and evolve, no one stays the same, so those musicians also, their skills develop, their knowledge develops, so they do change”. Richards queries whether such a narrow focus is a fulfilling goal, as represented in the following quote:

I think there are two answers to that question. I think you have to think about it in terms of the living music that’s still in the villages although disappearing, and the folk revival people. The folk revival people, in their heads, they’ve put it in aspic and kept it, so they’re playing something, they see it as aspic. I think the reality is that they all sound different, so even if they’re all playing and modelling the same violinist, they never sound exactly like that...So in that sense, their whole goal is to play it exactly like it was. Of course, it is impossible to play exactly the same as someone else and for me I’m not convinced that such a narrow goal is a worthwhile one. Each person should bring something to the music whilst respecting the stylistic subtleties. A question, and it is a frustration that we often come up with and it’s fine, but what do you take? Like what, do you play like when he was in his 20s, in 1963, or 1979 or 1982, so what period of time? Because obviously, they change and evolve, no one stays the same. So those musicians also, their skills develop, their knowledge develops so they do change, so I think it’s inevitable but more particularly in the village, the music has always evolved...\textsuperscript{107}

Richards also remarks that the music was homogenous and played a certain way due to the isolation of villages, and the reality is, that musicians played whatever people wanted to hear, whether this be traditional folk music or music influenced by new trends and traditions.

...so, for Hungarians, what’s changed in the village now is that, what had kept music more homogenous was the fact that they were cut off, so they didn’t have much contact with other people and they just sort of kept to themselves. Obviously, the more things open up with radios, in the village they hear Magyar nóta from Budapest and they love it and say, great that’s what I want to learn.\textsuperscript{108}

\textsuperscript{107} Mark Richards, interview by Teresa Vinci, April 4, 2017, Appendix, xi.
\textsuperscript{108} Ibid.
Ökrös expresses that with people disappearing from the villages, tradition is at a point where it can’t develop any further, with the focus now on protection, education, and passing the tradition on to others. He explains that the táncház is an opportunity to keep the culture alive and inspire the next generation of musicians and dancers. This is detailed in the following quote:

Nowadays in this point of time, it has closed, the music can’t do a lot more, people in the village have disappeared. Our first job is to guard this tradition and keep it alive with the younger generations, it won’t develop anymore. The dance meetings, táncház, there has been a revival because there are no villages. The countryside just copies the capital cities and its style, people have found their way. We have these recordings, video, sound, everything.109

Richter explained that in earlier times, villages and communities were isolated and had limited or no access to outside information, which facilitated development and evolution within their own culture. The music and tradition changed slowly, but today, things are different with folk music and dance presented in new ways, as explained in the quote below:

So earlier, the music and tradition changed, but slowly and it had continuation of change...for folk traditions, this kind of tradition, it’s a new thing to come to the city to be performed on the stages and not performed according to the customs and traditions, but performed as an independent music or art entity. So that’s why the circumstances changed and that’s why we can listen to lots of new ideas based on folk music or traditional music whilst being different from folk music, the creations are absolutely different to the aesthetic of folk music.110

Richter drew an interesting conclusion in that tradition is now maintained, but in new mediums, with folk culture being presented on the stage as an “independent music or art entity”, removed from the customs and traditions which had evolved through the generations in their villages and small communities.

**Performance Considerations: Hungarian Folk Music**

Interviews with four Hungarian folk music experts covered a range of pertinent topics, relating to the performance practices associated with this musical style, and its performative application. Musical ideas such as improvisation, ornamentation, performance style, bowing style, instrumentation, and social interaction were discussed in detail with reference to the interview data.

Whilst the literature on Hungarian folk music is extensive, these interviews fill a gap in the literature by documenting the experiences and knowledge of renowned musicians and musicologists, who have dedicated their lives to the preservation and sharing of this musical tradition. With access to a musician’s point of view, the reader is granted an insight into how this music functions, what

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110 Pál Richter, interview by Teresa Vinci, April 21, 2017, Appendix, xv.
elements are unique to Hungarian folk music, how improvisation is employed, and the importance of
its accompaniment to dance and cultural customs. The reader is also provided with stories of
experiences and challenges that the interviewees faced in their musical journeys, which help to
provide historical context, whilst also exploring significant details relating to this musical tradition,
beyond the information already available in the literature. The material shared in this Summary
Report will be expanded upon in the following chapter (Chapter Four), with CD recordings
consolidating the information conveyed, providing an immersive experience for the reader, and
facilitating an holistic understanding of this oral tradition. The following are some performance
considerations when approaching Hungarian folk music:

- Improvisation is within a prescribed framework, small things can be changed in the music,
  but these must be according to the music tradition and traits characteristic of the dialect; for
  example, a violinist can improvise the sequence of melodies, number of repetitions of each
  melody, the ornaments they employ, and the length and speed of each set of music.
- Rhythm is of utmost importance in Hungarian folk music, linked to its primary function as an
  accompaniment for dancing. The rhythmic pulses heard ‘within the melody’ must be played
  by all instruments, to provide a cohesive and driving sound. The use of folk bows (by the
  brácsa and bass), enable a strong and rustic sound.
- Ornamentation varies between dialects, ranging from trills and mordents, to complex
  ornaments, such as the körüliráš; even if the same ornament is present in two dialects, its
  speed and execution can also differ depending on the dialect.
- The violin technique differs in some dialects, especially those from Transylvania, with a ‘flat-
  wrist’ enabling the characteristic ornamentation, slides, and timbre. Whilst it may not be
  feasible to change one’s technique completely, experimentation with different postures and
  placement of the left-hand can facilitate a more authentic sound.
- As an oral tradition with a significant focus on dancing and social interaction, it is vital to
  play all music from memory, in order to fully immerse oneself in the musical and cultural
  traditions.
- There are several different instrumentations, which are a result of the circumstances that
  people faced. The variation in instrumentation can affect the timbre, ornamentation,
  harmonisation, function of certain instruments, and roles within the band. These
  performance practices should be observed.
B. GROUP TWO

In order to achieve a fair and unbiased response from the interviews, four violinists of outstanding ability and experience were selected, with a mix of nationalities and cultural backgrounds. The breadth of experience combined is significant, encompassing international solo careers, extensive chamber music concerts and recordings, orchestral playing and concertmaster experience, tertiary teaching and masterclasses, and competition adjudication. The interviewees selected were Laurence Jackson, Rudolf Koelman, Vilmos Szabadi, and Erika Tóth.

Laurence Jackson

Laurence Jackson studied at the Chethams School of Music, was awarded a scholarship to the Royal Academy of Music, England, and was a prize winner at several violin competitions. He has enjoyed a career as a highly successful soloist, chamber musician, and concertmaster, performing in the UK and abroad. Between 1994-2006, Jackson was the leader of the Maggini Quartet, touring extensively throughout USA, Canada, and Europe, and producing several recordings. Jackson was Concertmaster of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (CBSO) from 2006 onwards and since 2016, has held the position of Concertmaster with the West Australian Symphony Orchestra (WASO).

Rudolf Koelman

Rudolf Koelman was one of Jascha Heifetz’s last pupils from 1978-1981 in Los Angeles, and former Concertmaster of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra in Amsterdam from 1996-1999. He performs extensively as a soloist with internationally renowned orchestras, and is invited as a guest teacher and juror worldwide for competitions and master classes. Koelman is a Professor at the Zurich University of the Arts (ZHdK). He has made several CD recordings, including a live recording of Paganini’s 24 Caprices for Solo Violin.

Vilmos Szabadi

Vilmos Szabadi studied at the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music, Hungary and won several violin competitions and prizes, including the ‘Jenö Hubay’ Competition in 1983. He has performed extensively as an international concert violinist, including performing and recording many Hungarian works. Szabadi is an Associate Professor at the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music, and has been the Head of the Violin Department since 2016.
Erika Tóth

Erika Tóth received her Artist and Doctorate (DLA) from the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music, Hungary, and completed further studies in the US and Canada. She joined the Eder Quartet in 1978 and performed worldwide until 1986, recording and performing many quartets, including the complete Bartók String Quartets. In 1989, Tóth moved to Perth where she founded the Stirling String Quartet with husband, Pál Eder. Since 1997, she has been teaching in Budapest and performs chamber music with various ensembles, including the Kodály String Quartet, which she joined in 2005.

Group Two – Interview Questions

Each musician was asked a set of interview questions within a semi-structured format, exploring this topic through the violinist’s point of view. The starting point was to identify the defining works in the style hongrois, and which composers embodied this style in their compositions. This led to the ‘how’? How does the violinist achieve a convincing and authentic representation in this style? What aspects of violin playing help to create this character and do they align with the performance practices for the style hongrois? Is there a gap in the notation, or common misconceptions regarding the performance of this style? Would knowledge about Hungarian folk music help to achieve an authentic representation of this style, or aid interpretation? These issues are central to this study and are represented through the interview questions below:

1. In your opinion, which ‘gypsy’ inspired (style hongrois) violin pieces are the most famous? Which composers wrote in this ‘gypsy’ style?

2. What aspects of violin playing do you think help to create the character of this style? (Eg. Vibrato, portamento)

3. Can you describe aspects of performance that might not be captured through written notation? (Eg. Dance character, rubato)

4. In your opinion, would knowledge of Hungarian folk music be useful when learning and interpreting music of the style hongrois? If so, how?

5. Are you aware of any common misconceptions of performances in the style hongrois?

All interviews were recorded on an iPad and laptop, and transcribed at a later date. Following a semi-structured approach, the interview questions were used as a guide to facilitate conversation and discussion about topics relevant to this research project. Most interviews followed the interview questions strictly, with all questions addressed, however there was also space for additional topics to be explored. Question 5 was only answered by two interviewees, Jackson and Szabadi. It was not a deliberate choice to omit questions, simply, the interview was semi-structured
and flowed as an organic conversation and consequently, this question was not addressed by all interviewees. Additional topics covered included Hubay, verbunkos repertory, Bartók, Bihari, Lavotta, Auer, Heifetz and his premiere performance of Tzigane, passages that Heifetz omitted/alterred in his performances of Tzigane, the Hungarian style in the music of prominent Hungarian composers, and Romani musicians.

1. In your opinion, which ‘gypsy’ inspired (style hongrois) violin pieces are the most famous? Which composers wrote in this ‘gypsy’ style?

All interviewees mention early examples of ‘gypsy’ style dating back to the chamber music of Haydn and Mozart, such as Gypsy Trio, Gypsy Rondo, and ‘alla zingarese’ (string quartet movement) by Haydn, and ‘alla turca’ by Mozart; highlighting the early use of Romani music as inspiration. As expected, Tzigane (Ravel) and Zigeunerweisen (Sarasate) are mentioned as the most famous examples of violin pieces in the style hongrois, which are performed extensively worldwide. Csárdás (Monti) was also stated as possibly the most famous gypsy show piece, known by musicians and listeners alike, however, this piece was not mentioned by Szabadi and Tóth. Brahms and Hubay were also listed as notable exponents of the style hongrois, with a strong connection noted between the two composers, both professionally and personally. Brahms was celebrated for his 24 Hungarian Dances, as well as the ‘gypsy’ style evident in Piano Quartet Op. 25, and passages of his Violin Concerto, as demonstrated by Koelman. Hubay was listed as an important contributor in this style by Tóth, Jackson, and Szabadi, but not held in the same esteem by Koelman. Jackson highlights Hejre Kati (Scènes de la Csárdá No. 4) and Blumenleben as great violin pieces, and Szabadi also refers to the 14 Scènes de la Csárdá, detailing their success and performance history; they were often performed by Hubay’s famous students, with old recordings available on YouTube. Brahms and Hubay shared an interest in Romani music and were known to frequently watch the Romanies perform, as detailed in the following quote by Szabadi:

...in his (Hubay) more serious music, there are many gypsy-root oriented music, of course, it’s interesting in that way. It does not deny that he liked, for example, Brahms so much. Gypsy music, gypsy playing, and they even studied as far as I know, like how the gypsy musicians are so much educated in classical music and in their own repertoire... 111

Other contributors to the style hongrois include Bihari and Lavotta, Romani violinists who were early examples of this ‘gypsy’ style, and inspirational performers in their time. Liszt was mentioned by Szabadi and in passing conversation with Koelman, although this relates more to the

111 Vilmos Szabadi, interview by Teresa Vinci, April 21, 2017, Appendix, xxiii.
piano repertoire. Bartók moved away from this ‘gypsy’ style in search for music that truly represented the Hungarian people, and as a result, his music was folk inspired, however still displaying the same sense of nationalism. Bartók was mentioned by most interviewees as a composer of interest to the topic, especially as the study also explores Hungarian folk music and how an understanding of this style can aid with interpretations of works in the style hongrois. Other composers and compositions mentioned include Dinicu’s Hora Staccato (Jackson), Bizet’s Carmen (Koelman), Kreisler’s La Gitana (Koelman), and modern composer Skoumal (Koelman).

The compositions, opinions, and ideas discussed in the interviews, are represented in Figure 3 below:

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Figure 3. A Representation of Interview Question 1: Composers who wrote in the style hongrois

2. What aspects of violin playing do you think help to create the character of this style? (Eg. Vibrato, portamento)

Szabadi shared a vivid description of aspects of violin playing which embody the character of the style hongrois, ranging from wide vibratos and advanced bowing techniques, to a heaviness in sound and “rough emotional passion”. These sentiments are illustrated in the following quote:

Yes, of course these sort of things (vibrato and portamento), and right hand techniques kind of like flying bows, half-staccato, portamento, just like you mentioned. Also, in time, how much freedom is possible to generate in one passage, and it’s of course up to the character, up to the ornaments, or its own configuration, also the harmonies. Also, the vibratos, wider and broader vibratos, not the Mozart kind of very small and almost nothing. Of course, the sound,
the heaviness, the volume, all are part of this. I think this kind of rough, emotional passion, big fortes, always trying to get to the peak as many times as possible.\textsuperscript{112}

In addition to the use of portamento, Szabadi also emphasizes the importance of expressive tempo modification and rubato, which allow for greater freedom and expression in the music, encouraging the performer to push this aspect to the limit. He mentions ornamentation, harmonies, volume, and aiming to accentuate the climax of phrases.

Jackson expresses that a variety of sounds and a creative approach to articulation, vibrato, portamenti, and timbre, could help to create this ‘gypsy’ essence and character. He explains that it’s important to have this varied approach, otherwise the music ‘blurs’, and doesn’t have a full range of sound and emotion, which is characteristic of compositions in the style hongrois. His sentiments are seen in the following quote:

And if there’s a variety of approach, variety of sound, of articulation, I think that’s also very important, because it’s very easy to have one style of doing something, and then it all blurs. If you’re always listening to what you’re doing, and expanding that range of sound, not just the quality but also the timbre, and not being frightened to make a nasty sound, to be ugly, because that gives you the contrast. Then you can present things in a way to the audience that will really interest them. I think things particularly like portamento...it’s about having those variety of approaches. Some glissandi, they can be quite extravagant.\textsuperscript{113}

Jackson encourages experimentation of sounds and timbre, even making ‘ugly sounds’, in order to achieve contrast and a point of interest for the audience; to “present things in a way to the audience that will really interest them”.

Koelman similarly highlighted vibrato, portamenti, and bow pressure as aspects of violin playing which help to create the character of the style hongrois. He stressed the importance of sustaining bow pressure in the portamenti, and that the destination note should be “intense with vibrato”. Koelman also mentions sustaining notes, maintaining intensity in character, and mastering different glissandi. An excerpt from his interview is seen below:

I think that you have to master the different glissandi. You have to sustain the bow pressure in the glissando. Not as we learn, ‘oh don’t do a glissando’...keep in mind that the glissando is not the important thing, but the leading note, the note you are going to.\textsuperscript{114}

Tóth expressed that it is difficult to pinpoint exactly how to create the character of the style hongrois, which is a very decadent type of music. She noted that intricate ornamentations in these

\textsuperscript{112} Vilmos Szabadi, interview by Teresa Vinci, April 21, 2017, Appendix, xxiv.
\textsuperscript{113} Laurence Jackson, interview by Teresa Vinci, April 7, 2017, Appendix, xvi.
\textsuperscript{114} Rudolf Koelman, interview by Teresa Vinci, March 3, 2017, Appendix, xx.
compositions provided an opportunity for freedom and lots of rubato, and that the placement and accentuation of accents help to convey this ‘gypsy’ feeling.

3. **Can you describe aspects of performance that might not be captured through written notation?**

*(E.g. Dance character, rubato)*

Tóth remarked that in any style of music, there is always meaning to be gained beyond what has been notated. She lists portamento, accents, improvisation, vibrato, sound, and style, as aspects of performance that might not be captured through the written notation for compositions in the *style hongrois*. Tóth stressed the significance of an improvisatory approach in performance, and that the interpretation “should sound like an improvisation”, this was the most important thing. She likened the use of portamenti, shifting, and accents to their presence and function in the Hungarian language, stressing that it is important where the emphasis lays; it must be both tasteful and occur in a natural manner. An excerpt from Tóth’s interview is seen below:

...for that music, the improvisation has been written down, so it should sound like an improvisation, that’s the main thing I think. Of course, with the vibrato, everyone has a different vibrato so it’s hard to say that this vibrato is the one. Of course, sometimes you can start without vibrato and then start it later on, you can shift or using portamento, just like in the language, it makes a difference where you put the accent. So, with the shifting, you have to have a taste for it, where to put the portamento. It’s hard to say, ‘you only do the portamento when...’, it’s really hard to say. And how Hubay played, how he taught...the kids today don’t feel music in the same way, they don’t have or it’s not fashionable or trendy to play in that style anymore. They play those pieces but not always in the right style. It’s hard, it has a special flavour, special sound, very sensitive, overly sensitive, you know, but you can hear if you listen to Sarasate, or Kreisler, or Mischa Elman or even Heifetz’s playing, you hear that very violinistic, very sensitive, they are all different of course, but in that sort of style.115

Tóth also references the characteristic sound of past renowned violinists, such as Heifetz and Kreisler, who embodied the epitome of violin sound in their era; a very violinistic sound which Tóth describes had “a special flavour, special sound, very sensitive, overly sensitive” sound and qualities. She remarks that this overly sensitive and violinistic sound is not so fashionable by today’s standards, and so these compositions of the *style hongrois* are not performed or felt in this same way, perhaps lacking this characteristic timbre and feeling.

Koelman, like Tóth, also mentions vibrato, portamento, and performance style as aspects perhaps not captured by written notation for compositions in the *style hongrois*. In addition to these, he also highlights dance character, rubato, and articulation, especially short articulations,

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115 Erika Tóth, interview by Teresa Vinci, April 21, 2017, Appendix, xxvii.
which help to create this dance character in the music. An excerpt from Koelman’s interview is seen below:

So, the style, the vibrato and the portamento are aspects that might not be captured through notation. Also dance character and rubato...I think also articulation is important, like with guitar, you get a different articulation too. Shorter things, for example the melody in Zigeunerweisen (opening of the Allegro molto vivace)...there is really dancing there, but if you would look in the scores, you would play it like a classical musician, it’s not fun.\footnote{Rudolf Koelman, interview by Teresa Vinci, March 3, 2017, Appendix, xx-xxi.}

In his interview, Jackson expresses that the precision of notation and rhythm in the style Hongrois compositions, actually allow the ‘gypsy’ elements to shine through. However, a variety of approaches could still enhance the limitations of written notation. He suggests the intelligent use of rubato, experimenting with and without vibrato, effects such as sul ponticello, and expressive intonation; “playing nicely out of tune and just enjoying being bright”, and experimenting with high leading notes, “as long as they’re corrected well”. Jackson also recommends using different bow speeds to accentuate this expressive intonation, an effect that can be quite interesting and pleasing to the audience.

I think sound like we talked about, using a little more sul ponticello, listening to what you’re doing so there’s a variety of sounds there, you’re pushing the boundaries in terms of that aspect. So, it’s not just rubato, it says rubato but actually, in terms of these pieces which we are playing, from a classical point of view, I think rubato can be spontaneous but there has to be a reason for it. Rubato is not just something that happens, it begs to happen in a way, the music needs that and it makes sense within what you’re doing within the phrase. So, I think it’s the intelligent use of rubato and the range of sounds, so playing over the bridge, and actually using perhaps no vibrato as well in terms of what we can do to help that as well. And intonation-wise, playing nicely out of tune and just enjoying being bright or leading notes can be really high, as long as they’re corrected well, it’s fine, it’s great, that gives the listener, the audience a lot of satisfaction when something is out of tune and then comes into focus again. That’s an aspect which can be brought out, definitely.\footnote{Laurence Jackson, interview by Teresa Vinci, April 7, 2017, Appendix, xviii-xix.}

Jackson stresses not only the importance of rubato, but the intelligent use of rubato, in that it must “make sense within what you’re doing within the phrase”. Overall, he advocates for a variety of approaches, even perhaps not notated, in order to achieve an exciting, original, and compelling performance which captivates the audience, and captures the essence of this ‘gypsy’ style.

On a different note, Szabadi’s response was that one can easily attain information and an understanding of the ‘gypsy’ style, through personal research and natural intuition to look beyond the notation. He describes the Hungarian style as “a little bit capricious, a little bit easy, hot blooded, hot tempered, without consideration”, and highlights some characteristics of the Hungarian
mentality, even alluding to past tragedies in Hungarian history as a result of these behaviours. Whilst he says there has been a change in Hungarian mentality over the years, these features can still be seen and heard in the music; “we are very emotional, we are passionate, we are crazy in one sense...”.

4. In your opinion, would knowledge of Hungarian folk music be useful when learning and interpreting music of the style hongrois? If so, how?

Several valuable insights were shared in a bid to inform and create the most authentic, exciting, and engaging interpretation in the style hongrois, using both the written notation, and perhaps what is unable to be notated. This formed a central theme of this research study, that is, would knowledge of Hungarian folk music be useful when learning and interpreting music of the style hongrois? All agree that it would be beneficial to have an understanding of Hungarian folk music, as this provided an insight into the composer’s intentions, as well as historical and cultural context, resulting in a more informed interpretation. An excerpt from Szabadi’s interview is seen below:

Absolutely, yes this is for sure because the Hungarian folk music is so rich and the text, the lyrics are of upmost importance, because they really contain the essential moments and feelings, all kinds of really precious, heartfelt things, which is probably what the Hungarian spirit is in folk music, it’s written down. That is, I think probably the best question, because that detail means the country, the folk music, very much.\(^{118}\)

Szabadi expresses the significance of knowledge of Hungarian folk music, as this “detail means the country”, and the essence of the Hungarian people. In addition to the melodies, he references the rich texts and lyrics which have been documented, which hold intrinsic value and meaning; these folk melodies and texts provided invaluable inspiration for composers of the time.

Jackson agrees with the benefits of having knowledge of Hungarian folk music, stating that it would be valuable in gaining a deeper understanding of the music of Hungarian composers who employed these folk idioms. However, he also stresses that some composers, such as Ravel and Saint-Saëns, approached their compositions from the classical establishment, and so their compositions should be approached in a classical way. In these circumstances, this knowledge of Hungarian folk music is still helpful; however, it is important to respect the writing of composers when approaching an interpretation. Jackson’s thoughts are illustrated through the following quote:

Oh, I think undoubtedly, yes. I wish I knew Hungarian folk music, I think it would be really helpful. Absolutely because you need to know, particularly with Bartók, you want to know

\(^{118}\) Vilmos Szabadi, interview by Teresa Vinci, April 21, 2017, Appendix, xxv.
obviously where they’re coming from. I suppose with Ravel, it’s coming much more from the classical, from the establishment... But certainly Ravel, Saint-Saëns and those French composers were coming much more from a classical background so I think it would be helpful but you still have to approach it in a classical way. But for Bartók, yes, it’s good to know, it’d be very helpful, particularly because rhythmically it’s so strong. It’s so important to feel that rhythm, not playing metronomically but in time, that’s something that you have to feel, and that the audience has to feel as well. So yes, I think it would be really helpful to know a bit about it, but I think it’s just one half of the equation. It’s important but it mustn’t override the instrumental side of it, that’s very important.\(^\text{119}\)

Jackson expresses that the knowledge of folk music is important, especially regarding the strong rhythmical element present in the *style hongrois*, however, this shouldn’t override other aspects of performance.

**5. Are you aware of any common misconceptions of performances in the style hongrois?**

Jackson remarks that often compositions of the *style hongrois* are performed very fast, and whilst it can be “incredibly exciting”, it can also be unfulfilling and compromise the dance character. There was also discussion about the use of ‘up bows’ or ‘down bows’ in certain passages, but this was not necessarily a misconception, just an idea to explore further. An extract of Jackson’s interview is seen below:

> I think, we talked about the down bows, and that aspect, but that’s not necessarily a misconception at all. I’m not convinced, I’m wondering, sometimes you hear a lot of gypsy music played very fast and I wondered actually if that was...I mean, they can play amazingly fast, I’ve heard some incredible playing, the fastest spiccato you could imagine from gypsy violinists. But I wondered how authentic that is, or whether speed matters, or whether it doesn’t matter and it can be any speed, it’s up to the individual. So, I don’t know whether that’s a valid misconception, sometimes you hear young players, some people think speed is the ultimate thing and I always wondered about that. Because actually there’s the dance element to it as well, if it’s too fast you lose some of the character as well...it does leave me unfulfilled sometimes when I hear things so fast, but I don’t know, it can be incredibly exciting. But I’m afraid I don’t know any other misconceptions, apart from down bows and up bows. And I think, each to their own.\(^\text{120}\)

The reference to the use of ‘up bows or down bows’, was referring to a conversation about the opening of *Tzigane* (Ravel), following a violin lesson with Jackson. The discussion was regarding whether to begin the cadenza on an up bow as printed in the score, or a down bow; Ravel is meticulous in his notation, with bowings detailed in the parts. The argument for ‘down bow’ is that it emphasizes a heavy downbeat and captures the crisp rhythm, whereas, the printed bowing of ‘up bow’ is better for bow control in the following note, however, the first note must not sound like an

\(^{119}\) Laurence Jackson, interview by Teresa Vinci, April 7, 2017, Appendix, xix.

\(^{120}\) Ibid.
anacrusis. It is performed both ways, but the prevalence of the ‘up bow’ bowing is more frequent; as Jackson states, “each to their own”.

It is also known that *Tzigane* was written and dedicated to virtuosa Jelly D’Arányi, who Ravel had heard performing *style hongrois* repertoire at a party. Her stellar reputation is well documented in biographical sources, such as the entry on *Grove Music Online*. Jelly is described as “a vivid personality and a born violinist, with fine technique and a good measure of gypsy fire”.\(^\text{121}\) It is likely that the opening gesture had been specifically written or modelled on Jelly’s performance style and Ravel’s observations of her artistic flair. The opening of *Tzigane* is seen in EXAMPLE 3 below:

 EXAMPLE 3. *Tzigane*, by Maurice Ravel, Bar 1-3.\(^\text{122}\)

![EXAMPLE 3.-Tzigane, by Maurice Ravel, Bar 1-3.](image)

Szabadi did not mention any misconceptions about performances in the *style hongrois*, but expressed that it was the responsibility of the musician to research and recreate the music in the most authentic way possible.

**Performance Considerations: Style Hongrois**

In a style which is modelled on the improvisatory approach of Romani musicians, and often notated in excruciating detail, realistically, how does the performer approach an interpretation? Of course, with integrity and respect for the composer’s intentions, but works of the *style hongrois* would quickly lose their drama and spark if performed exactly as notated. So, from a performer’s perspective, armed with all this analytical and contextual knowledge of the *style hongrois*, how does one approach an interpretation of this music? Does an understanding of Romani and Hungarian folk music performance styles and practices also contribute to the final interpretation? What is important to the performer? An original performance with a quasi-improvised approach, strict adherence to the score, or a happy medium satisfying both perspectives?

These were the ideas explored through interviews with four violinists who have considerable expertise performing in the *style hongrois*. The data and insights from these interviews can be used by performers as ‘food for thought’ when approaching an authentic interpretation of works in the

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Whilst there is considerable literature on the *style hongrois*, these interviews offer a unique perspective by exploring a musician’s point of view, hence filling a gap in the literature. These insights, discussions, and suggestions are invaluable, complementing the analyses and written texts which are available. Of course, there is no correct answer when it comes to music performance, these interviews simply offer advice and knowledge from those with extensive experience in performing in the *style hongrois*, a deep theoretical understanding of this musical style, and a passion for music. Below are some performance considerations to consider when approaching compositions of the *style hongrois*, collated from the interview data:

- Experiment with a variety of approaches and sounds; utilise effects such as sul ponticello, ‘ugly’ sounds, different bow speeds, and expressive intonation.
- Approach the music with an ‘air of improvisation’; the music should sound like an improvisation.
- Sustain bow pressure in portamenti and emphasise the destination note with vibrato.
- Use rubato intelligently; it must make sense within the music, and if used effectively, it can create maximum dramatic effect.
- Use ornamentation with freedom and lots of rubato.
- Aim for a wide vibrato, and heaviness in both sound and volume.
- Experiment with no vibrato, and also gradually introducing vibrato.
- Emphasise the accents and rhythms in the music; these have an important link to the Hungarian language.
- Aim for a strong rhythmic foundation, not playing metronomically, but in-time with rhythmic feeling; this must be felt by the performer and the audience.
- Capture the essence of the dance character through short articulations and syncopations.
- Emulate the stereotypical Hungarian character; emotional, passionate, rough, and capricious.
- Visualise the ‘overly sensitive’ and violinistic sound of past violinists, like Heifetz, to create an expressive and dramatic sound.
- Be careful not to sacrifice the dance character in pursuit of quick tempi.
- Research, watch videos, and listen to recordings of Hungarian folk music and Romani musicians; these will give an insight into the style and performance practices, as well as inspire and aid interpretations with fresh ideas.
C. CONCLUSION

The data from these interviews link directly to the central research questions of this study, offering an additional viewpoint to support the existing literature. Many pertinent ideas eventuated, with each interviewee drawing attention to different aspects of the topic or gleaning a unique perspective to the research questions. By interviewing violinists with considerable expertise in the style hongrois, a more personal and practical approach towards authentic interpretation was facilitated, with the interviewees able to share informed advice, and experience in how to recreate this style in the context of performance. In a similar vein, the Hungarian folk music experts contributed personal experiences and anecdotes which highlight their breadth of knowledge, and their significant role in preserving and maintaining this musical culture, in addition to their performance experience. Although the literature on both Hungarian folk music and the style hongrois is significant, it is important, relevant, and refreshing to gain the insights of musicians and experts who have dedicated their lives to refining their crafts, and who are passionate about sharing these ideas with performers, audiences, and enthusiasts. The interviewees contributed greatly to this research study by generously sharing invaluable insight, discussion, personal experience, and knowledge for the benefit of understanding and appreciating more fully Hungarian folk music and the style hongrois.

This research study aims to integrate a rich body of evidence pertaining to Hungarian folk music, the style hongrois, Romani music, and the performance practices relating to and intersecting between these musical styles. The culmination is an analysis of Hubay’s composition Scènes de la Csárda No. 5 “Hullámzó Balaton” (Chapter Five) which is supported by the interview data, the literature, and documentary evidence. The Hubay analysis is also an opportunity to crosscheck the information conveyed in the interviews with the literature, in order to verify the statements of the interviewees. Of course, with oral traditions, it is inevitable that there will be missing links and aspects which one cannot be fully certain. This is due to the absence of documentation and the nature of transferring information. Further enquiry is necessary and there is scope for deeper exploration in this research topic which could be achieved through interviews with a greater number of local and international specialists, collaborative research with the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music, and ethnomusicological research.
IV. CHAPTER FOUR: FOLK CD

A. LINKING THE ROMANI STYLE AND HUNGARIAN FOLK MUSIC

An article written by Bartók, entitled “Gypsy Music or Hungarian Music?”, explores the misconceptions of what people believed to be ‘gypsy music’, shining a light on what is in fact Hungarian music. Bartók states:

...what people (including Hungarians) call “gypsy music” is not gypsy music but Hungarian music; it is not old folk music but a fairly recent type of Hungarian popular art music composed, practically without exception, by Hungarians of the upper middle class. But while a Hungarian gentleman may compose music, it is traditionally unbecoming to his social status to perform it “for money” – only gypsies are supposed to do that.¹²³

Bartók also urges the importance and relevance of Hungarian folk music, stressing its national significance and intrinsic value. These sentiments are seen in the following quote:

...the significance and importance of Hungarian peasant song within the body of Hungarian folk music is considerably greater than those of popular art song, not only from the numerical point of view – there are some 10,000 collected peasant songs as against about 1,500 urban songs - but even more because of its content...The intrinsic value of the peasant songs, whether from the point of view of aesthetics or from that of national significance, is incomparably superior to the intrinsic value of the popular art song.¹²⁴

These quotes highlight Bartók’s feelings regarding the evolution of the style hongrois as a national style, Romani musicians, and the zeitgeist. They underpin his search and belief that the peasant folk music truly represented the Hungarian people. Bartók believed that folk music best represented the thoughts and feelings of the Hungarian people, and as a result, he diverged from styles such as the style hongrois. The first quote however, confirms the importance of interpretation and origins of these exotic idioms, which are duly covered in this research study. It is undeniable that the Romani musicians offered a profound contribution to the style hongrois, inspiring composers and audiences with their unparalleled musicianship, technique, and performance abilities, however, the music was not per se, ‘theirs’. Their performances certainly inspired composers such as Hubay and Liszt but the music also owes to its origins in the verbunkos repertory, the music of the aristocracy, no doubt with folk origins. In this way, Hungarian folk music is also relevant when interpreting works of the style hongrois. Its impact or connection may not seem quite as strong as the Romani musicians, however,

¹²⁴ Ibid., 243-4.
this does not discount that an understanding of this musical style fills gaps in knowledge. In fact, there are countless similarities between Hungarian folk music and ‘gypsy music’, with the obvious difference being the repertoire; although, it is also likely due to their nomadic lifestyle, that Romani musicians would have performed Hungarian folk music in some form, and vice versa.

Several components and gestures which comprise the style hongrois are also defining features in Hungarian folk music. Characteristic ‘gypsy’ elements such as dynamic rhythmic patterns, ornamentation, slides and emulation of the voice, exotic instrumentation, and form, are all shared by Hungarian folk music. The strong connection to the Hungarian language abounds in Hungarian folk music, with thousands of vocal melodies in existence, many more than urban nóta songs. Both styles share the dotted rhythms linked to the Hungarian language, which convey lament and pride, and the driving syncopations which propel the music into exciting tempi and captivate the listener. Ornamentation is intricate and complex in both styles, and slides are used freely to emulate the voice; this links to both nóta melodies and Hungarian folk tunes. In terms of instrumentation and performance, the Hungarian folk band shares the same hierarchy and roles within the band, with the violinist assuming the role of primás, leader of the band, and displaying virtuosic qualities; in most instances, the instrumentation is also the same. While the Romani band will perform for an audience and have control over artistic decisions, the folk band will perform for dancers, which in turn affects the dialect, tempo, style, and sequence of melodies that they can perform. However, in both musical styles, musicians are at the service of their audience, playing whatever will please.

Forms such as csárdás and verbunkos are dances which were historically danced in villages during this period, and have been revived as a result of the ‘Táncház Movement’. Whilst composers did not intend their compositions in these forms to be danced, the link to Hungarian folk music and dance is evident, and the Romani musicians conveyed this dance character through their performances. The progression from Lassú-Friss as explored in the style hongrois has a strong relation to Hungarian folk music, which is linked intrinsically to dance and fulfils a holistic purpose. Therefore, the connection to Hungarian folk music is evident and similarities can be seen on both a big and small scale. Knowledge of Hungarian folk music and its performance style would also aid in interpretations of the style hongrois, enhancing one’s understanding and appreciation.

In conclusion, it is unmistakeable that Hungarian folk music and Romani music share many traits that are characteristic of the style hongrois. The Romani and folk musicians were a great source of inspiration for composers of the time and inspired countless compositions. Through an understanding of both musical styles, and the gestures which are characteristic in performance, it is possible to achieve a more holistic and informed interpretation. Many composers detail their scores with accurate markings of fingerings and complex ornamentations, yet much can be gained by
listening to recordings, and observing performances of Romani and folk musicians, so as to fully absorb the spirit and character of the music. A full appreciation of the exotic idioms and unique performance styles could be gained by listening to the recordings. This would enable a performance to present as compelling, authentic, and exciting.

B. LEARNING HUNGARIAN FOLK MUSIC: THE JOURNEY

Hungarian folk music has a very rich history and still to this day plays a large part in the lives of many people, not only in Hungary, but in diasporas all around the world. It is an oral tradition that has been passed down for generations and is linked intrinsically with Hungarian folk dancing, as well as countless cultural customs and celebrations. The music serves many different purposes; accompany dancing, entertainment at weddings, solemn reflection at funerals, nationalistic displays, cultural traditions, religious celebrations, and performances. As explored in the interviews, the music differs from village to village reminiscent of different dialects, which in turn affects other aspects of the music, such as the use of different vocal melodies, ornamentation, instrumentation, pulse, performance style, dances, and costumes matched with the music. There is a strong social connection between musicians and dancers in Hungarian culture, which can be witnessed at social events such as the táncház. Typically, music from many different dialects will be played throughout the night, allowing for diversity and variety in the corresponding dances; it is common for dancers to request a particular dance or song to be played. There is an incredible amount of music that the musicians must know, in addition to remembering the personal favourite songs of their friends, all of which are performed by memory; it is truly a very diverse and rewarding folk music tradition.

There is often the misconception that folk music is ‘easy’, or not as complex as classical music, however, I have found this to be untrue, especially of a tradition which has been maintained and refined over hundreds of years. This folk tradition is passed on orally and requires actively learning from musicians, or by listening closely to recordings, in order to fully achieve the complex nuances, accents, pulses, and ornamentation, which mimic the language and link to the folk dancing. Although Hungarian folk music is primarily learnt by ear, there have been music books published with folk melodies and ornamentation notated. However, it is worth noting that these books document one interpretation of the melodies. Of course, the base melody will be played a certain way as it fits with song lyrics, and certain ornaments are employed characteristic of the dialect. However, musicians have a degree of freedom as there is always an element of improvisation within this prescribed framework. So, while there is some sheet music available, it proves difficult to learn this way as the notation often differs to recordings, and has many limitations; it is unable to
incorporate every important element, complex nuance, and capture the true essence and style of this music.

At the start of my journey eleven years ago, having come from a classical-music background with no real or tangible experience in folk music, there were many things to learn and absorb about Hungarian folk music. Not only was I faced with countless melodies to learn aurally, different sounds to become accustomed to, new musicians to collaborate with, a band to lead, and dancers to accompany, this was a completely foreign and exciting musical tradition that I had never experienced. With so many components to focus on, my goal was to play the notes, recall the melodies without sheet music, remember suitable sequences of melodies, and play at a tempo suitable for dancers. Understandably, with such new and complex sounding music, my ears were not yet tuned into the intricacies of the style unique to each dialect, and how to recreate this in my performance and bowing style. One of the most complex and important elements in Hungarian folk music is the pulse and rhythm heard in the bowing style, and although this is primarily the role of the brácsa and bógó, it must also be incorporated in the violin melody, providing a cohesive sound with the band moving in sync. In the tradition of folk string bands, this means that, whilst playing the melody and the ornaments embellishing the melody, the violinist must also capture the bowing style, which is achieved through accents, pulses, lilt, and rhythm. Bow pulses allow the violin sound to gel with the other instruments to create a truly authentic sound. This was a difficult concept to grasp at first, especially coming from the classical tradition, but over time, I have been able to integrate this aspect into my playing to achieve a more authentic sound. Lessons with prominent musicians and bands, such as Téka and Tükös, have allowed much needed attention on the important aspects of each dialect, such as bowing style, ornamentation, and performance style. Study trips to Hungary and attendance at music camps held in Australia, supplemented by excellent tutelage, guidance, immersion, enjoyment, and inspiration, have facilitated my holistic progress. The detail in which I have been instructed is a credit to the commitment and care of my teachers who wish to ensure that these melodies are preserved in the truest way possible. I am committed to continue studying the nuances of each dialect with great attention to detail and an informed mindset, as affirmation to honour these musicians who have lovingly shared with me this music tradition.
As part of this research project, I have chosen to record and submit a CD of Hungarian folk music. This CD is the culmination of several years dedicated to studying the intricacies of Hungarian folk music, involving study trips to Hungary and Eastern Europe, music camps, countless hours listening to recordings, performances, and most of all, a passion for the music and traditions. During this time, I have been very fortunate to learn from prominent Hungarian folk bands and musicians, such as Téka and Tükrös, who have facilitated a holistic experience, and an understanding of the music and culture. For the last eleven years, I have been performing with local band Hot Paprika, and for us, this CD is a celebration of our journey. Many of the tracks have been recorded with the intention to be used for dance performances and choreographies, which in turn affected the length, sequence of melodies, and tempo. This CD is also a tribute to our late singer, Julianna Sackett, who passed away in 2016; Julianna is featured from past performances in three live tracks.

The CD is comprised of eight tracks; five were recorded in 2017 and three are live recordings from previous performances (2009, 2010, and 2013). Three tracks have been selected for Case Study analyses, allowing for an in-depth exploration of the performance practices, characteristics, and unique traits specific to these three different dialects. These detailed case studies explore the recordings in relation to the interview data and the literature surrounding this topic, whilst also drawing links to the style hongrois. This is followed by a critical reflection which discusses each track in relation to personal experiences, as well as characteristics heard in the recording. There is a table for each track which details the number of melodies played, repetitions of melody, vocal melodies (v), form of melody (for example, AABBCC), change in dance, and time markings for any tempo changes.

Supplementing the interview data, this CD demonstrates the differences between a selection of dialects, which are evident through instrumentation, ornamentation, and musical style. Each track offers a different dialect, possessing unique characteristics and traits, and an undeniable link to past events and the history of its village. An explanation for the variation in dialects is detailed by Sárosi in the following quote:

Hungarian folk music has developed in conjunction with the country’s history. The fact that within its uniform character it presents many different facets has also a historical explanation. Historical events affected different parts of the linguistic area in different ways, thus providing these regions and ethnic groups with differing opportunities for development. In some places the population died out, leaving nothing of its traditions; in others certain ethnic groups, driven to the periphery, became isolated and checked in their development, preserving their ancient music as part of a way of life they were compelled to maintain; in still other places the
current of civilization arrived unannounced, sweeping away traditional values that might have been preserved.\textsuperscript{125}

The diversity in the music is explained well by Sárosi; it is a direct result of circumstances which the people faced, including significant historical events, isolation, “differing opportunities for development”, and social progress. As discussed in the previous chapter, Árendás explained that financial limitations were also a cause of variation between dialects, and the circumstances of the people in the village dictated how many musicians they could afford to hire. These ideas expressed by Sárosi and Árendás are reinforced by the diversity of musical dialects, as presented on this CD; some tracks feature the heavy and full sound of the popular string band, whilst others contrast with the refined style of strings and cimbalom, and other tracks utilise more medieval instruments such as the bagpipe or lute.

The ‘Hungary Research Trip’ was a highly beneficial process for this research project as it allowed me to reconnect with several Hungarian folk musicians, in order to fully prepare for the CD recordings. Through intensive violin lessons and interviews with Hungarian folk experts, I gained a deeper understanding of the music, history, and culture, which in turn informed my performance style and violin playing. I was also able to revisit the intricacies of melodies, such as, ornamentation, pulses, and nuance, under the guidance of skilled musicians. My violin lessons with Csaba Ökrös were particularly helpful in preparation for Track 3 ‘Bonchida’; this village music features very intricate ornamentation and a refined style, of which Ökrös is regarded highly. Whilst in Hungary in April 2017, I was fortunate to observe classes at the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music (Folk Department), have in-depth conversations about the music with knowledgeable musicians, and observe performances of several bands. I also attended the 2017 Táncháztalálkozó, which is a weekend-long event resplendent in Hungarian culture, incorporating folk music and dance performances, workshops, and exhibitions. These experiences alone were highly valuable and inspiring, and they were also important in contributing significantly to the CD recording process. They allowed for consolidation, conviction, and confidence in the permanent product that I was creating, as well as confirmation that I was accurately recreating the performance style and melodies, authentic to the tradition. Many bands in Hungary, especially those with whom I studied, are deeply passionate and committed to preserving Hungarian folk music; this is an ideal I also strive to uphold.

The first CD of Hot Paprika “Never Far Away...” was launched on Friday 1\textsuperscript{st} September 2017 at the Hungarian Community Hall, Mount Lawley. The evening comprised of a concert and short performance.

\textsuperscript{125} Sárosi, Folk Music, 63.
stories between each piece, highlighting important events and experiences on our journey as a band. Over 100 people attended and the night was a huge success.

D. GENERAL THOUGHTS ON THE RECORDING PROCESS

Several of these tracks were designed to complement specific dance choreographies, and were intended for use at dance performances where the band is unable to play live music. Had these motivations not been a consideration, the tracks could have differed in many ways, such as length, progression and number of melodies, and change of dance rhythm; for example, playing only a Verbunk instead of changing from a Verbunk to a Csárdás.

Given that the primary role of this music is to accompany dancing, it can prove difficult to record and capture the true essence and energy of the music. As a musician playing for dancers, many decisions are based on the dancer’s needs; the speed, length of set, type of dance, choice of melodies to accommodate singing, and the potential inclusion of a friend’s favourite melody. There is a special interaction between the musicians and dancers, and anything can happen in any given moment, making each performance unique. It is also music for a more holistic purpose and the focus is on enjoyment, celebration, and tradition, not striving to create a perfect musical performance.

Over the years, recordings and editing processes have changed expectations of performance level and created an unrealistic standard for perfection; recordings are often highly edited, mastered, auto-tuned, and pasted together in little takes to produce the best performance sound possible. When recording this CD, these thoughts and pressures weighed on my mind, but also the reality that any mistakes would be very expensive, and almost impossible to remedy. Hungarian folk music is complex and each instrument binds together in every moment; perfect harmony in rhythm, intonation, style, energy, and feeling. Unlike other recordings, instruments cannot be recorded individually and mixed at a later stage, and tracks cannot be recorded in snippets and later pasted together. Adding to these technical demands, as well as budgetary constraints and time sensitivity in the recording studio, there was also the pressure and desire to produce a CD which is not only of the highest quality musical performance, but also true to the Hungarian folk music tradition. I always aspired to uphold and respect this music tradition and its philosophy, and aimed to recreate the music and knowledge, as it was generously shared with me by esteemed teachers and musicians. On this CD, each track was recorded in a single take.
E. CRITICAL NOTES: THREE CASE STUDIES

Three tracks from the CD “Never Far Away...” have been selected for closer analysis with regards to instrumentation, ornamentation, musical structure, technique, and performance style. These dialects were used to best demonstrate the complexity and variation evident between dialects, whilst also showcasing connections and links to the style hongrois. As explored in the interview analysis with Hungarian folk music exponents (Chapter Three), the music can differ greatly between dialects and each is unique; this is evident when considering all eight tracks. The three tracks featured in the Case Studies were chosen as they best resonate with this research study in relation to the style hongrois and the analysis of Hubay’s music, which will be investigated in Chapter Five.

1. CASE STUDY 1: GÖMÖR

The music from Gömör (Track 1) has a refined and classy style, which is reminiscent of the Romani performance style. Stylistically, Gömör shares many defining characteristics with the style hongrois, and these are evident in the instrumentation, ornamentation, technique, performance style, and musical structure.

Instrumentation

The instrumentation in Gömör is violin, 4-stringed viola, cimbalom, and bógó; this is also the instrumentation of a typical Romani band. The 4-stringed viola offers a greater range and choice of chords and inversions, as well as a lighter sound, using two strings at a time instead of three. The bass line is also quite active, changing notes on most beats and utilising passing notes; this differs with other dialects, such as Dunántúl (Track 7), where the bass line provides a drone-like accompaniment, or might repeat the same pitch for several bars. The cimbalom is vital to the texture and sound of the band, and is free to embellish the melody, support the bass with accompanying chords, or a mixture of the two approaches. Sárosi explains that the role of the cimbalom is to fill gaps in the ensemble’s sound, which is particularly important in the hallgató; slow melody in free rhythm. Below is his description of the way the cimbalom adds texture to the music, and creates atmosphere within the band:

...he covers the strings, outlining chords with a light, fast, virtuoso motion virtually across the whole compass of the instrument making a pleasant harmonic background for the melody.\textsuperscript{126}

\textsuperscript{126}Sárosi, Folk Music, 135.
Ornamentation

The violin ornamentation in the Gömör dialect is not intricate like several others, but has a distinct character and flavour. As described in Richards’ interview, typical of the music from Hungary and Felvidék, ornamentation features include “a very wide vibrato… and cuts and trills”. In addition to this, what truly creates the distinctive Gömör sound, is the use of both upward and downward portamenti, which connect notes in the melody with quarter-tones. Often the melody would be played in a basic form the first time, and any subsequent repetitions can be embellished with more ornaments and flourishes in the violin part, such as semiquaver motives to end a phrase or introduce a new phrase. The following musical example (EXAMPLE 4), demonstrates typical phrase endings which can be used by the violinist to embellish a Gömöri melody, some of which are heard in this track. These examples are characteristic ornamentations in the Gömör dialect, taken directly from Gömöri Népzene, a music book dedicated to documenting melodies of this dialect. In an informal performance, each melody may be played several times, giving the violinist many opportunities to utilise these different ornamentations, and others which are not shown below. However, in this recording setting where each melody is played only two times, it would sound disjointed if so many different embellishments were heard, without first giving the listener a chance to experience the base melody in its simplest form. Examples of characteristic ornamentations from the Gömör dialect can be seen below, as presented in Gömöri Népzene. Interestingly, there is no clef or key signature at the commencement of the passage, and accidentals are notated. The omission of the clef indicates there is an understanding that the notation is written for violin, and therefore, in the treble clef.

Mark Richards, interview by Teresa Vinci, April 4, 2017, Appendix, x.
There are similarities in ornamentation between Gömör and the style hongrois, with both often employing a wide vibrato, expressive use of portamenti, and semiquaver passages to embellish a melody. In addition, the Gömör performance style is also charismatic, refined, emotive, and “much more influenced by that café-gypsy style”, as Richards describes in his interview. He also explains that the Gömöri violin technique is closer to the classical violin technique, which allows for agility and accuracy in this dialect, as opposed to several other dialects, such as Magyarpalatka (Track 8), where a flat wrist facilitates ornamentation and timbre. Richards’ sentiments are seen in the following quote:

…it’s much more informed by that style which is closer to a classical technique in a way, not completely, but that technique probably requires you to not have a flat wrist certainly so much, because you’ve got to be able to move around the instrument a lot more and do some flashy stuff, which would be harder with a really flat wrist...129

Musical Structure

The progression of melodies heard in this track is Csárdás – Verbunk – Friss; however, another typical progression of melodies in Gömör is Hallgató – Csárdás – Friss. Although not heard in this recording, a feature of Gömöri music is the hallgató, which is a song performed in free rhythm without any dance, also known as ‘music for listening’. There is a strong emphasis on emotion, which

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128 Ildikó Varsányi, Gömőri Népzene (Budapest: Publisher unknown, 1994), 12.
129 Mark Richards, interview by Teresa Vinci, April 4, 2017, Appendix, x.
is facilitated by a flexibility in tempo and use of rubato, meaning that the singer will perform the same song differently each time, according to their mood. The band must attentively accompany the singer, quickly changing chords, and moving through the melody to accommodate the singer’s mood and expression. As described earlier, the cimbalom plays a significant role in the hallgató as it condenses the texture of the band and combines the sounds of all instruments, which is achieved through rapid scale passages and virtuosic displays. An excerpt of the violin part in a Gömör hallgató is seen in EXAMPLE 5. It is understood that the treble clef at the beginning of the melody carries throughout the work and is not rewritten on every staff.

EXAMPLE 5. Hallgató melody, “Az én ökröm a Virág”, from Gömör.¹³⁰

¹³⁰ Varsányi, Gömőri Népzene, 35.
As evident in the notation, the lack of bar lines suggests freedom in tempo, and enables the violinist to follow the singer, with the rhythms notated serving as a guide. Each line fits with the lyrics, and the singer has the freedom to use rubato and emphasise certain words according to their mood. Each hallgató melody flows into a Csárdás rendition of the exact same melody, although now in a strict tempo and rhythm, which allows for dancing. This is evident in the example above, with the violinist signalling the change through a chromatic semiquaver introduction, characteristic of the Gömör dialect.

Regarding performance style and musical structure, there is a strong link and similarity between the folk tradition of Gömör and the style hongrois, which can be seen through the performance of hallgató and popular nóta melodies, respectively. Ultimately, the concept is the same; a melody where expression and emotion are of utmost importance, therefore dictating the rhythm, flow, and tempo of performance. In the folk tradition, the hallgató will be performed with a singer, who is to a certain extent, at the service of the lyrics. On the other hand, the nóta melodies performed by Romani musicians offer greater freedom with tempo and rubato, as without a singer, the lyrics no longer dictate the tempo and flow of melody. These sentiments are expressed by Sárosi as he discusses nóta and hallgató, shown in the following quote:

The tempo and rhythm are not for dancing, nor are they the parlando of old folk songs conforming to speech. The performances of such popular songs allows for the possibility of lengthening and shortening notes, or slackening the tempo, according to the singer’s momentary mood and personal taste. This to a certain extent arbitrary handling of tempo and rhythm is called tempo rubato. It prevails not so much in the singer’s performance as when the orchestra plays such a melody, called hallgató (music for listening) – when the words do not exercise their hold over the rhythm. In the longer-held notes between the quasi recitativo passages, the runs and broken chords of the accompaniment can predominate.

Sárosi certainly outlines a link between the hallgató and the popular nóta songs, which leads to questions about the style hongrois: were composers also inspired by the folk tradition? It is fair to conclude that folk musicians performing the hallgató could have influenced composers of the style hongrois, just as the Romani musicians impressed with their performances of nóta melodies. Ultimately, one of the main differences between these performance styles, is whether the musicians are accompanying dancing and singing, or solely playing music. These ideas are discussed by Richards:

Essentially, they’re (gypsies) not playing music for anyone to dance to, they’re just playing music. The traditional musicians were really well aware of whether they were playing for themselves, playing just music or playing for a dancer. And that will affect the tempo and all

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131 Sárosi, Folk Music, 55.
sorts of different things...what they play is pretty much influenced by what people are either
dancing or singing.132

The knowledge of these characteristic traits unique to the Gömöri style, has informed my
performance on this CD, specifically in relation to performance style, and ornamentation; not only
the types of ornamentation used, but also the appropriate amount of embellishment, to suit the
structure of melodies in this CD arrangement.

132 Mark Richards, interview by Teresa Vinci, April 4, 2017, Appendix, xii.
2. CASE STUDY 2: MAGYARPALATKA

The music of Magyarpalatka (Track 8), or Palatka for short, features a rustic performance style, heavy instrumentation, intricate ornamentation, and a different violin technique.

Instrumentation

Palatka features a powerful and rustic performance style, which is created through its instrumentation of two violins, two brácsa (3-stringed), and bógó, with the lowest string retuned from an A-C. The 3-stringed brácsa, often used in Transylvanian music, features a flat bridge which enables all three strings to be played at the same time. This instrument offers a strong accompaniment in terms of both pitch and rhythm, which is further amplified in Palatka by the addition of an extra brácsa. The result is a fuller sound and consistency of articulation, as in some dances in Palatka, such as the Csárdás, one brácsa will play on the beat and the other brácsa will play the off-beat. The retuned bógó utilises a very short folk bow which allows for a thick, raw sound, characteristic of the Palatka style. With such a heavy and full accompaniment, it would be very difficult for only one violin to compete with so much sound, resulting in the addition of another violin. It is common for one violin to play the basic melody and the other violin to embellish further, or for both violins to play in different registers, but often both violins play together in sync.

Ornamentation

The violin ornamentation characteristic of Palatka is very expressive and intricate, utilising the körülrírás to maximum effect. Whilst ornaments are used to embellish the melody, they are not played in a frivolous or random way, but in fact performed in a deliberate fashion that connects the melodic notes, in both a musical and rhythmic way. The violinist employs ornaments on almost every note, with extra grace notes and portamenti added to further connect melodic notes. Körülrírás, an expressive ornament used to emphasize important notes within the phrase, can be played as a single turn, or a continuous turn; the notation for ‘single körülrírás’ and ‘continuous körülrírás’ from the Magyarpalatka dialect is seen in EXAMPLE 6. This extract is taken directly from Palatkai Népzene I. There is no marked clef or key signature, however, since it is to be played on violin, it is understood to be in the treble clef.
EXAMPLE 6. The notation for ‘single körülrés’ and ‘continuous körülrés’ (assume treble clef).  

![Image of körülrés notation]

The following is an extract of ornamentation in a Lassú melody, from Palatka. As described above, there is an ornament on almost every note, plus frequent additions of portamenti and grace notes; visually, the notation looks very detailed and intricate. It is also important to note the accuracy in which the körülrés have been notated, with the symbols clearly depicting how many turns are to be played, and when the turn should be stopped; it can be stopped approaching from above the pivot note, or from below the pivot note. EXAMPLE 7 is taken directly from Palatkai Népzene I, and was contributed by Gáspár Károlyé; it is understood that the treble clef at the beginning of the melody carries throughout the work and is not rewritten on every staff.

EXAMPLE 7. An example of ornamentation in the Magyarpalatka dialect, by Gáspár Károlyé.

![Image of ornamentation in Magyarpalatka dialect]

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133 Mártat Virágvölgyi, Palatkai Népzene I (Budapest: Hagyományok Háza, 2007), 19.
134 Ibid., 70.
Technique

There is a noticeable difference in violin technique and posture between Hungarian folk music and classical violin, which in turn affects the sound, timbre, and character that is created. In classical violin, the left hand wrist is free from the neck of the violin and the fingers stop the strings with the fingertips. In several dialects of Hungarian folk music, the left hand wrist rests up against the neck of the violin, with the fingers stopping the strings at a different angle and using a broader area of the fingertips; musicians also play without a shoulder rest. While this posture is discouraged in classical playing as it is inaccurate, causes tension, and hinders movement around the violin, in the folk tradition it is a fundamental component to achieving an authentic sound, especially in Transylvanian music. The angle at which the fingers stop the string and execute ornaments, almost incorporates quarter-tones, which achieves a unique intonation and rustic sound. This is not quite possible with the classical hold as the clarity and precision that is achieved through the classical technique is at times too neat and refined, especially when executing the complex ornamentation of certain dialects, such as Palatka. Whilst this folk technique is not so prevalent in dialects such as Gömör, which require free-flowing movement and virtuosic displays, in several other dialects, it is an imperative component to creating an authentic sound. Palatka is perhaps the region where the folk hold is the most important, as it allows a more authentic execution of the ornamentation and creates the characteristic timbre, as discussed by Richards in the following interview extract.

So if you want to play Transylvanian music, and particularly bring that kind of ornamentation that we were talking about, it’s pretty much impossible to go with a classical hold, you need a flat wrist. A flat wrist also allows you the movement, to do certain slides, it allows you to do the things that I think you need to do.135

Whilst I am not able to fully and permanently assimilate this folk technique of no shoulder rest and flat wrist, my playing is still informed by the knowledge of the characteristic traits associated with the Palatka dialect. Over time I have become more flexible in my left-hand technique (allowing me to employ a flat wrist when needed), so I can execute the ornamentation accurately and recreate the distinctive timbre and style.

135 Mark Richards, interview by Teresa Vinci, April 4, 2017, Appendix, x.
3. CASE STUDY 3: BONCHIDA

The music of Bonchida (Track 3) is beautiful, refined, and exhibits a classical sound, all of which are achieved through the performance style, ornamentation, and instrumentation characteristic of this dialect.

Performance Style

‘There once was a Count in Bonchida who desired a more classical and refined sound for the village music, so he hired classically-trained Italian musicians to play the music’. This is a story that musicians from Téka and Tükrös shared with me during past violin lessons, to help inform my interpretations of this dialect, and describe the archetype I should strive for when performing this music. Unlike more ‘rustic-sounding’ dialects such as Palatka, Bonchida requires a sweet tone and restrained approach from the violin, as well as the accompanying instruments in the band. The instrumentation and ornamentation facilitate the creation of this timbre, therefore, achieving the appropriate ideal which is characteristic of this dialect.

Instrumentation

The instrumentation for Bonchida is violin, 4-stringed viola, cimbalom, and bógó. The use of the 4-stringed viola, where two strings instead of three are played at once, facilitates a lighter sound which is appropriate to the Bonchida style. Similarly, the bógó utilises a long classical bow, offering a gentler bow stroke and attack on the string, compared with the short folk bows utilised in other dialects, such as Palatka, which offer a more percussive sound. The cimbalom is once again vital to the texture of the band, blending the sounds of all instruments, and creating a sophisticated air to the music. Broken chords, rapid scale passages, and virtuosic displays are heard as the cimbalom plays the melody alongside the violin, whilst at other times, provides accompaniment to the melody.

Ornamentation

The violin ornamentation in Bonchida includes mordents, inverted mordents, körüllerás, and grace notes, and these are utilised to complement the refined sound and performance style of this dialect. Compared to the complex ornamentation of Palatka where ornaments are heavily employed, within the Bonchida dialect, some dances have quite minimal ornamentation. The Invirtita dance perhaps features the most intricate ornamentation, with the main melodic notes embellished with körüllerás, mordents, inverted mordents, and grace notes. The notation presents exceptional detail and depicts exactly where the ornaments fit within the melody, as seen in EXAMPLE 8 below. Here again, it is understood that the treble clef at the beginning of the melody carries throughout the work.
EXAMPLE 8. An example of ornamentation in the Invirtita, from the Bonchida dialect.¹³⁶

Whilst in Hungary for my research trip, this melody was taught to me by Csaba Ökrös, who is highly regarded for his performances of Bonchida music. Every ornament and detail notated in EXAMPLE 8 was taught to me aurally by Ökrös, exactly as it is shown in the example above. This involved learning small parts in copy-cat fashion, playing the melody together, and finally playing the melody alone whilst Ökrös accompanied with the brácsa chords. Ökrös stressed it is important that the main melodic notes and rhythmic pulse can always be heard, with the ornamentation serving as added embellishment, and not overpowering the overall aesthetic of sound. The violin must also incorporate the same rhythmic pulses and bowing style as played by the accompaniment, sharing the emphasis on rhythms in the melody; this aspect was addressed in the violin lessons with Ökrös, as he incorporated these rhythm nuances into the melody. This concept of rhythm ‘within’ the melody, is described by Árendás in the following quote:

...one unique feature is how they play, how they use the bow, how they play rhythms in the melody, so not rhythms of the melody but rhythms which fit with the dance, with the steps. If you play the violin in a dance melody, your emphasis must be absolutely the same as what the viola and bass player plays, so they help each other.¹³⁷

These ideas of ornamentation, rhythm, and nuance, as explored in the lessons with Ökrös, informed my approach when recording this track. The specific Invirtita in EXAMPLE 8 was not recorded as the rest of the band were not familiar with this melody, however, the same principles regarding

¹³⁷ Péter Árendás, interview by Teresa Vinci, April 26, 2017, Appendix, iii.
ornamentation, in addition to the knowledge from past instruction, were applied to the melodies recorded.

Intricate ornamentation, as seen in the Invirtita, shares similarities with compositions of the style hongrois, where composers accurately notated ornamentation, with great attention to detail evident within the score. To support this idea, an extract from Sarasate’s Zigeunerweisen is seen below, depicting how ornaments are employed to embellish the melody; however, chromatic slides are not so prevalent in the folk tradition.

EXAMPLE 9. An example of ornamentation in Zigeunerweisen, Bar 12-22.138

This further demonstrates a clear connection between Hungarian folk music and the style hongrois.

F. CRITICAL NOTES AND REFLECTIONS

This section gives an overview of each track on the CD by addressing key aspects such as instrumentation, form, progression of dances, description of what is heard in the track, general stylistic traits of the dialect, and contextual experiences which informed the performance. Whilst the Case Studies offer an in-depth exploration into three dialects, this section focuses on the elements heard in each track as presented on the CD. This provides a glimpse into the similarities and

138 Sarasate, Zigeunerweisen, 2.
differences evident within and between dialects, and a snapshot of the extensive repertoire of Hungarian folk music.

**Track 1: Gömör**

This track was inspired by Tükrös, a prominent Hungarian folk band, who shared their passion and knowledge with Hot Paprika at the 2012 Music Camp in NSW, and Perth in 2017 (post-CD recording). The music camp involved daily lessons in small group classes, learning music aurally, and informal tâncház of music-making and dance. Gömőr was the focus for the music camp and so these melodies were taught with careful attention to the intricacies of this style, as well as how it fits together with the dancing of this region. Aspects including ornamentation, portamento, bowing style, and rhythm which are unique to this dialect, were incorporated into melodies from the initial point of learning the music, making it easier to grasp the intricacies of this style in an authentic way. This track is an original arrangement of Gömőr melodies, that was created in collaboration with the local Hungarian dance group, and can be used for dance choreography performances; all melodies featured on this track were taught at the camp in extensive detail.

The track begins with a Csárdás (couple’s dance), slowing into a steadier tempo with the Vasvári Verbunk (men’s dance), and finishing with a fast Friss (fast couple’s dance). These different dances are heard by the contrast in rhythm within the band; the Csárdás features a smooth rhythm, the Verbunk is slightly slower and more stated, and the Friss is fast with syncopations heard between the brácsa and bógó. The change from Verbunk to Friss is signalled by the violin with 3 finishing chords before moving into a new tempo; time marks for these dances are indicated in the table below. Additional information on this track is available in Case Study 1: Gömőr, as previously discussed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Csárdás</th>
<th>Vasvári Verbunk (2.44)</th>
<th>Friss (4.11)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 - 2 - 3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 - 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x2   x2  x2</td>
<td>AABBCC</td>
<td>x1  x3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4. A representation of Track 1: Gömőr

Instrumentation: Violin, 4-stringed viola, brácsa (3-stringed), cimbalom, and bógó.
Track 2: Vajdaszentivány

The melodies featured on this track have been learnt mostly from recordings, and from musicians in Sydney band ‘The Transylvaniacs’, with whom Hot Paprika often collaborate for concerts, events, and celebrations. In January 2017, I was employed to perform with The Transylvaniacs at the Magyar Találkozó (national Hungarian convention) in Sydney, where our main role was to provide live music for the dance workshops and performances, as well as entertainment and music for evening táncház. The focus for the dance workshops was ‘Vajdaszentivány’, a village in Transylvania, and dance instructors travelled from Hungary to teach this dance and performance style. An intensive week of collaboration with The Transylvaniacs and dance experts from Hungary was highly beneficial to refining the stylistic intricacies of this dialect, as well as learning several new melodies. The convention concluded with a gala concert where the dancers presented a choreography showcasing what they had learnt; this track is the accompanying music for the choreography. This track is an original arrangement of melodies, which was created in collaboration with dance experts from Hungary for a specific choreography of Vajdaszentivány.

This track features a Verbunk, Forduló (twirling dance), Csárdás, and Cigánycsárdás (fast ‘gypsy’ dance). The changes in dance are heard by the changes in pulse from the band; this indicates to the dancers a change, which in turn affects the dance movements they employ. There is an abrupt end to the Verbunk which fits with the choreography; however, this would usually be ended with three finishing chords signalled by the violin; these would be played in rhythm with the brácsa, and not as blunt as heard in this recording. In contrast to the full sound of the other dances, the Cigancsárdás is light and features a change in texture, with the bass plucking the strings and the brácsa playing off-beat chords. In Vajdaszentivány, the cimbalom utilises harder sticks which creates a more direct, honky-tonk-like sound, as opposed to a full, lush sound heard in other dialects. The use of piano accordion provides an interesting contrast to the string sound. Another feature in this dialect as discussed in Árendás’ interview, is the chords played by the brácsa; “the viola players use just major chords, not minor chords, just major chords, no 7th chords”. The number of melodies used are depicted below, with several közjáték (K) in between which serve as joining melodies or passages.

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139 Péter Árendás, interview by Teresa Vinci, April 26, 2017, Appendix, ii.
**Verbunk** | **Forduló (1.50)** | **Csárdás (3.58)** | **Cigánycsárdás (5.24)**
--- | --- | --- | ---
1 - K - 2 - K | 1 - 2 - K | 1 | 1 - K - 1 - K - 1 - K
x2 | x1 | x1.5 | x2 | x3

Figure 5. A representation of Track 2: Vajdaszentivány

Instrumentation: Violin, brácsa (3-stringed), cimbalom, piano accordion, and bógó.

**Track 3: Bonchida**

The music from Bonchida, a village in Transylvania, characteristically has a sweet and refined sound, clean style, and features complex ornamentation in the violin. When planning the ‘Hungary Research Trip’, it was a major priority and privilege to study again with Ökrös, an expert in this dialect, in order to fully grasp the intricate ornamentation and highly nuanced style. Whilst I have been fortunate to learn several Bonchida melodies from Ökrös, Téka, and Tükrös, this was the perfect opportunity to learn the intricacies of the Invirtita, a Romanian dance from Bonchida; three Invirtita melodies are featured on this track. Whilst there are many recordings of the Invirtita available on CDs and online, this track is different in that the cimbalom plays a more prominent role, not just accompanying within the band texture. This track exhibits virtuosic displays in the cimbalom, with the whole range of the instrument utilised, and melodies embellished beautifully, complementing the ornamentation in the violin part. Both the 4-stringed viola and brácsa feature in this track, however, there was a conscious effort to ensure both musicians were playing in different registers to avoid an overlap with chords, or a heavy sound; this resulted in a balanced harmonic base. Additional information on this track is available in Case Study 3: Bonchida, as previously discussed.

| Melody 1 | Melody 2 (2.09) | Melody 3 (3.12) |
--- | --- | ---
 x2 | x1 | x2

Figure 6. A representation of Track 3: Bonchida

Instrumentation: Violin, 4-stringed viola, brácsa (3-stringed), cimbalom, and bógó.
Track 4: Ördöngösfüzes

I learnt these melodies at the 2009 Hungarian Music Camp in WA from prominent Hungarian folk band, Téka. Not only was this my first music camp, it was also my first experience in a traditional folk setting, learning aurally from Hungarian musicians. My previous experience in learning Hungarian music was by listening to recordings and utilising a small supply of available sheet music. It was a privilege to have the opportunity to learn from Téka, a renowned band who have educated generations of musicians and students in Hungary, and were instrumental in the táncház revival movement. Learning from Téka was impressionable to me and regardless of the obvious language barrier, the experience was a rewarding way to learn new music. Aspects such as bowing style and rhythms which are unique to Hungarian folk music, were incorporated into melodies at the outset of learning them, making it easier to grasp the intricacies of this style in an authentic way. Each melody was broken down into small phrases or motives, ensuring that every ornament, every nuance, every accent, every pulse, and every note was correct and true to the style. Learning in such detail from the beginning has also proved very effective in remembering these melodies over a long period of time.

This track features a progression through a series of dances; Ritka Magyar (men’s dance), Sürü Magyar (fast men’s dance), Lassú Csárdás (couple’s dance), and Sürü Csárdás (fast couple’s dance). Ördöngösfüzes features quite an interesting and heavy style, especially in the men’s dances, which is evident in the rhythmic bógó and brácsa parts. In this dialect, the bógó plays on one string only, the A string which is tuned up to a C; this means that the bass player often plays in high positions on the instrument, which in turn creates an interesting timbre. In addition to this, the use of a very short folk bow instead of the ‘classical’ long bow, allows for a rough and raw sound, characteristic of the Ördöngösfüzes style. The brácsa (3-string) provides a strong rhythmic base which complements the heavy sound of the bógó, and the violin sound also captures this more rustic feeling. Before the voice enters, often the violin will play the melody with minimal ornamentation, similar to an introduction. When the voice joins, the violin is able to embellish the melody with intricate ornaments. In addition to singing, the voice often cheers and recites small poetic phrases, in encouragement to the dancers. This dialect shares strong similarities with Case Study 2: Magyarpalatka in terms of performance style, character, ornamentation, technique, and instrumentation.
Instrumentation: Voice, violin, brácsa (3-stringed), and bógó.
Live recording from Kulcha Club, Fremantle, 2010.

**Track 5: Kalotaszeg**
These melodies have been learnt from recordings and due to their popularity amongst the dancers, Hot Paprika plays them regularly at táncház evenings. This track is a live recording from Fairbridge Festival (2013), where Hot Paprika performed and served as the live band for dance workshops for many years. It features Julianna Sackett on voice. This track is pertinent to this research study as it demonstrates many stylistic similarities with compositions of the style hongrois; these are especially evident in the Cigánycsárdás, which can be likened to the ‘Friss’ section in style hongrois compositions. The accompaniment is characterised by off-beat chords shared between the brácsa and bógó, whilst the violin plays running semiquaver passages, makes full use of the instruments range, and leads the band with fast and exciting tempi. These characteristics, performance style, and virtuosity, are traits shared by the Romani musicians, who inspired composers of the style hongrois. It also creates an image for the listener of how compositions of the style hongrois could sound if they were to be re-orchestrated or re-imagined for a folk band or Romani band setting.

The music of Kalotaszeg is smooth, easy-listening and exciting, and the dance is graceful to watch. This track begins with a Csárdás, featuring beautiful vocal melodies and intricate ornamentation in the violin; there is almost an ornament on every note, and additional embellishment, such as semiquaver passages, when the voice joins. The change into the Cigánycsárdás is signalled by three finishing chords in the violin, before a new tempo is set; the Cigánycsárdás is a fast gypsy dance which entails thigh and boot slapping from the men, captured in this recording. Kalotaszeg features complex harmonies in the accompanying chords, with the brácsa utilising different combinations, as discussed by Árendás; “in Kalotaszeg, they use many more chords, major, minor, 7th chords, diminished”. Piano accordion is also used in the music of Kalotaszeg, but is not present in this recording.

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140 Péter Árendás, interview by Teresa Vinci, April 26, 2017, Appendix, ii.
Figure 8. A representation of Track 5: Kalotaszeg

Instrumentation: Voice, violin, 2 brácsa (3-stringed), and bógó. Live recording from Fairbridge Festival, 2013.

**Track 6: Moldva**

During a study trip to Hungary and Transylvania in 2010, Hot Paprika and I had the opportunity to reconnect with Téka for some intensive lessons, focusing on music from the Moldva region. This dialect features ancient melodies from the ‘csángó’ people in eastern Romania and has an interesting instrumentation of violin, koboz (lute from Medieval times), and drum; wooden flutes known as ‘furulya’ are often utilised and give the music a distinct flavour, however they are not present in this recording. Moldva is a nice addition to our repertoire as the instrumentation provides a point of difference and variety in concert performances, as well as being versatile for táncház and children’s dance workshops. The oldest forms of circle and line dance are featured in Moldva, which are ideal for beginner or novice dancers, ensuring that everyone can participate regardless of their prior dance experiences. When performed for dancing, only one melody is played at a time, starting very slowly, and gradually getting faster and faster, until it is impossible to dance anymore; each melody corresponds to a particular dance. This dialect shares similarities with Dunántúl (Track 7) in terms of its suitability for novice dancers, and the use of Medieval instruments which deviate from the popular string band formation.

This track is an original arrangement which has been designed as a concert feature performance, and showcases a series of different melodies. It is a unique progression of melodies, which can be used for a choreography performance, but not suitable for a táncház. The different dance rhythms can be heard in the different sections (as marked in the table below), especially evident in the contrasting drum beats. In preparation for recording this CD, I revisited these melodies with Ökrös during my ‘Hungary Research Trip’, to consolidate that I was performing the melodies accurately and true to the Moldva style; in relation to bowing style, ornamentation, and rhythm.
Instrumentation: Violin, koboz, and dob (drum).

**Track 7: Dunántúl**

The music of Dunántúl is typically taught to beginners, and was in fact the first dialect of Hungarian folk music that I learnt. This track was from one of my first performances with Hot Paprika and represents our humble beginnings as a band, which in that period, had a few extra musicians. The music of Dunántúl has a simple harmonic base and often a pedal drone can be heard, especially in the Lassú; the duda (bagpipe) and tekerő (hurdy-gurdy) add a characteristic timbre, often playing the melody as well as a drone. Like Moldva, Dunántúl is perfect for táncházh and features a simple circle dance, perfect for novice dancers. Typically, the music starts out very slow, with everyone holding hands in a circle and rocking side to side. As the music gets faster, the dance steps become quicker and more complex, and eventually, the circle breaks to form a single line, like a snake weaving around the room. The informal choreography of this dance is complemented by the music, which indicates a change in dance steps. The music starts very slowly with a static accompaniment, and simple dance steps, and as the violinist introduces a new melody, the tempo gets a little faster, the accompaniment becomes more active, and the dance steps get a little more complicated. Several melodies are played, each with many repetitions, so that the dancers can adequately grasp the step before a new one is introduced; as mentioned, this dance is typically taught to novice dancers. Towards the end of the dance, dancers break off into couples for simple jumping steps, however this music is not heard in this track, as it is a concert arrangement of Dunántúl.

**Figure 10. A representation of Track 7: Dunántúl**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lassú</th>
<th>Csárdás (1.40)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 - 2</td>
<td>1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x2 x2</td>
<td>x2 x2 x2 x2 x2 x2 x2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(v) (v)</td>
<td>(v) (v) (v) (v) (v) (v)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Instrumentation: Voice, 2 violins, brácsa (3-stringed), cimbalom, duda, and bógó.


**Track 8: Magyarpalatka**

The final track of this CD is dedicated to our late singer Julianna Sackett, and is a collaboration between Hot Paprika and The Transylvaniacs. Magyarpalatka is a favourite among dancers and is always requested at tâncház evenings, with a typical set lasting up to one hour. There is a special interaction between the dancers and the musicians, especially in the men’s dance; in one dance, the violinist and dancer try to coordinate slaps in time with a break in the music, the violinist often breaking up the melody with sharp glissandi up the E-string. This is like a game, the dancer trying to trick the violinist of when he will slap, and also the violinist breaking up the music at will, trying to create lots of opportunities where the dancer has to do a slap. I have been fortunate to witness these interactions in performances by the renowned Palatka band in Hungary in 2011 and 2017, showcasing both musicians and dancers of the highest calibre.

The music of Magyarpalatka is thick and heavy, which is reflected in the instrumentation; two violins, two brácsa (3 are present in this track), and bógó, with the lowest string retuned from an A-C. The ornamentation in the violin is very expressive and complex, utilising an ornament called the ‘körülírás’, which is like a continuous turn. This track features a progression through a series of dances; Lassú (couple’s dance), Csárdás, Korcsos, and Friss. The first section, Lassú (0-4.00), is slow with an uneven lilt, elongating the 2nd and 4th beats, which is reflected in the dance steps; the couple rock from side to side, in sync with the music. As the music gets faster, the dance steps become more complex, with twirling and spinning by the women, and leg slapping by the men. The közjáték (K) are used to connect melodies but can also be used as a pivot to change keys, as heard in the Friss. Additional information on this track is available in Case Study 2: Magyarpalatka, as previously discussed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lassú</th>
<th>Csárdás (4.00)</th>
<th>Korcsos (9.03)</th>
<th>Friss (12.55)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 - 2 - 3</td>
<td>1 - K - 2 - K</td>
<td>K - 1 - K - 2 - K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x4</td>
<td>x4 x4 x3</td>
<td>x2 x3</td>
<td>x2 x1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(v)</td>
<td>(v) (v) (v)</td>
<td>(v)</td>
<td>(v)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 11. A representation of Track 8: Magyarpalatka
Instrumentation: Voice, 2 violins, 3 brácsa (3-stringed), and bógó.

Recorded in Sydney, January 2017.

G. CONCLUSION

This chapter is a thorough exploration of several dialects of Hungarian folk music, showcasing the variation evident between them, as illustrated through the performance output of this research study, the CD entitled “Never Far Away...”. The CD provides the reader with an immersive and holistic experience, and fills a gap in the literature by providing tangible examples, to facilitate a deeper understanding of the accompanying text. Case Study Analyses of Gömör, Magyarpalatka, and Bonchida, enable an in-depth exploration into the performance practices of these dialects, whilst also proving intersections and similarities with the style hongrois and Romani music. Performance practices such as ornamentation, instrumentation, bowing style, rhythm, and technique, are discussed in detail, contributing to a broader knowledge of the Hungarian folk music tradition, which can aid a more authentic performance of compositions utilising these exotic idioms. In addition, the ideas explored in this chapter can be applied when approaching an ‘Historically Informed Performance’ of compositions in the style hongrois. As detailed, there are several intersections between Hungarian folk music and the style hongrois, especially in terms of rhythm, ornamentation, performance style, and form. This chapter also details Critical Notes and Reflections regarding each CD Track, the recording process, and prior experiences and strategies in learning Hungarian folk music.

This chapter is a small representation of the rich body of Hungarian folk music, providing the reader with an opportunity to experience this oral tradition in an immersive way; this is achieved through the addition of CD recordings. There is scope for further exploration of Hungarian folk music, its history, and the unique traits that each dialect offers to the musical tradition, which would facilitate a deeper understanding of this oral tradition. Several early recordings of Hungarian folk bands are available on the National Széchényi Library\textsuperscript{141} (Hungarian National Library) website, providing a valuable resource and avenue for future research, as well as an opportunity to provide valuable triangulation with the interview data explored in the previous chapter (Chapter Three).

V. CHAPTER FIVE: HUBAY ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

The following chapter is an exploration of the style hongrois, investigating its intersections with Hungarian folk music, and shining a light on the impressive influence and contribution of the Romani musicians. The chapter discusses these intersections via a Case Study Analysis of Hubay’s composition Scènes de la Csárdá No. 5 “Hullámvó Balaton”, and gives a short background on Hubay, his compositional style, and reception history. Michaelis’ framework for the style hongrois is employed as an outline for the analysis, and the key elements examined are form, harmony, melodic material, rhythm, and ‘gypsy’ effects. The category ‘gypsy’ effects is complemented by ‘violin techniques’, as detailed by Luca Settimio Ciarla, in Maurice Ravel’s Tzigane: A link between the Classical and the Hungarian-Gypsy Traditions. In addition to the literature, this analysis is framed through the interview data collected as part of this research study, as well as personal knowledge and experiences of Hungarian folk music. This allows a unique approach to the analysis, with a broad range of sources providing pertinent insights, in addition to original observations regarding the intersections with Hungarian folk music; this also fills a gap in the existing literature. In addition to these ideas, the analysis explores how an understanding of the performance practices of both Hungarian folk music and the style hongrois, can shape an interpretation which is both informed and authentic. It is supported by interview data and the literature, whilst also drawing on additional sources, such as a recording of Hubay performing his composition, and numerous other recordings.

A. HUNGARIAN FOLK MUSIC AND THE STYLE HONGROIS

An exploration of the performance practices, history, and social factors relating to Hungarian folk music can also add value to the understanding and interpretations of compositions in the style hongrois. Both styles share a common history, audience, and ideals, therefore creating a more informed picture of the performance reception, and tastes prevalent in this time. It is probable that audiences and composers would have concurrently been exposed to both Romani and folk styles, either directly or indirectly. Thus, an understanding of Hungarian folk music can prove pertinent when interpreting works in the style hongrois, especially with particular relevance to ornamentation, rhythm, performance style, instrumentation, social dynamics, and dance elements reflected in the music. On a practical level, the explicit playing of Hungarian folk music provides a unique advantage in engaging with the intricacies of the style, whilst also gaining a physical or practical understanding.
of the inner workings of the band instrumentation. Archival footage and recordings are also readily available for an immersive experience.

The interviews of four musicians with considerable expertise in the style hongrois, raised the question, ‘would knowledge of Hungarian folk music be useful when learning and interpreting music of the style hongrois?’. All interviewees agreed it would be useful, with Szabadi expressing that folk music was the essence of the Hungarian people, and Jackson explaining the importance of understanding the motives of composers. Jackson refers specifically to the strong rhythmic aspect evident in the music, and how to approach its execution; “it’s so important to feel that rhythm, not playing metronomically but in time, that’s something that you have to feel, and that the audience has to feel as well”.  

The CD offers insight on different dialects within the folk tradition, whilst also highlighting several similarities and intersections, not only between Hungarian folk music and Romani music, but also the style hongrois. Characteristic features such as instrumentation, musical structure, rhythm, performance style, and ornamentation, display strong links between styles, leading to the conclusion that a knowledge of Hungarian folk music can in fact facilitate with interpretations of the style hongrois. The literature strongly suggests that composers found inspiration in the performances of Romani bands and condensed these ideas into a format which could be played in a classical setting by violin and piano. Interestingly, the reverse of this is occurring today, with several compositions of the style hongrois often re-orchestrated into different formats, and capable of being performed in a Romani band setting, perhaps an homage to the past; this will be explored later in the chapter in an analysis of Hubay’s Scènes de la Csárdá No. 5 “Hullámzó Balaton”.

As discussed in Chapter Four, through the exploration of different dialects as presented on the CD, there are several similarities evident between Hungarian folk music and the style hongrois. These ideas shed light on performance practices, providing a deeper understanding beyond the limitations of notation, and ultimately, contribute to the notion of ‘Historically Informed Performance’. Below is a selection of examples outlining these links and performance considerations.

**Instrumentation**

Several dialects of Hungarian folk music, such as Gömör and Bonchida, feature the same instrumentation as that of a typical Romani band, which was a source of inspiration for composers of the style hongrois. The instrumentation of violin, 4-stringed viola, cimbalom, and double bass, as well as the roles within the band dynamic are shared by both traditions, and are reflected in works

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142 Laurence Jackson, interview by Teresa Vinci, April 7, 2017, Appendix, xix.
of the *style hongrois*. Characteristic features of the band are especially evident in piano accompaniments, embodying folk elements such as ‘cimbalom-like’ flourishes and tremolos, syncopated accompaniments reminiscent of the brácsa and bógó, and the evocation of a similar flavour and timbre.

**Musical Structure**

Hungarian folk music serves as an accompaniment to folk dancing, which in turn, affects the musical structure of the music. A progression of melodies is created that flows through different tempi to accompany the dancing, often starting slowly and gradually getting faster. Several works of the *style hongrois* can be divided into sections, marked by different tempi, such as Lassú and Friss, that are reminiscent of folk dancing. Often, the compositions will start slowly and progressively get faster and faster, in a similar fashion to the Hungarian folk band which provides accompaniment for traditional dances. Composers of the *style hongrois* also sought inspiration from popular nóta melodies, which allowed for expressive delivery and improvisational qualities to shine through; this is also present in the Hungarian folk tradition, such as the hallgató songs in the Gómőr dialect.

**Rhythm**

The primary role of Hungarian folk music is to accompany dancing, emphasising the importance of a strong rhythmic base, which is created collectively by all instruments in the band, through bowing style and rhythmic pulses. These rhythms are derived from the Hungarian language, poetry, songs, and dance, and have become associated with Hungarian music, thus existing long before any compositions of the *style hongrois*. As described by Jackson, rhythm is an important element in compositions of the *style hongrois* and other works by Hungarian composers, with iconic syncopations and off-beat accompaniments becoming famously associated with the Hungarian and Romani styles. Fortunately, there are countless videos of Hungarian folk bands available online where one can experience the strength, energy, and driving force that these dance rhythms provide. The visually engaging accompaniment of the brácsa and bógó, along with the virtuosity of the cimbalom and violin, will certainly inspire and aid interpretations of compositions in the *style hongrois*.

**Ornamentation and Performance Style**

Several dialects of Hungarian folk music, such as Magyarpalatka and Bonchida, feature intricate and expressive ornamentation, which is also found in improvisatory passages in compositions of the *style hongrois*, most commonly evident in slow Lassú-like sections which occur at the beginning of these
works. The use of semiquaver passages to embellish a melody, as well as expressive portamenti, wide vibrato, and the ‘café-gypsy’ performance style, provide strong links between the Gömöri dialect and the style hongrois. Similarly, the use of semiquaver passages to showcase violin virtuosity, as seen in the Kalotaszeg dialect, offer tangible comparison to the fast Friss-like sections in compositions of the style hongrois. The drone-like piano accompaniments in slow passages not only evoke a Romani band accompanying the violin, but are reminiscent of folk instruments such as the duda (bagpipe) and tekerő (hurdy gurdy), from the Dunántúl dialect. Of course, the similarities between Hungarian folk music and the style hongrois are stronger in certain dialects, however, the intersections are undeniable.

In conclusion, by broadening one’s knowledge and experience of musical styles such as Hungarian folk music, it is possible to enrich one’s understanding of compositions of the style hongrois, and compositions of Hungarian composers, such as Bartók. In understanding the performance practices, characteristics, historical context, and performance styles associated with Hungarian folk music, one can further appreciate and recognise the idioms that inspired composers, and this can contribute to giving an authentic interpretation of compositions in the style hongrois.

B. STYLE HONGROIS: SIGNIFICANCE OF ROMANI MUSICIANS

Undoubtedly the Romani musicians had a great influence on the success of the verbunkos repertory. Their performance style, improvisational qualities, intense emotion, melodrama, technical ability, and instrumentation, all became so engrained in the music, that these characteristics became inseparable from it. Together with the verbunkos repertory, the characteristic performance style of the Romani musicians formed the style hongrois. Szabolcsi details the importance of the Romani musicians below:

The tradition of performance of the “verbunkos” was undoubtedly developed in the music of Gipsy bands. For the member of the provincial lesser nobility, who gladly amused himself listening to a “melody without words” (“hallgató-nóta”), and later to some “czardas,” it was the ideal narcotic, pliant, readily adapted to personal demands, orientally ornamented, performed as it was by Gipsy bands, in the dreamily free and capricious sparkling of extempore ornamentations and paraphrases. We must not forget the inimitable versatility of the Gipsy performer...And it was the Gipsy musicians who popularized the new music – in the village, in the Hungarian small town, and even in the Western metropolises.143

The Romani musicians brought their own flair and spirit to the local verbunkos music, offering expressions of strong Hungarian patriotic feelings and nationalism, with which audiences could identify. They were an integral part of the Hungarian national culture, and without Romani

143 Szabolcsi, A Concise History of Hungarian Music, 56.
musicians, the Hungarian culture is incomplete. Romani musicians provided constant inspiration for composers, offering a unique tonal palette and exotic Romani idioms; the Romani musicians and culture became integral to Hungarian national tradition. In a way, the Romani musicians took the music of the aristocracy, the verbunkos, and made it accessible to all people, through their unparalleled musical abilities, interpretations, and raw emotion. Michaelis explores the impact of Romani musicians, and their indispensable expressions of Hungarian nationalism through the verbunkos repertory, as seen below:

...these gypsy artists bring their own unique spirit, ornamentation, rhythms, colourings, and effects to the extant local music. It is by reworking and reweaving these extant melodic threads into a new stylised and most effective tapestry of raw musical emotion that the gypsy musicians have demonstrated their greatest talent, and made their mark.\footnote{Michaelis, "Ignoble and Irresistible: The Gypsy Presence in Violin Music, 1865-1925," 6.}

Many famous gypsy musicians, such as János Bihari, Czinka Panna, and Dankó Pista, were recognised and admired as virtuosos who embodied Hungarian national music. They exhibited amazing performing abilities, expression, and technique, with their music becoming widespread and unmatched in popularity. It was through their performances that the verbunkos music gained momentum and popularity with audiences and composers alike; “scores of verbunkos music were published from 1784 onwards in Vienna and elsewhere”,\footnote{Jonathan Bellman, "Verbunkos," in Grove Music Online, accessed September 1, 2015, Oxford Music Online.} and there were great demands in the amateur market.

Bihari was referred to as the “most important Hungarian musician of his time...a national figure of great prominence”,\footnote{Ciarla, "Maurice Ravel's "Tzigane": A Link between The classical and the Hungarian-Gypsy Traditions," 33.} who was admired and famous for his musical and technical skills. A significant influence, he played a leading role in ensuring the success of the new dance music, as his interpretations left a deep impression on many, including Liszt; “Bihari spent time in Vienna as a performer for the royal imperial court. There he met Liszt, who was one of Bihari’s greatest admirers”.\footnote{Ibid., 34-35.} Invited to perform for the royal court, banquets, and public celebrations, Bihari’s presence and influence was considerable, contributing to the success of the verbunkos as a national style. As a result of performances by Bihari and his contemporaries, the verbunkos “became the most important expression of the Hungarian musical Romanticism. It even assumed the role of the representative art of nineteenth-century Hungary, the role of national music”.\footnote{Szabolcsi, A Concise History of Hungarian Music, 57.}
Not only did the Romani musicians inspire composers through their performance prowess, they also presented composers with a new and exciting instrumentation. This was significant as it introduced composers to the possibility of new sounds, stylistic effects, techniques, and an exotic character, creating a glamorous, new sound. This introduced the possibility for a new style of virtuosic violin writing, as well as piano accompaniments which could personify the driving rhythmic forces of the Romani band. Instruments typically used were violin, viola, double bass, and cimbalom; each instrument having a different role within the band, culminating in a new exciting sound. The violin is recognised as the epitome of the ‘gypsy’ sound; in addition to endless possibilities of virtuosic effects and violin techniques, it is the closest instrument to the human voice, filled with great expressive qualities, and capable of conveying intense and deep emotions. The Romani band instrumentation was a source of inspiration for several composers, including Hubay, and these stereotypes are evident in countless compositions of the style hongrois.

C. JENŐ HUBAY: BACKGROUND

Jenő Hubay (1858 – 1937), originally known as Eugene Huber, was born in Budapest and began violin lessons with his father, Karl Huber (violinist and conductor). He made his debut performance at age 11 and from 1873, he began violin studies with Joseph Joachim in Germany for three years while taking composition lessons with Benno Härtel. Hubay then moved back to Budapest where he performed several recitals with his good friend Franz Liszt who encouraged him to perform in Paris. Hubay’s performances in Paris were highly successful and he went on to perform in France, England, and Belgium. In Paris, he formed a close rapport with Henry Vieuxtemps, who later presented Hubay for a position as Head of Violin Studies at the Brussels Conservatory, which he commenced in 1882. In 1886, he accepted a position at the Budapest Academy of Music and was the “leading figure in establishing a national violin school”. Many of his students, such as Joseph Szigeti, Zoltán Székely, Ferenc von Vecsey, Emil Telmányi, and Jelly D’Arányi became notable violinists and important figures.

Hubay undertook annual European tours for 25 years (from 1880 onwards), and in 1886, he formed the ‘Hubay Quartet’ with David Popper, which “played a significant role in Hungary’s musical culture”, and gave many premiere performances of works by Brahms.

Hubay’s compositions, such as operas, symphonies, and violin pieces, follow in the style of the “French and German instrumental culture of the nineteenth-century, in particular of Massenet

151 Gombos, “Hubay, Jenő.”
and Vieuxtemps”.\textsuperscript{152} This influence is evident in his compositions, his violin playing, and in the philosophy and style of the Hungarian Violin School. Many of Hubay’s friends, such as Pablo de Sarasate and Leopold Auer, “asked him to write virtuoso music in the Hungarian gypsy style for them to play”;\textsuperscript{153} this resulted in an abundance of violin works portraying Hungarian patriotism, thus, contributing to the body of works in the \textit{style hongrois}.

Hubay’s violin playing style was “influenced by the German and Franco-Belgian schools [but also had a] unique Hungarian character which is related to his native culture”.\textsuperscript{154} In 1879, Hubay changed his name from Huber to the more Hungarian-sounding name, Hubay.\textsuperscript{155}

### D. PREFACE TO ANALYSIS

Central to the discussion of this research study is the question of how a performer can create an authentic representation of the compositions in the \textit{style hongrois}, that is, to present an ‘Historically Informed Performance’. This is explored further with the notion that an understanding of the musical styles which influenced composers can fill gaps in knowledge, and facilitate a more informed approach. Whilst the verbunkos repertory and the rousing performances of Romani musicians are documented as the key ingredients of the \textit{style hongrois}, this study also explores the contribution and relevance of Hungarian folk music, when approaching an interpretation in this ‘gypsy style’. Issues such as ‘Historically Informed Performance’, authenticity, and the Urtext Method, are interconnected between the \textit{style hongrois}, Hungarian folk music, and Romani music, with several similarities and intersections evident between these different styles.

Koelman shared a spectacular story about his former teacher, renowned violinist Jascha Heifetz, who is considered by many as the greatest violinist of all time. Not only is it exciting to hear a personal story about such a prominent and celebrated violinist, it also relates to the central issues of this research topic regarding interpretation, authenticity, limitations of notation, the role of the performer, and to what extent the performer must adhere to the composer’s intentions. The story expresses a conversation between Heifetz and Ravel, ahead of Heifetz’s performance of \textit{Tzigane} at its premiere.

Heifetz always had these anecdotes you know. When I was playing \textit{Tzigane} he said, ‘you know I had the premier in Paris’. You hear that and you can just imagine, wow what an honour, such a famous piece, wow. At that time, it was probably not so famous. It was in Paris and Ravel was

\textsuperscript{152} Szabolcsi, \textit{A Concise History of Hungarian Music}, 81.
\textsuperscript{154} Askin, “Early Recorded Violinists,” 141.
\textsuperscript{155} Gombos, “Hubay, Jenô.”
going to come, and so Heifetz practiced a lot. Ravel came to the hotel room and there was a request that he would like to hear in advance before the concert, Heifetz playing Tzigane. So, Heifetz allowed Ravel to come and they met in the hotel room and Heifetz played. Ravel said, “If you play like this, I will walk out of the concert hall.” And during your playing when the composer walks out, it’s not so good. It was the next day, so Heifetz agreed that he would play the specific version that Ravel wrote, with all the little signs. But then also Heifetz argued that he has to sell the piece and Ravel can write it but he had to play it and sell it to the audience. So that is a strong argument. And then Heifetz played the original version at the premiere and it was a big success. Ravel didn’t walk out of the room and he had a very good review in the newspaper. Ever after, he played his own version and as he said, he was quite successful with that! So that’s the story! So why is this story so important? Heifetz was possibly the greatest violinist ever, Ravel was a very successful composer, and many years later, Tzigane is still one of the most famous violin ‘gypsy’ show pieces. This story is significant because it relates to authenticity in performance, and the limitations of written notation, as supported by comments in the interviews with the style hongrois experts. It also embodies a recurring ideology regarding interpretation and the role of the ‘performer versus composer’. What liberties, if any, can a performer take in their interpretation? The performer’s aim is to deliver and remain as true as possible to the intentions of the composer, but does this mean a complete void of individuality? Even when approaching an interpretation with the utmost respect for the composer’s intentions, it is impossible to play a literal version without letting personal experiences and opinions colour the performance. With regards to the conversation between Heifetz and Ravel, it is possible that Heifetz had seen or heard Romani musicians, been inspired by them, and tried to recreate this feeling and energy in his performance. Despite the precise detail visible in Ravel’s notation, it seems that Heifetz saw an opportunity to express his ideas and experiences drawn from past encounters with Romani musicians. The title Tzigane translates literally to ‘gypsy’, suggesting the evocative performance style of Romani musicians. It is interesting that a violinist of Heifetz’s calibre and command, a musician so highly educated and respected in his time, was not permitted to express or interpret Ravel’s work with artistic freedom. For Ravel, there was no doubt or ambiguity of how he wanted his composition to sound, and from Koelman’s story, it seems he was adamant that his music should be depicted in his way.

It is hard to answer definitively what is the correct stance to the ‘performer versus composer’ argument when approaching any composition. Furthermore, it is especially interesting when interpreting works of the style hongrois, as these pieces allude to the performances of Romani musicians, known for their improvisatory playing style and free nature, demanding from the performer a level of individuality and originality. Romani musicians are likened to jazz musicians, never playing the same phrase twice, so in this way, it is difficult to recreate something within a framework of the composer’s intentions, whilst simultaneously creating an air of free spirit and

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quasi-improvisation. Perhaps it relates more to the composer and their traditions; perhaps Ravel preferred his works to be interpreted with the precision depicted in the notation; perhaps fellow composers such as Hubay and Sarasate, were open to individual expression from the performer. Jackson explains “with Ravel, it’s coming much more from the classical, from the establishment”. To respect each composition, one should consider factors such as, but not exclusive to, nationality of composer, cultural understandings and behaviours, and traditions in order to deliver an authentic interpretation.

E. JENŐ HUBAY: SCÈNES DE LA CSÁRDA NO. 5 “HULLÁMZÓ BALATON”

INTRODUCTION

This case study analysis is supported by the existing literature, research interview data contributed by music experts in the style hongrois and Hungarian folk music, recordings, a recording of Hubay performing the composition, and a body of knowledge and personal experience pertaining to Hungarian folk music and this musical tradition. It is through this lens that Hubay’s music will be studied, with importance placed on historical and cultural context, in addition to score and recording analysis. Approaching Hubay’s music with a deep understanding of the traditions, music, and culture that influenced his life and compositional style, allows for a holistic insight into his music, filling gaps in knowledge to achieve a more informed performance.

Hubay’s compositional style was extremely varied and ranged from operas and symphonies in the style of nineteenth-century French and German instrumental culture, to virtuoso violin pieces in the style hongrois. Hubay’s friends, Sarasate and Auer, “asked him to write virtuoso music in the Hungarian gypsy style for them to play”, which resulted in an abundance of violin works in the style hongrois. He dedicated these compositions to his friends. Not only were these energetic show pieces that demonstrated the violinist’s ability and flair, they were also an homage to Hubay’s Hungarian culture and heritage, and portrayed a sense of Hungarian patriotism. Although Hubay spent much of his life outside of Hungary, he identified very strongly with being Hungarian, even changing his name from Huber to Hubay. The researcher can gain an insight into Hubay’s performance style and how he intended for his compositions to be performed by listening to his recordings. This sheds light on the liberties he allows to be taken within the score, the mood he wished to evoke, and how he himself performed these works. Many scholars have likened Hubay’s violin playing to ‘gypsy’ violinists “because his vibrato and playing habits have very important

157 Laurence Jackson, interview by Teresa Vinci, April 7, 2017, Appendix, xix.
stylistic similarities”, and a “unique Hungarian character which is related to his native culture”. The ideas discussed suggest that, perhaps the performer is not bound to the score when interpreting Hubay’s compositions of the style hongrois, but in fact free to evoke the improvisatory Romani nature that Hubay was aspiring to capture. This will be explored further with reference to Hubay’s recording of Scènes de la Csárdá No. 5 “Hullámzó Balaton”.

The prominence and reception of Hubay’s compositions in the style hongrois are noted by Jonathan Bellman in his Grove article, Csárdás; “The csárdás compositions of the violinist Jenő Hubay are particularly successful; indeed, material from his Scènes de la Csárdá No.5, Hullámzó Bálaton (op.33), is quoted outright in the famous csárdás in Act 3 of Glazunov's ballet Raymonda (1896–7).” Scènes de la Csárdá No. 5 “Hullámzó Balaton”, dedicated to friend and contemporary Sarasate, is a perfect example of the style hongrois, with Hubay effortlessly embodying the performance style, form, and violin virtuosity. The framework discussed by Michaelis in Ignoble and Irresistible: The Gypsy Presence in Violin Music 1865-1925 (2006), will be used to analyse the compositional style and performative application of Hubay’s composition, with attention to the elements which comprise the style hongrois. These include:

- Form
- Harmony
- Melodic Materials and the Gypsy Scale
- Rhythm
- 'Gypsy' Effects: Pedals and Drones, Ornamentation and Improvisation, Slides and the Emulation of the Voice, and, Pizzicato and Virtuosic Effects

In addition to Michaelis’ framework, the ‘Gypsy Effects’ category will be complemented by the several violin techniques associated with Romani playing, as detailed by Ciarla in Maurice Ravel’s Tzigane: A link between the Classical and the Hungarian-Gypsy Traditions. Vibrato, trills, slides, grace notes, harmonics, bow strokes, pizzicato, and high positions, are all characteristic features of Romani playing and adopted by several composers when aspiring to evoke this exotic ‘gypsy’ style. These musical gestures are utilised by Hubay in Scènes de la Csárdá No. 5 “Hullámzó Balaton”, creating the sound world, image, and atmosphere identified with Romani performances.

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159 Askin, “Early Recorded Violinists,” 135.
160 Ibid., 141.
These frameworks will provide direction and clarity to the analysis. The focus for the recording analysis will be ‘gypsy’ effects and rhythm; examining how portamento, choice of fingering, and expressive tempo modification can shape the interpretation and understanding of works in the style hongrois. The score analysis will refer to form, harmony, rhythm, and instrumentation; exploring how Hubay emulated the Romani character, and utilised the verbunkos repertory in his compositional style.

1. FORM

Like the verbunkos, the csárdás had slow sections (lassan or Lassú) and fast ones (friska or Friss); the former were in a heavy 4/4 metre that suggested dignity, pride and (often) grief, while the latter could achieve extremely fast tempos and was danced with abandon. As the name ‘Csárdás’ suggests, *Széncs de la Csárda No. 5 “Hullámzó Balaton”* follows the usual form of a virtuosic violin show piece in the style hongrois; a Lassú (slow) introduction evoking feelings of lament, followed by a Friss (fast) dance-like section, which displays the performer’s capabilities, through technically difficult and fast passagework. The Lassú section features many characteristics associated with the style hongrois, such as a slow 4/4 meter, a rhapsodic approach, and incorporates elements of the nóta style. In fact, it is notable that in the Lassú, there is a reference to the nóta song “Hullámzó Balaton tetején”, composed by Ferenc Sárközi (1820-1897); this is also stated in the title of the composition, *Széncs de la Csárda No. 5 “Hullámzó Balaton”*. This melody can be seen in EXAMPLE 10 below:

EXAMPLE 10: The nóta song “Hullámzó Balaton tetején”, composed by Ferenc Sárközi.

Sárközi’s “Hullámzó Balaton tetején” was first performed by Lukácsy Sándor on 2 June 1877; Hubay’s composition was composed in 1890. Sárközi, a famous Romani musician who performed

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163 Bellman, “Csárdás.”
extensively in Hungary and abroad, was considered one of the best primás of the nineteenth/twentieth centuries. Several Hungarian Romanies, including Sárközi’s band, joined the Hungarians during the War of Independence. Sárközi became the ‘Gypsy Lieutenant’ to Lajos Kossuth, conductor of the 47th Honvéd Battalion, and was promoted by Kossuth, who named him leader of all Romani musicians in the army. It is safe to conclude that Sárközi’s prominence as a performer and composer had a profound effect on composers of the time, and although there are some subtle differences with Sárközi’s melody, it is evident that Hubay is ‘quoting’ or ‘referencing’ this nóta song, in Scènes de la Csárdá No. 5 “Hullámzó Balaton”, as illustrated by EXAMPLE 11. The main melody begins at Bar 25.


Several composers ‘quoted’ these nóta tunes in their music, perhaps a quasi-popular music reference to the most prevalent melodies of the time. Another example of this compositional quotation occurs in Sarasate’s Zigeunerweisen, where the famous nóta song “There is but one lovely girl…”, composed by Elemér Szentirmay, is heard; compositions by Hubay and Lehar also quote this melody. These examples again highlight the significance and popularity of the verbunkos repertory, in particular the nóta songs, their impact on composers of the time, as well as the influence and reach of Romani musicians. The fact that Sarasate was Spanish illustrates this point further, underlining the success of the style hongrois beyond Hungary.

The form of Sárközi’s nóta song follows the common template of A - A5 (A played a fifth higher) - B - A’ (slight variation). Hubay’s quotation of this melody begins at Bar 25 and in most part, follows the same template, however, there are slight differences. Hubay uses a 4/4 metre instead of 2/4, restates the B section with slight variation (first two beats a tone lower), and ends on the dominant instead of the tonic (c = cadence). This progression is depicted in Figure 12 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>A5</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>A’</th>
<th>B’</th>
<th>A’c</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Figure 12. A representation of the form of “Hullámzó Balaton tetején”, as presented by Hubay in Scènes de la Csárda No. 5 “Hullámzó Balaton”.

As discussed previously, the nóta songs had great success with the audiences of the time as they accurately depicted the sentiments and mentality of the Hungarian people; it was music for all people, regardless of class or education. It was common for these nóta songs to depict feelings of lament or grief, as captured by Sárközi through the lyrics of “Hullámzó Balaton tetején”. These are seen below in Figure 13 with an accompanying translation, provided by Albert Mohácsy.

Hullámzó Balaton tetén
Hullámzó Balaton tetején csónakázik egy halászlegény.
Hálóját a szerencse, őt pedig a kedvese elhagyta, el a szegényt.

Hullámzó szívem a Balaton, Kis csónak rajta búbánatom.
Szerelmem a kormánya, Lelekem a vitorlája, Megtört a hullámokon.

On the Waves of the Balaton
On the waves of Lake Balaton there is a young fisherman
He doesn’t have luck with fishing and his sweetheart also left him

My heart is like the wavering Lake Balaton, there is a little boat: my sadness
The rudder is my love, the sail is my soul, broken on the waves

Figure 13. Lyrics of “Hullámzó Balaton tetején”, by Ferenc Sárközi. Translation by Albert Mohácsy.

The Friss section of Hubay’s Scènes de la Csárda No. 5 “Hullámzó Balaton” embodies the traits associated with the Csárdás form, featuring a progression of different melodies and tempi, highlighted through characteristic Romani gestures and violin techniques. Bellman explains that it is common for the Friss to comprise of more than one melody and to progress gradually from slow to

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168 Translation by Albert Mohácsy.
Both the aforementioned traits are evident in Hubay’s composition, and seen through various key changes and tempi changes. Melody 1 and Variation A are marked Allegretto Moderato in a 4/4 metre, Variation B is a quicker 4/4 tempo marked Allegro, and finally Melody 2 with Variations is marked L’istesso Tempo, however in 2/4 metre. A progression from G Major – G Minor – D Minor – G Minor – G Major – G Minor is heard throughout the Friss. These details are represented in Figure 14.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Melody 1 (Bar 42)</th>
<th>Melody 1 – Variation A (Bar 54)</th>
<th>Melody 1 – Variation B (Bar 68)</th>
<th>Melody 2 + Variations (Bar 85)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allegretto Moderato</td>
<td>Allegretto Moderato</td>
<td>Allegro</td>
<td>L’istesso Tempo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/4 metre</td>
<td>4/4 metre</td>
<td>4/4 metre</td>
<td>2/4 metre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G Major /Minor</td>
<td>D Major/Minor</td>
<td>G Major/Minor</td>
<td>G Minor – G Major – G Minor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 14. Sequence of melodies in the Friss, Scènes de la Csárda No. 5 “Hullámező Balaton”, by Hubay.

The Csárdás form as utilised by Hubay, is also reminiscent of traditional Hungarian folk music and dancing, which often follows the Lassú-Friss structure and progression, as well as the csárdás being the most common dance. Several similarities in terms of form can be drawn between Hungarian folk music and Hubay’s Scènes de la Csárda No. 5 “Hullámező Balaton”. Many dances will begin with a Lassú and feature vocal melodies, with the primás embellishing the vocal line, similar to Hubay’s use of Sárközi’s nóta song with embellishment. Hungarian folk dancing follows a natural progression from slow to fast, often moving seamlessly from the Lassú into the Friss, gaining speed until it is not possible to dance any faster. The primás will improvise a series of melodies, forming a medley which can move naturally through different key progressions, whilst reaching fast tempi. This form is emulated by Hubay in the Friss, as depicted in Figure 14 above; the violinist plays a medley of melodies, progressing through different keys, whilst gradually getting faster and faster.

2. HARMONY

The use of unconventional harmony and sudden chord changes are characteristic harmonic traits of the style hongrois, owing to the spontaneous performances of the Romani musicians. Composers embodied this idea by accompanying nóta melodies with harmonies that fit the tastes of the audiences of the time; that is, an audience who was accustomed to the Romani orchestra accompaniments. The harmonic base for nóta melodies differed from the Hungarian folk melodies,

\[\text{169 Bellman, “Toward a Lexicon for the Style Hongrois,” 217.}\]
with the nóta melodies rooted in the Romani orchestra accompaniment. These sentiments are detailed by Sárosi below:

Although externally the melodic form of the popular song strongly resembles that of the new folk songs, it is not difficult to perceive how removed its melody is from folk song. Its main distinctive feature is its strong harmonic base: the turns of melody virtually dictate the accompanying chords – the chord sequences and accompaniment clichés well known from gypsy orchestras. Such accompaniments are inconceivable with folk songs, especially the old-style ones.\(^{170}\)

Romani musicians were known to use unconventional harmonies and abrupt key changes, perhaps indicating a change in mood or emotion, or a bid to shock and capture their audience. It was questioned whether this was due to a lack of education, ignorance, or more rather, whether it was a tactic to enthral and entertain audiences. Michaelis explores this idea in the following quote:

Liszt attributed this wild creativity to a blissful ignorance of the rules of functional harmony. However, the true explanation might well indicate more savvy than naïveté. For a creative musician hoping to perform an extant repertory of dances in such a way as to leave his audience awestruck, something original is needed.\(^{171}\)

Pethő explores these ideas further by explaining the principles of harmonic structure of compositions in the *style hongrois*.

The harmony of these pieces can be briefly summed up. It moved within the frames of a stabilized major-minor tonality even if it was at places enriched by a Lydian turn or one including an augmented second which brings some exotic, Hungarian colour. The harmonic progressions accompanying melodies were rudimentary, almost restricted to the basic functions (T-S-D) only. In the piano score, the harmonic process is ensured by the simple chordal accompaniment of the left hand.\(^{172}\)

Hubay’s *Scènes de la Csárda* No. 5 “**Hullámzó Balaton**” embodies the characteristic harmonic traits of the *style hongrois* as detailed by Sárosi, Michaelis, and Pethő. It features a major-minor tonality with occasional Romani and folk colourings, a simple chordal piano accompaniment, and abrupt chord changes in the Friss. Also worth noting, is the harmonisation of Sárközi’s nóta song, “**Hullámzó Balaton tetején**”, which follows the typical sequences and “accompaniment clichés” associated with the Romani orchestras.

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\(^{170}\) Sárosi, *Folk Music*, 57.


3. **MELODIC MATERIAL AND THE ‘GYPSY’ SCALE**

Hubay utilises Sárközi’s nóta melody, “Hullámzó Balaton tetején”, as the main melodic material for the Lassú, creating the perfect focus for this section and capturing the ideal ethos. In fact, the ten-bar piano introduction which opens the work states the melodic material linked to the lyrics “Hullámzó Balaton tetején” five times, creating a sombre mood; these lyrics are available in EXAMPLE 10. EXAMPLE 12 features two statements of the melodic material linked to these lyrics.

EXAMPLE 12: Hubay, *Scènes de la Csárdá* No. 5 “Hullámzó Balaton”, Bar 1-4.173

![EXAMPLE 12](image)

A strong and declamatory violin enters at Bar 11, displaying characteristic emotions of dignity and lament often associated with the Lassú section, as well as demonstrating several typical Romani gestures. Prior to the quotation of “Hullámzó Balaton tetején”, Hubay employs several violin techniques associated with the Romani performance style to exploit the expressive capabilities of the violin, in order to evoke this exotic spirit and character. He utilises high registers of the violin to achieve a rich and expressive quality, covers the full range of the violin with fast flourishes, employs slides as indicated by fingerings in the score, and uses harmonics for an ethereal quality. Hubay aspired to emulate the Romani style in his melodic material and many instances are evident in the Lassú alone; see EXAMPLE 13 shown below. The violinist is instructed to play ‘sul sol’ (on the G string) expressively, followed by a rapid semiquaver run, beginning high to low on the G string, before progressing through different registers and arriving at a high E harmonic, at the top of the violin range.

173 Jenő Hubay, *Scènes de la Csárdá pour Violon avec accompagnement d’Orchestre ou de Piano* (Breslau: Julius Hainauer, 1890), 1.

The violinist plays unaccompanied in Bar 15-17, allowing for absolute freedom and musical expression, and although there are no tempo markings, rubato is a must. However, if passages such as this one are performed exactly as written, and not with an improvisatory and free nature, it is likely the music will sound stale and rudimentary. This view is echoed by Michaelis who states, “these gestures need to sound fresh and inspired, and the danger, as Liszt himself pointed out, is that once it is committed to paper, the flourish can lose its drama”. Considering this view, passages such as these should be performed and interpreted in a way which captures the spontaneity and improvisatory nature of Romani musicians, not necessarily playing exactly as ‘committed to paper’. This is a fine example of how Hubay’s melodic material mirrors the dramatic Romani style; it is an homage to the improvisatory Romani flourishes and the spirited performance nature of Romani musicians, quasi-transcribed by Hubay. Hubay’s treatment of melodic material is aligned with the *style hongrois*, utilising both elements of the verbunkos repertory and a successful embodiment of the improvisatory Romani style.

A common characteristic associated with melodic material in compositions of the *style hongrois*, is the use of the ‘gypsy’ scale; the augmented-2nds evoke a distinct ‘gypsy’ character. This is evident in EXAMPLE 13 above, heard between the Bb and C#, however there is not an abundance of this feature in *Scènes de la Csárda No. 5 “Hullámzó Balaton*. EXAMPLE 14 illustrates the ‘gypsy’ scale starting on A; augmented-2nds are seen between C-D# and F-G#. Further examples of the ‘gypsy’ scale in notable compositions of the *style hongrois* are evident further into the chapter in EXAMPLE 35 (Bar 4) and EXAMPLE 36 (Bar 7).

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174 Hubay, *Scènes de la Csárda No.5*, 2.
To colour the melodic material, Hubay employs several typical Romani elements and gestures in Scènes de la Csárdá No. 5 “Hullámzó Balaton”, including the ‘Kuruc-fourth’. This is “a rebounding figure that alternates between the fifth scale degree and the tonic...the sound of it evokes a great feeling of Hungarian national pride of the Kuruc period”. There are several examples of the Kuruc-fourth in the violin part, often played with harmonics, such as Bar 20, 22, 58, and 65-66. This gesture is illustrated in EXAMPLE 15.

Another characteristic Romani gesture evident in Hubay’s melodic material is the use of harmonics in melodies. Ciarla states that “playing a melody or a portion of it in harmonics is a favourite Gypsy variation”; an idea which is adopted by Hubay. This can be seen in the Friss, Bar 147-154, where the violin ceases playing semiquaver runs and instead performs the melodic passage, previously heard in the piano accompaniment, utilising artificial harmonics. This is depicted in EXAMPLE 16.

EXAMPLE 14: The ‘gypsy’ scale.\(^{176}\)

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\(^{176}\) Sárosi, *Folk Music*, 31.

\(^{177}\) Ciarla, “Maurice Ravel’s "Tzigane": A Link between The classical and the Hungarian-Gypsy Traditions,” 67.

\(^{178}\) Hubay, *Scènes de la Csárdá No.5*, 3.

\(^{179}\) Ciarla, “Maurice Ravel’s "Tzigane": A Link between The classical and the Hungarian-Gypsy Traditions,” 38.
EXAMPLE 16: Hubay, Scènes de la Csárdá No. 5 “Hullámzó Balaton”, Bar 147-154.\textsuperscript{180}

Hubay’s melodic material, especially the treatment of fast semiquaver passages in the violin, is reminiscent of the verbunkos music, Romani performances, and Hungarian folk music. Bellman explains the significance of these passages, stating, “the virtuoso running notes of the faster sections became central to the so-called style hongrois, the evocation of Hungarian Gypsy repertories and performance styles by (primarily) Austro-German composers”.\textsuperscript{181} This is evident in the Friss, particularly Bar 123-146 and Bar 155-176, where the violin performs virtuosic semiquaver passages whilst accompanied by the driving ‘off-beats’ in the piano accompaniment; reminiscent of both Romani bands and Hungarian folk bands. This is depicted in EXAMPLE 17.

EXAMPLE 17: Hubay, Scènes de la Csárdá No. 5 “Hullámzó Balaton”, Bar 155-164.\textsuperscript{182}

\textsuperscript{180} Hubay, Scènes de la Csárdá No.5, 5.
\textsuperscript{181} Bellman, “Verbunkos.”
\textsuperscript{182} Hubay, Scènes de la Csárdá No.5, 5.
Related to these virtuosic semiquaver passages, is the use of *figura*, a gesture which is reminiscent of Hungarian folk music, verbunkos music, and Romani repertories. In the early verbunkos music, several pre-cadential and cadential patterns were used as the building blocks within melodies; Pethő describes that “the musical material filling the formal frames was nothing but a set of some typical melodic turns, melodic “building blocks” or patterns in the narrow sense of the phrase”.\(^{183}\) The *figura* is related to these pre-cadential and cadential gestures, but differs in that it is a motif-repeating coda. There is a strong link to Hungarian instrumental folk music, in particular the *duda* (bagpipe) music, where *aprája* (fragments music) would be performed as interludes to vary the music. Sárosi explains:

There was a time when the bagpiper played throughout the whole wedding. During the long dances he never ran short of melodies, but the frequent repetition of bagpipe songs was monotonous. The *interlude* served in part to alleviate boredom – an undistinguished piece of music with motivic repetition and a loose structure, it brought musical respite, as it were, between the bagpipe songs. Bartók’s bagpiper performers in Komárom County called this interlude music consisting of small units, *aprája* (fragments music).\(^{184}\)

These ideas are also echoed by Pethő who identifies the *duda-aprája, apraja*, and *aprózás* as “an embellished musical section which functions as an interlude or a coda. Used equally by bagpipes and fiddlers”.\(^{185}\) Violin passages featuring the *figura* gesture are prevalent in Hubay’s *Scènes de la Csárdá No. 5 “Hullámzó Balaton*”, as seen in the Friss. Typically, these figurative sections are “characterised by a narrow tonal range, plenty of figurations, high register and motivic repetition”,\(^{186}\) as seen in Bar 91-94, Bar 133-137, and Bar 155-162. Hubay embodies this idea by embellishing a simple melodic line with *figura*, in a sequential pattern. This can be seen in EXAMPLE 18 below:

EXAMPLE 18: Hubay, *Scènes de la Csárdá No. 5 “Hullámzó Balaton”,* Bar 91-94.\(^{187}\)

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\(^{184}\) Sárosi, *Folk Music*, 142.


\(^{186}\) Ibid.

\(^{187}\) Hubay, *Scènes de la Csárdá* pour Violon avec accompagnement, 5.
This example is also reminiscent of Hungarian folk ornamentation where melodic notes are often embellished by trills and turns; in this case, Hubay notates this ‘ornamentation’ in full, but perhaps it would have been quasi-improvised by folk musicians, or notated differently. In Bar 163-168, the figura is repeated again, this time displaying the coda function as the work draws to a close; however, only the second half of the figura is heard in a sequential pattern. This is demonstrated in EXAMPLE 19 below:

EXAMPLE 19: Hubay, *Scènes de la Csárdá No. 5 “Hullámzó Balaton”*, Bar 163-167.\(^{188}\)

Another similarity between Hubay’s treatment of the *style hongrois* and Hungarian folk music, can be seen in EXAMPLE 20 and EXAMPLE 21. In Chapter Four, the discussion mentioned the several dialects of Hungarian folk music, with particular attention and exploration of the Gömör dialect. The Gömöri ornamentation is pertinent to this section as it relates to Hubay’s melodic material; both *Scènes de la Csárdá No. 5 “Hullámzó Balaton”* and Gömör share a chromatic gesture, which serves to introduce an upcoming melody. In EXAMPLE 20, a chromatic figure is played, introducing the main melody and thus setting the mood.

EXAMPLE 20: Hubay, *Scènes de la Csárdá No. 5 “Hullámzó Balaton”*, Bar 23-27.\(^{189}\)

Similarly, the same gesture is seen in the following hallgató melody from the Gömör dialect; it functions as an introduction to the main melody of the Csárdás. EXAMPLE 21 illustrates the chromatic figure below, further demonstrating the similarities and intersections between Hungarian folk music and Hubay’s treatment of the *style hongrois*.

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\(^{188}\) Hubay, *Scènes de la Csárdá No.5*, 5.
\(^{189}\) Ibid., 2.
EXAMPLE 21: Extract of Gömör hallgató melody, “Az én ökröm a Virág” (assume treble clef).

The entire melody can be seen in EXAMPLE 5 in the Case Study Analysis 1: Gömör. The original excerpt notates a treble clef at the beginning of the melody which is not repeated in any consequent staff and, therefore, is assumed to be carried throughout the piece.

Hubay often evokes the instrumentation of both the Romani band and Hungarian folk band, embodying these exotic sounds in his treatment of the melodic material. The following example (EXAMPLE 22), demonstrates the intersections between these musical styles with the style *hongrois*, with Hubay evoking the cimbalom, as seen in the piano accompaniment. A characteristic effect associated with the cimbalom is the tremolo, which adds a colourful character and interesting timbre to the music. This tremolo effect can be seen mimicked in the piano accompaniment in Hubay’s *Scènes de la Csárda* No. 5 “Hullámzó Balaton” in Bar 37-41, depicted in EXAMPLE 22 below. Whilst the right-hand plays these tremolos, the left-hand plays chords, some arpeggiated, with frequent use of the Pedal marked in the score; this creates a lush blend of sound and condenses the texture, reminiscent of the cimbalom player and the gestures they employ.

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190 Varsányi, Gömöri Népzene, 35.
4. RHYTHM

Rhythm is an iconic feature in compositions of the style hongrois, creating excitement, momentum, and energy through the use of dynamic rhythmic patterns, which are derived from the verbunkos repertory and the Hungarian language. Rhythmic patterns such as syncopations, also known as ‘alla zoppa’ (Italian for ‘limping’), and dotted rhythms, are linked to the Hungarian language, where the first syllable has the emphasis and is accented. This connection to the Hungarian language underlines the importance of the verbunkos repertory, in that, many compositions were inspired by nőta songs, song lyrics, and the inflections of the human voice. Hubay’s Scènes de la Csárdá No. 5 “Hullámzó Balaton”, is a recipe for success in capturing the spirit and essence of the style hongrois, created through a strong rhythmic base. His composition is overflowing with examples of pertinent rhythmic features, driving syncopations, dotted rhythms, running semiquaver passages evoking ‘gypsy’ virtuosity, and éstam accompaniments, where the alternating left-hand and right-hand of the piano accompaniment mimic both the Hungarian folk and Romani band instrumentation.

Although Scènes de la Csárdá No. 5 “Hullámzó Balaton” is scored for violin and piano, Hubay captures the spirit of these exotic musical styles and their associated instrumentations, through the use of rhythmic patterns, and the roles he assigns to each instrument in his compositional style. The violin is the primás leading the piano through various tempo changes, displaying expressive moments in the Lassú, and virtuosity and flair in the Friss. On the other hand, the piano

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¹⁹¹ Hubay, Scènes de la Csárdá pour Violon avec accompagnement, 2.
accompaniment fulfils the role of the ‘band’, and is often reminiscent of the role of the brácsa and bógó combined into one, accompanying the violin with various syncopated and driving rhythmic patterns. Hubay utilises several rhythmic features in Scènes de la Csárdá No. 5 “Hullázmó Balaton” in order to captivate the audience and embody the Romani style; these will be discussed further in specific categories with musical examples.

**Syncopations – ‘Alla zoppa’**

Syncopations are perhaps the most recognisable rhythmic feature associated with compositions in the *style hongrois* and are highly effective, creating momentum and an air of excitement. The short-long-short pattern, with the first ‘short’ accented, is iconic, and several examples can be heard in the piano accompaniment. Syncopations are evident in the Friss in the piano part, alternating between the left and right hands, as seen in Bar 68-70 (EXAMPLE 23), and in the left-hand in Bar 139-141 (EXAMPLE 24).

**EXAMPLE 23:** Hubay, *Scènes de la Csárdá* No. 5 “Hullázmó Balaton”, Bar 68-70.

**EXAMPLE 24:** Hubay, *Scènes de la Csárdá* No. 5 “Hullázmó Balaton”, Bar 137-141.

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193 Ibid., 7.
The ‘alla-zoppa’ syncopation is versatile in that it not only serves a rhythmic purpose, but also a melodic one, proving functional in both slow and fast tempi. Ciarla reiterates this idea; “In melodic uses, the syncopation creates attention by virtue of the sudden stop. In faster music, it produces a typical dance rhythm.” The examples above showcase Hubay’s use of the ‘alla-zoppa’ syncopation in the Friss, creating the characteristic dance rhythms and energy of the style hongrois, as well as alluding to performances by Romani and folk musicians, who offered compositional inspiration. However, Hubay also utilises this rhythmic pattern in the Lassú, creating a very different character. This idea will be explored further in the section, ‘Evoking the Instrumentation of the Romani Band through Rhythm’.

**Hungarian Anapest**

The Hungarian anapest, an accented short-short-long pattern, is another characteristic rhythmic pattern often featured in works of the style hongrois. Hubay utilises this rhythmic pattern in the piano accompaniment, as seen in EXAMPLE 25 below:

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EXAMPLE 25: Hubay, Scènes de la Csárdas No. 5 “Hullámzó Balaton”, Bar 91-94.195
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**Dotted Rhythms**

Dotted rhythms are common in works of the style hongrois, due to a strong link with the verbunkos repertory and the Hungarian language, mimicking the natural inflections of speech. Hubay’s use of dotted rhythms such as short-long and the inverse, long-short, are evident in the Lassú, creating a feeling of lament or grief; this is demonstrated by the violin in Bar 13 and Bar 19. Towards the end of the Lassú, the violin plays a more emphatic and expressive statement of this dotted rhythm (Bar 37), with the piano joining in Bar 39 for a dramatic ending in rhythmic unison. This is demonstrated in EXAMPLE 26.

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194 Ciarla, "Maurice Ravel’s ”Tzigane”: A Link between The classical and the Hungarian-Gypsy Traditions,” 61.
195 Hubay, Scènes de la Csárdas pour Violon avec accompagnement, 5.
Related to these dotted rhythms is the choriambus, a long-short-short-long pattern which is prevalent in the style hongrois and performances of Romani musicians. An example of the choriambus can be seen in EXAMPLE 26 above, in Bar 37 and Bar 39.

**Rhythmic Patterns Interrupted by Improvisation**

In addition to the dynamic rhythmic features of the style hongrois, another way to captivate the audience in the Friss was to juxtapose these upbeat sections with free improvisational passages. This was also an homage to the performance style of the Romani musicians, who were famed for their improvisation skills, ornamentation, spontaneity, and expressive musical qualities. This idea of using ‘interrupting improvisational passages’ and its success, is echoed by Michaelis; “these rhythmic gestures exploding with energy and motion are particularly effective when juxtaposed with plodding éstam (straight quarter notes alternating between the bass and treble) accompaniments, or interrupted by momentary flights of improvisational fancy”.

Hubay employs this gesture in Bar 95-102, and then again at Bar 110-117, interrupting the first statement of a new melody with moments of ‘gypsy improvisation’ and expression. Violin and piano play together in rhythmic unison for the first 6 bars (Bar 85-90), before the violin commences an ascending semiquaver motif, driven by a more active piano accompaniment. Once the climax is reached, the piano provides an accompaniment of block drone chords, whilst the violin indulges in a moment of ‘improvisational fancy’, covering the violin range with rapid scale passages and artificial harmonics. This passage is seen in EXAMPLE 27.
Hubay is able to recreate the spirit and energy of a Romani performance through this rhythmic gesture, and the score depicts an image of the improvisational qualities characteristic of Romani musicians. True to the style hongrois, not only are the iconic fast syncopations and rhythms captured, but also the full spectrum of emotions, expressions, and improvisational qualities associated with the Romani musicians.

198 Hubay, Scènes de la Csárda pour Violon avec accompagnement, 5.
**Evoking the Instrumentation of the Romani Band through Rhythm**

The instrumentation of the Romani band influenced many composers, offering an exotic sound world and a contagious energy, resulting in several compositions in the *style hongrois*. Constant off-beat accompaniments and syncopated ‘alla-zoppa’ rhythms, provided by the viola and bass, often juxtapose the straight rhythms of the violin melodies; this is seen in both slow and fast tempi, Lassú and Friss alike. Hubay emulates the roles associated with the Romani instrumentation, with many examples evident in his composition.

The nóta melody “*Hullámzó Balaton tetején*” quoted in the Lassú section, captures the essence of the Romani instrumentation, with the piano accompaniment mimicking the roles of the viola and bass. The right-hand is reminiscent of the viola role, playing syncopations and off-beat chords, whilst the left-hand fills the bass role, steadily playing the main beats of each bar. An identifiable feature associated with Hungarian music is the ‘off-beat’, which is evident even in slow music, as seen in this Lassú. This creates momentum and a full body of sound in the accompaniment, which juxtaposes the straight rhythms played by the violin. It also allows for expressive tempo modification and rubato in the violin, as there is a very natural ‘push and pull’ created through this accompaniment. The fact that Hubay chose to accompany this beautiful nóta melody with the plodding syncopated piano part, shows a strong link to the verbunkos repertory, the Romani band instrumentation, and also Hungarian folk music. This idea of off-beats was discussed by Richards in relation to Hungarian folk music, which shares several similarities with the Romani instrumentation and roles within the Romani band. The following is an excerpt from Richards’ interview:

> ...the other thing that’s really key to the Hungarian music is the focus on the off-beat, I don’t think there’s any other kind of music where the off-beat is so important. Not only when you’re playing fast music, but also when you’re playing slow music, that constant feel of the off-beat...  

This feature of juxtaposing the violin melody with a syncopated off-beat accompaniment, is heard in Bar 25-36. An extract from this melody can be seen in EXAMPLE 28.

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199 Mark Richards, interview by Teresa Vinci, April 4, 2017, Appendix, x.
Along with syncopation, off-beats are easily recognisable and associated with performances of Romani musicians, and compositions in the *style hongrois*. Friss sections are filled with virtuosic running semiquaver passages in the violin, encouraged to play faster and faster by the driving motion of the viola and bass off-beats. This accompaniment creates excitement and energy guaranteed to capture and please the audience, listening on the edge of their seats until the music ends in a big flourish. Hubay employs this gesture in the Friss, as seen in the piano accompaniment in Bar 128-139, and Bar 155-168. Once again, the right hand fills the viola role, and the left hand fills the bass role, mimicking the instrumentation and roles in the Romani band. These driving off-beats are juxtaposed by running semiquaver passages in the violin, a characteristic feature of the Csárdás. This is demonstrated in EXAMPLE 29.


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**Rhythmic Variation**

Hubay employs rhythmical variation in his treatment of the first melody in the Friss, emulating the technical capabilities and various bowing styles employed by the Romani performers. It is common for the Friss to be constructed from a medley of melodies, and in this case, the first melody is played three times, employing both rhythmical and melodic variation. In the first two statements of the melody, the piano accompaniment plays the melody whilst the violin embellishes, aligned with true

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201 Ibid., 6.
Romani style; the violinist often embellishes the melody when there is a singer, or when more than one violinist is playing the melody. From Bar 42-53, the violin is heard embellishing the melody through semiquaver passages, arpeggios, and string crossings quintuplets, covering the range of the violin. In the next statement of the melody at Bar 54-66, the violin embellishes the melody with ascending and descending triplet arpeggios. Examples of these rhythmic variations are seen in EXAMPLE 30 and EXAMPLE 31, below:

EXAMPLE 30: Hubay, Scènes de la Csárdá No. 5 “Hullámzó Balaton”, Bar 46-47. 202

EXAMPLE 31: Hubay, Scènes de la Csárdá No. 5 “Hullámzó Balaton”, Bar 55-57. 203

Undeniably, rhythm is such an important feature of compositions in the style hongrois, and in general, a defining element associated with Hungarian music. The use of rhythmic gestures associated with the Hungarian language, combined with syncopations and varied accentuation patterns, culminates in an energy that is effective and contagious in performance. With strong roots to the Hungarian language and the verbunkos repertory, and brought to life by the performances of charismatic Romani musicians, it is a winning formula. These rhythmic gestures provide excitement, drama, and accessibility, managing to captivate and entertain audiences, still to this day.

202 Hubay, Scènes de la Csárdá pour Violon avec accompagnement, 3.
203 Ibid.
5. ‘GYPSY’ EFFECTS

Defining features of compositions in the style hongrois are the ‘gypsy’ effects and gestures associated with the performances of Romani musicians, which create the spirit, emotion, drama, and energy characteristic of these works. In the nineteenth century, Romani musicians were employed to play at cafés and bars and it became a commercial enterprise for them; people would request nóta songs and music of the verbunkos repertory, and so the Romani musicians would entertain the locals with familiar music. Understandably, it would be difficult to remember such a vast repertoire, so being able to improvise was a crucial and lucrative skill, one by which Romani musicians are highly regarded. The Romani musicians would add their own flair, energy, and raw emotion to the local music, which along with several performance techniques, were crucial to developing the style hongrois. The use of improvisation, virtuosic techniques, and effects shown by the Romani musicians, contributed to this musical style, just as much as the Hungarian music itself.

Through score analysis and critical reflection of recordings, it is possible to explore the various ‘gypsy’ effects employed by Hubay in his composition, Scènes de la Csárdá No. 5 “Hullázmó Balaton”. It is especially fortunate that there is a recording available of Hubay204 performing his composition, as this allows an insight into how he intended his composition to be interpreted, and what, if any, liberties the performer may take in their interpretation of the work. It also allows for further investigation of the performative qualities of the Romani style, as imagined and recreated by the composer. The following sections will make reference to Hubay’s recording and his treatment of the ‘gypsy’ effects, as seen in his composition. Hubay made the recording in 1933 at age 75.

Slides (Portamenti) and the Emulation of the Voice

The Lassú section centres around the simple nóta melody, “Hullázmó Balaton tetején”, but through Hubay’s use of portamenti, expressive tempo modification, and his choice of fingering, it is transformed into a melody full of expressive moments. The manner in which Hubay utilises portamenti and performs the nóta melody, as heard in his recording of Scènes de la Csárdá No. 5 “Hullázmó Balaton”, conveys a very natural shape and imitates the natural inflections of the human voice. Expressive slides, which are facilitated through Hubay’s indications of fingering, symbolise sighs of the human voice and emotions of lament, contributing to the ethos associated with the Lassú and the verbunkos repertory; examples include Bar 19, Bar 26 (3rd finger-3rd finger), Bar 29 (4th-4th), and Bar 30-32. An expressive slide as indicated by Hubay’s fingerings, can be seen in EXAMPLE 32.

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EXAMPLE 32: Hubay, Scènes de la Csárdá No. 5 “Hullámzó Balaton”, Bar 19.\textsuperscript{205}

In the score, fingerings have been marked to facilitate expressive portamenti, as well as indicating the colour and mood Hubay intended, allowing the performer to achieve an expressive quality and to personify the Romani character. Examples where Hubay specifies a fingering for the performer, resulting in an expressive slide, include Bar 19, 21, 26, and 29-33. In several instances, such as Bar 29-33, Hubay’s indicated fingerings help the performer to achieve the sighing gestures, intense emotion, and expressions associated with the human voice, as well as the evocative performances of the Romani musicians, characteristic to the style hongrois. An example of Hubay’s indicated fingering can be seen in EXAMPLE 33, below:

EXAMPLE 33: Hubay, Scènes de la Csárdá No. 5 “Hullámzó Balaton”, Bar 28-31.\textsuperscript{206}

However, as a result of the recording age, modern performance practices and standards, and expectations of perfect intonation, performers of today would likely be deterred from employing some of the fingerings that Hubay indicates; these would probably be substituted for a safer or more reliable fingering. For example, in Bar 21 (EXAMPLE 34), Hubay suggests a shift from 4\textsuperscript{th}-4\textsuperscript{th} finger and sustaining for almost 4 beats; today, 4\textsuperscript{th} finger would probably be avoided when sustaining such a long and expressive note, 3\textsuperscript{rd} finger is the likely choice for superior accuracy and expressive capabilities. It is also seen as risky to shift 4\textsuperscript{th}-4\textsuperscript{th}, as the intonation could be unreliable, and the movement not as free and relaxed; shifting 4\textsuperscript{th}-3\textsuperscript{rd} would be a better option.

\textsuperscript{205} Hubay, Scènes de la Csárdá No.5, 2.
\textsuperscript{206} Ibid.
In saying this, today’s habits aside, Hubay’s motivation for these fingerings is evident through the stylistic mood and character that he is able to create. Although these are not necessarily fingerings that violinists would choose to employ today had they not been marked in the score, they are certainly effective at coaxing the desired character and mood of this Lassú section, as well as being in line with early nineteenth-century practice.

Portamento is discussed in many treatises as an expressive device which was employed to imitate and emulate the voice. Although this was common vocal practice in the early nineteenth-century, it also relates to folk singing and folk music, as most melodies are based on vocal songs which are then embellished by the violin. Over-use of portamento was discouraged by scholars as it led to the music sounding like a caricature or false, resulting in a loss of the expressive quality. In saying this, the nature and character of the music could determine the frequency and subtlety of portamenti used; violinists performing compositions in the style hongrois could be more liberal in an attempt to evoke the Romani style.

Ornamentation and Improvisation

Ornamentation is another defining feature of compositions in the style hongrois, with composers often notating intricate patterns of tiny notes, embellishing an overall melody. This idea links to the extravagant performances of Romani musicians, who were known to freely embellish melodies, employing a variety of effects, ornaments, and bowing techniques. Improvisation was certainly linked to this, with each performance being a new interpretation, a view which was echoed by Tóth; “…they had a special way of playing with lots of improvisation, they never played twice the same, just like in jazz”.

It is common for composers to notate several turns, trills, and ornaments, of which the Romani musicians likely improvised at each performance. Therefore, it is fair to conclude that in performing the notated ornamentation, a level of improvisation is required of the performer. When considering compositions of the style hongrois, the famous opening of Sarasate’s Zigeunerweisen immediately comes to mind. The violinist channels the technical prowess of the

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207 Hubay, Scènes de la Csárda No.5, 2.
208 Erika Tóth, interview by Teresa Vinci, April 21, 2017, Appendix, xxvi.
Romani musicians, embellishing a declamatory melody by performing rapid scales and arpeggios, covering the full range of the violin. This is seen in EXAMPLE 35 below:

EXAMPLE 35: Sarasate, Zigeunerweisen, Bar 1-11.  

In Sarasate’s composition, there is an inscription which instructs the performer to embody the improvisatory character of the ‘gypsy’ musicians as much as possible. It states –

It is impossible to express in words the manner of performing this Composition. The interpretation is to be free and the Character of Zingara (Gipsy) Music improvised as much as the ability of the performer will admit.  

In works of the style hongrois, the performer is able to showcase their virtuosic technique and expressive abilities through ornamentation, which in turn aids an improvisatory approach. Several of Hubay’s compositions feature a Lassú section like Sarasate’s Zigeunerweisen, where the score indicates intricate passages of ornamentation; these include Scènes de la Csárda No. 2, Scènes de la Csárda No. 7, Scènes de la Csárda No. 8, and Scènes de la Csárda No. 9. An example of Hubay’s ornamentation can be seen in EXAMPLE 36.

209 Sarasate, Zigeunerweisen, 2.
210 Ibid.
In comparison, *Scènes de la Csárdá No. 5 “Hullámzó Balaton”* has a subtler opening, focusing instead on mood, expressive tone, and evoking emotions of sadness and lament. However, there is still an opportunity for ornamentation and improvisation, which is expertly demonstrated by Hubay in his recording. He embellishes the nóta melody by adding extra ornaments, such as in Bar 30 and 34, as well as shaping the melody through his use of expressive tempo modification. Below is an annotation of Hubay’s performance; the purple markings indicate a fluctuation in tempo, added ornaments, and a slightly slower tempo in Bar 35 (indicated by a backwards arrow). Green markings show Hubay’s use of portamenti; the most emphatic portamento is heard in Bar 34, where Hubay combines a wide vibrato and slow portamento, for maximum expressive effect. This is an exaggerated musical gesture characteristic of Romani performances. An illustration of these ideas is seen in EXAMPLE 37 below:

EXAMPLE 37: Hubay, *Scènes de la Csárdá No. 5 “Hullámzó Balaton”*, Bar 23-36.212

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212 Hubay, *Scènes de la Csárdá No.5*, 2.
There is certainly an element of individuality and improvisation heard in Hubay’s playing, especially when he employs expressive portamenti and tempo modification for maximum dramatic effect; this is also evident in the score through his indications of fingerings, although the rubato is not always indicated. In addition, improvisation is an important element associated with the style hongrois, and is reminiscent of how the Romani musicians would perform.

Hubay’s Scènes de la Csárdá No. 5 “Hullámzó Balaton” utilises grace notes and trills in the violin part, and lower-neighbour grace notes in the piano part, to evoke the Romani idiom. Hubay embellishes the melody of the right-hand piano in Bar 139-146, with a semitone upward grace note to each melody note. This effect emulates the slides of the Romani violinist and the expressive capabilities of the human voice; it also creates drama when there is a temporary clash with other notes.

EXAMPLE 38: Hubay, Scènes de la Csárdá No. 5 “Hullámzó Balaton”, Bar 142-146.

Although much can be gained from score analysis and listening to recordings of other performers, hearing Hubay’s interpretation provides the listener with a deeper insight into how he intended his composition to be interpreted. The performance style, added ornaments, wide vibrato, expressive tempo modification, and emotion, directly link the researcher to Hubay, and his strong national feelings associated with the style hongrois. Through Hubay’s recording, the researcher is transported to a past time in history and invited to experience the ‘old-school’ violin sound of the nineteenth century, a sound which is not as ‘fashionable’ today. Tóth explains the ‘overly-sensitive’ playing of many great violinists, of which is evident in Hubay’s recording; “…it has a special flavour, special sound, very sensitive…”.

The nóta melody and accompanying harmonies used by Hubay have the typical ‘schmaltzy’ sound often associated with Romani performances, and his own playing displays the sensitive character linked to violinists of the time, including Romani musicians. The researcher can easily imagine Romani violinists playing melodies in thirds, adding ornaments, and embellishing the melody with passing notes. This is likely the sound that Hubay was trying to emulate in his

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213 Hubay, Scènes de la Csárdá pour Violon avec accompagnement, 7.
composition *Scènes de la Csárda* No. 5 “*Hullámzó Balaton*”, as he was so inspired by and exposed to the performances of Romani musicians. A greater understanding of ornamentation, and how the Romani musicians employed these freely in their performances, can be gained through viewing various videos available on YouTube; it is fortunate that there are several recordings of Hubay’s composition performed in both a traditional setting, and re-imagined with Romani instrumentation.

**Pedals and Drones**

It is quite common in compositions of the *style hongrois* to have sections where pedals and drones are employed. This practice alludes to the performances of both Hungarian folk music and Romani music, where drones provide a static accompaniment to the embellished melody. Hubay employs this practice in *Scènes de la Csárda* No. 5 “*Hullámzó Balaton*”, as in Bar 95-100, and the repeat of this idea at Bar 110-115 where the piano accompaniment plays block drone chords. This static accompaniment is paired with an improvisational passage in the violin, consisting of rapid scale passages, expressive sustained notes, and harmonics. This is illustrated in EXAMPLE 39.

EXAMPLE 39: Hubay, *Scènes de la Csárda* No. 5 “*Hullámzó Balaton*”, Bar 96-100.\(^{215}\)

![EXAMPLE 39](image)

There are also examples of drones in the Lassú, where a simple piano part accompanies the violin melody, allowing for freedom of expression and an improvisatory approach, characteristic of the Romani musicians. This is also a common feature in Hungarian folk music, mostly evident in slow music such as the hallgató, but not common for fast music like the Friss. As Hungarian folk music is used to accompany dancing, passages such as the one above (EXAMPLE 39) would not be practical as it would interrupt the dancing.

Hubay also pairs drone chords in the piano accompaniment with grace notes, which can be seen as an imitation of violin and bagpipe music in Hungarian folk music; violinists often employ slides and ornaments to decorate the melody, and bagpipers are able to bend notes to add inflection. This is illustrated in EXAMPLE 40.

\(^{215}\) Hubay, *Scènes de la Csárda pour Violon avec accompagnement*, 5.
Pizzicato and Virtuosic Effects

Perhaps one of the most iconic characteristics of Romani performances is the use of virtuosic effects and pizzicato, which is “believed to have been part of the Gypsy tradition since at least 1780”. These virtuosic effects, executed with such flair, ease, and agility by the Romani musicians, inspired composers and left audiences mesmerised. Composers of the style hongrois such as Sarasate, Ravel, and Hubay, recreated this performance idea in their compositions through the use of virtuosic passages which utilise left and right hand pizzicato, passages alternating quickly between pizzicato and arco, melodies featuring artificial harmonics, rapid arpeggios, complex ornamentation, and difficult bowing styles, such as saltando and ricochet.

The Friss section of Hubay’s Scènes de la Csárdá No. 5 “Hullámzó Balaton”, is filled with passages of virtuosic display characteristic of the Romani style, such as, fast semiquaver passages using a spiccato bow stroke, passages alternating quickly between pizzicato and arco, and string crossing. EXAMPLE 41, below, depicts a section where the performer must alternate rapidly between arco and pizzicato.

EXAMPLE 41: Hubay, Scènes de la Csárdá No. 5 “Hullámzó Balaton”, Bar 68-75.

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216 Hubay, Scènes de la Csárdá pour Violon avec accompagnement, 4.
218 Hubay, Scènes de la Csárdá No.5, 4.
In conclusion, Hubay’s Scènes de la Csárdá No. 5 “Hullámzó Balaton” is a fine example of the *style hongrois*, clearly embodying the key elements of form, harmony, melodic material, rhythm, and ‘gypsy’ effects. It is evident through both score analysis and listening to Hubay’s own recording of his composition, that the Romani musicians had a profound influence on his performance and compositional style. Hubay’s exposure to Hungarian folk music is perhaps harder to prove or triangulate; however, there are several examples evident in this composition that show an intersection between these musical styles. This is in part due to numerous similarities with the Romani performance style, but also the shared connection of the verbunkos repertory, and the strong link to the Hungarian language. An understanding of context, as well as articulations, style, and idioms, all contribute to a more informed approach. In light of this, it is fair to conclude that having knowledge of Hungarian folk music and its performance practices, is also valuable when approaching an interpretation of compositions in the *style hongrois*.

These arguments are confirmed through the numerous videos, performances, and interpretations available today of Hubay’s Scènes de la Csárdá No. 5 “Hullámzó Balaton”. Although scored for violin and piano, with an orchestral version (by Hubay) also available, there are several recordings and videos of Hubay’s composition in a variety of performance styles, instrumentations, and musical arrangements. Of course, there are those classical formats219 as just mentioned, but there are also several others, such as Romani band using cimbalom,220 Romani orchestra,221 and bands with a singer222 singing Sárközi’s original nótá melody, “Hullámzó Balaton tetején”. These recordings are an invaluable source of information, providing inspiration and ideas for consideration when approaching an interpretation of Hubay’s compositions, as well as other works in the *style hongrois*. By listening to a variety of recordings of different styles, and by immersing oneself in the music and culture, a more holistic understanding can be gained. These strategies may contribute to filling gaps in knowledge and experience. A deeper appreciation regarding the gestures, presence, presentation, and performance style of Romani and folk musicians can inform the performer’s approach and illuminate the composer’s wishes, beyond what has been notated in the score. It is

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also an opportunity to experience the sights and sounds which inspired composers, such as Hubay, to compose these brilliant compositions.

There is scope for deeper exploration into Hubay’s composition and the *style hongrois* through consultation of additional recordings, especially those pertaining to contemporaries of Hubay, and those who attended performances by Romani musicians. As mentioned in the Literature Review (Chapter Two), Bellman explored historical recordings of Brahms’ *Hungarian Dances* which were created by renowned performers who displayed a strong connection with Brahms. In a similar vein, it would be pertinent to consult recordings of musicians who shared a strong connection with Hubay, in order to gain a deeper understanding of his composition and the performance practices characteristic of the *style hongrois*. For a deeper exploration into performances of the *style hongrois*, recordings by contemporaries, such as Joseph Joachim and Leopold Auer, and Hubay’s well-known students, such as Joseph Szigeti and André Gertler, could be investigated to provide greater depth to the performative aspects associated with the *style hongrois*. 
VI. CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

This research study has brought to light several important discussions and a vast array of topics, ranging from the efficacy of the ‘oral’ tradition, cultural appropriation, performance practices, and ‘Historically Informed Performance’. There has been an exploration of the performance practices of Hungarian folk music, Romani music, and the style hongrois, which proves a strong relationship between musical styles which emanate from a common heritage. This research study has proven an interconnectedness between these different musical styles, with intersections occurring in every level of the music; including rhythm, melody, notation, and harmonic gesture. It encourages an understanding of Hungarian folk music in order to truly gain an holistic understanding of the exotic idioms present in the style hongrois, of which most have been attributed to the influence of the charismatic Romani musicians. Scholars are not incorrect in linking the Romanies to the style hongrois, as there is no doubt that they had a profound effect on composers and audiences of that period. This research study simply illustrates the intersections between the style hongrois and Hungarian folk music, and conveys that a knowledge of these performance practices can aid a more informed interpretation, and understanding of the performance style. This is supported by the experts in the style hongrois who were interviewed for the research study.

Whilst the literature on Hungarian folk music is extensive, the existing gap can be filled with an immersive and holistic approach in order to achieve an informed understanding of this music tradition. Many ethnomusicologists and musicians have dedicated their lives to documenting and preserving this folk music, by immortalising melodies with wax cylinders, writing books, making recordings, and publishing articles. Melodies are meticulously notated and analysed in great detail, covering important aspects including form, instrumentation, use of different modes, and lyrics; many even detail the number of syllables per line or phrase. Researchers describe how the music accompanies folk dancing, cultural traditions, and religious celebrations, and the important social connection between the musicians and the dancers. These noble contributions by researchers are done so to preserve this diverse music tradition, and to ensure the knowledge is accessible for future generations. However, authenticity of the Hungarian folk music, style hongrois, and Romani music is greater than printed text and notation. The oral tradition which keeps it authentic needs to be seriously considered, supported, and practiced in order for it to be sustained.

Therefore, an immersive experience is crucial to maintaining authenticity to this oral tradition of music. The written word/score is merely an aspect of producing and performing the music. Practical experience gives value to how the folk band interacts, how visually stimulating it is...
to watch the bowing technique of the brácsa player, the number of intricate ornaments that the violinist employs in each melody, how the band synchronises by playing the same bowing style, how the music fits with the folk dancing, the colourful and intricate costumes, and the spontaneous interactions between the musicians and the dancers. These are things that can only truly be experienced with an holistic approach and attitude. An oral tradition is best experienced in its rich and cultural environment. Through personal experiences shared by the interviewees, in addition to the CD, this research study has transported the reader closer to gaining an understanding of the performance practices of Hungarian folk music, filling gaps in knowledge in relation to cultural traditions and performance style.

This research study has also provided a unique angle in documenting the stories of Hungarian folk music experts who have passionately preserved and maintained this musical tradition; this study shines a light on their contributions. As previously mentioned, while several ethnomusicologists have thoroughly documented this folk tradition, this research study has allowed for a more personal insight into the music, by applying a practical approach, and gleaning insight through the point of view of musicians. It has provided an opportunity to track the progress of researchers such as Bartók who recorded and studied melodies, to today, where the music tradition continues to thrive through the tándcház. The music tradition is evident in the lives of many people in Hungary and diasporas all around the world, demonstrating that it is not solely found in books and museums. This is a testament to musicians, such as Ökrös, who have dedicated their lives to studying, sharing, and spreading this music not only in Hungary, but around the world. At 16 years of age, Ökrös heard Hungarian folk music for the first time, not knowing this was the original music of his heritage; he immediately went to live in Transylvania, dedicating his time to studying with village musicians. During my lessons with Ökrös, it was evident that 40 years later, he is still as passionate and meticulous in his teaching, to ensure that these folk melodies are preserved in the truest way possible, just as his teachers had shared with him. While a lot can be gained through the literature, much can also be learned through the experiences, stories, and knowledge of practising musicians, scholars, and people.

The CD produced as part of this project is another way in which the reader has been able to gain a deeper understanding of Hungarian folk music and exotic Hungarian idioms, which are adopted by several composers. The CD provides an avenue for a more immersive experience, allowing an understanding of the sources in which composers found so much inspiration. By showcasing a variety of different dialects, it not only demonstrates the vast repertoire of Hungarian folk music, but also explores the intersections with the verbunkos, Romani music, and the style hongrois. This CD provides an opportunity for many people to engage with this rich cultural
tradition, and continues the work initiated formally by Bartók, and continued by the interviewees, to preserve and share Hungarian folk music with diasporas in Australia.

Although the literature on the style hongrois is also substantial, those theses provide analyses on famous compositions in the repertoire while this dissertation offers uniqueness by including the advice of violinists who have considerable expertise in this performance style. This research study supports and supplements the literature by providing an in-depth analysis of Hubay's Scènes de la Csárdá No.5 “Hullámzó Balaton”, Op.33, with particular reference to the elements of the style hongrois and its performative application. It also offers examples illustrating the strong connection between Hungarian folk music and the style hongrois. The analysis is supported by the interview data, the literature, and recordings of several different dialects of Hungarian folk music, which are presented on the CD. Although used as an example of the style hongrois, this analysis also brings to light the significance of Hubay, and his compositions, which have not had the scrutiny they deserve.

This research study encourages and facilitates an immersive approach, allowing the reader to gain a deeper understanding of Hungarian folk music, and identify Hungarian idioms present in compositions, in particular those of the style hongrois. In analysing Hubay’s Scènes de la Csárdá No.5 “Hullámzó Balaton”, Op.33, it is evident how greatly composers were influenced by and sought inspiration from exotic musical idioms, such as Romani music, and Hungarian folk music. These influences are seen in several aspects of this composition, especially with regards to rhythm, form, ornamentation, performance style, and even the title. This demonstrates a clear relationship and intersections between these musical styles. Acknowledging that Hungarian folk music and Romani music, both oral traditions, had such a profound effect on composers of the time, one can appreciate the efficacy and value of employing the ‘oral tradition’ approach. This research study demonstrates that by looking to the performance practices of these exotic musical styles, and embracing a more holistic and authentic approach towards interpreting compositions of the style hongrois, a more authentic and ‘Historically Informed Performance’ can be achieved. Interviews with ‘style hongrois experts’ consolidated this view, all remarking there were limitations in notation in compositions of the style hongrois, and confirming that an understanding of Hungarian folk music would be useful; they also suggested ways to further create the ‘gypsy’ character in the music. This research study also challenges the performer to research and be proactive in achieving an authentic interpretation, to watch live performances, videos, and archival footage available online, in order to gain a more holistic understanding of the musical styles and exotic idioms that inspired composers. Even if live performances cannot be attended, there is much to gained from watching videos online, to witness the enigmatic performance style of the Romani musicians, and visually understand how
Hungarian folk music ‘looks’ and fits with the dancing. There is certainly no shortage of inspiration to be found.
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D. HUNGARIAN FOLK MUSIC: BOOKS


E. NEWSPAPER ARTICLES


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G. HUNGARIAN FOLK MUSIC CDS


H. YOUTUBE RECORDINGS


VIII. APPENDIX

A. SHEET MUSIC FOUND ON IMSLP: COMPOSERS AND THEIR VIOLIN WORKS IN THE STYLE HONGROIS


Hubay, Jenö. *Scènes de la Csárda No.6, Op.34*. Breslau: Julius Hainauer, 1890.


**B. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR A SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW: HUNGARIAN FOLK MUSIC**

1. What has been your involvement with Hungarian folk music/how long have you been playing?

2. Is the music different from village to village? If so, how?

3. Is improvisation used or are melodies usually played a certain way? Is there space for individuality?

4. What is unique about playing Hungarian folk music? (Eg. Technique, ornaments, pulse, purpose of music)

5. In your lifetime and experience, has the music changed/evolved or has tradition been successfully maintained?

**C. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR A SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW: STYLE HONGROIS**

1. In your opinion, which “gypsy” inspired (*style hongrois*) violin pieces are the most famous? Which composers wrote in this “gypsy” style?

2. What aspects of violin playing do you think help to create the character of this style? (Eg. Vibrato, portamento)

3. Can you describe aspects of performance that might not be captured through written notation? (Eg. Dance character, rubato)

4. In your opinion, would knowledge of Hungarian folk music be useful when learning and interpreting music of the *style hongrois*? If so, how?

5. Are you aware of any common misconceptions of performances in the *style hongrois*?
INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS – HUNGARIAN FOLK MUSIC

1. PÉTER ÁRENDÁS

TV: Can you tell me a bit about your involvement with Hungarian folk music?
PA: So, my parents and my relatives knew the real Hungarian folk music. My dad was lucky because when I went to the Secondary Grammar School in Budapest, there was a special faculty in that time, in the 1980s, where all the students had to learn folk dance or folk music. And I had been playing the piano since the age of 6, so the music was more appealing to me than the dance. So, I said, ‘if it’s necessary for me to learn, it’s easier for me to learn folk music than folk dance, I’m not interested in dance, it’s just for two years, okay I’ll do the music’. And the school, it’s working nowadays too, folk music school, it has a good connection with my school. The folk music lessons were in that school, so I went there and the members of Téka and Rikas, they were the teachers at that time. So, I went there and I played the piano quite well, so which instrument should I choose? Hurdy gurdy/tekerö? It’s so easy, because it’s just like the piano, I just have turn and play the melody. Okay, I have to do it for two years and after one year, I started to get interested. So, I wondered, is folk music just hurdy gurdy or are there other instruments? The bass player of Téka, Havasréti Páli and Gyuri, the kontra player, they asked me, ‘okay, join us? We’ll go to táncház’. I thought, ‘táncház, what is that?’ They said, ‘just come!’ It was a Friday evening and we went there, and that was the first time that I heard a real Hungarian folk string band. And I liked it, it was cool. When I played the piano, I played not just classical piano but also jazz piano too. I was so interested in chords and harmonies, I loved it. Okay, there’s a violinist, a viola kontra that plays chords and harmonies, so I started to become interested in the brácsa. Then I got an instrument and I started to learn. The members of Téka were very good teachers because they told me to go to the villages, go to Transylvania, to Romania, because there are old musicians and you have to know them, and you have to learn from them first hand. And I went to Transylvania and I started to collect folk music, it was so inspiring. A few months later I decided, this is my way, I want to play Hungarian folk music. Quite soon, we founded Tükös because I met Halmos Attila in táncház. He was young, I was young too, he didn’t have a band, he was a violin player, I tried to play the viola, okay so we decided to make a band. And we called it Tükös, it was 30 years ago. We had success very soon. We were invited to many táncház, we started to work with different folk dance groups. So, when I finished school, not every day, but every week, three or four times, I played somewhere in a táncház. I went to Transylvania, or other villages, we went abroad with the folk-dance groups, so many programs. So, I decided, school is enough for me, just folk music. But I was lucky because my parents and a few teachers told me to go to university, music university, but at that time there was no folk music at any university. It meant I had to go to the classical music university, so I learnt as a conductor, conducting, and played piano, and studied music teaching. But continuously I played folk music and I got the diploma, so I finished university in classical music, but I didn’t want to be a conductor or a music teacher in the grammar school. When this Folk Music Department started in 2007, there were only a few of us who had a music degree from university, not in folk because there was no folk, just the classical. We had lots of experience and knowledge in Hungarian folk music so that’s why, when it started in 2007, I was one of the teachers that was invited to teach here. Before this, I taught not just folk music, but music history and music literature in different schools, meanwhile I was playing folk music, I was a musician and a music leader for a while for one of the professional folk dance groups in Budapest. So that was my professional job, as a music director, it was just folk music and I continuously taught music in different schools and different places. So, I’m so lucky because at the age of 18-20, it was very clear for me what I wanted to do. Folk music and viola, harmonies, teaching, playing, making CDS, making books, travelling, everything. It’s the same today.

TV: Sounds pretty good! Okay, so now I’m going to talk about the music a little bit. Can you describe how the music might be different depending on which region or area you go to?
PA: Do you mean the string instrumental music or anything in the Carpathian basin?

TV: Yes, anything.

PA: Well, I prefer the string instruments but because I was teaching continuously, it’s not possible to teach at the school, not instrumental, but music teaching, music history, so it’s not good to teach just string instruments. So, I had to know the vocal recordings, I had to know different Hungarian folk instruments like flute, bagpipes, zither, cimbalom and so on. So, the differences between the villages, first is with the instruments. The string band is the most popular in the whole Carpathian basin, but for example, in the south area of Hungary nowadays, there in the villages there are no string bands. In that region, the hurdy gurdy and clarinet are the most popular instruments because the people that lived there were very poor, so they had no money to pay for a whole band, just the hurdy gurdy and the clarinet, just two people, that was enough. So, for example, if you play the music of the south region of Hungary, the instruments there are these ones. The south area of Transdanubia for example, the country of the long flutes, hosszi furulya. Or the Uplands, Slovakia, the bagpipe was very popular. The bagpipe was popular everywhere, but for example in Transylvania, where the most string bands were working, approximately 200 years ago, the string bands became popular and then the bagpipe was over, the bagpipe music. So, one of our instruments, if we see just the string instruments, there are differences between the villages. If you say not the villages, but the dialects, you can say in this dialect, in this region, these kinds of melodies that they both use in this region, different kinds of melodies, there are the same melodies but a few melodies are used just in this area or just in that area. So, this is the repertoire. So, the style how they play is different. Different ornaments in the violin, different harmonies in the kontra, for example in the middle area of Transylvania, the viola players use just major chords, not minor chords, just major chords, no 7th chords. In Kalotaszeg, they use many more chords, major, minor, 7th chords, diminished, this is the other difference. If you see the villages, so in one region, one dialect, there are differences between the musicians. Some of them were better musicians, some are not so good, one of them was a very hard and strong man and could play very hard, the other one was weak and could not play so hard. It means how they used, for example the bow, was very different, one had huge actions and the other one was a bit softer. One of the musicians was very loud and had a big sound and means his music was louder, and the other one was a very quiet person, so the music was quieter. So, you can see the differences in every level, in the people level, in the region level, in the dialects, in one dialect there are smaller regions, in the whole Carpathian basin, the instruments level, so it’s a very complicated question. I can talk about it for hours.

TV: That’s good. Is improvisation used or are melodies usually played a certain way?

PA: Okay, so tradition means that I have to know the style, how older musicians, my parents and grandparents play, but I have a personality, so some small things I can change. The melodies are the same because the people in the village ask for the same melodies, from me, or my father or my grandfather. So, I can’t figure out a brand-new melody. The tradition means, that in this village, Joszi bácsi’s favourite melody is this so I have to play this melody, not a different melody. But how I play it, I can change it in a small way. I have to know the style from the older musicians, my teachers, but if I know the style very well...and it’s very important to understand, the musician in the village, in his whole life, he plays just in one style. So, it was easier for him because that was the music that they played, that was the style. Now, us in Budapest, we have to know the style of Gömör, Kalotaszeg, Mezőség and so on, but for a village musician, the style was normal. So, they knew the style perfectly, like a mother language, but as you say or as you speak, you can make your own sentences, in your mother language that you speak perfectly. So, it’s the same in music, so I know the style perfectly and I can use it. This means, for example if I’m a violinist, it is an improvised thing that I start a melody and then I can decide which is the next one or the next one. It’s interesting for a viola or a bass player because I have to know all melodies and when we start playing, I don’t know which melodies the violin player will choose. And it’s an improvisation, ‘okay I’ll play the first melody 3 times, no 4 times, and then I change melody and play it 2 times, maybe go back to the first melody, or take a third melody’. It’s an improvisation. The other one, I’m a viola player, so one melody
doesn’t just have one way to be harmonized, so I can play it like this, or I can play the same melody with a slightly different harmony. It’s the same with the bass, it’s like the violin, so I have to know the style, I mustn’t figure out some special chords, it has to be in the style. So, in the style, I can choose which chords I want to play, ‘okay now I’ll play these chords, or these chords, or these chords’, because when you listen to the original recordings, and listen to the viola player, they don’t play the same chords every time. So, this melody you can play AADDAAEEA or you can play AA⁷DDAE⁷E²⁷A for example. But there are many variations, so I can choose and I can decide what kind of chords I will play, and the bass player can decide what kind of notes he will play with my chords, and if we know the melody and if we know the style, it’s not a problem. I play this version and he plays this version, because it fits together.

TV: What do you think is unique about Hungarian folk music?

PA: So many things. What I love so much is the technique, the style, how they used the string instruments because I think it’s very practical. So, there is nothing in our style that isn’t necessary, it’s very practical. The ornaments help the rhythm, the ornaments help to make the melody more beautiful. The bow that we use helps us to play louder, because 100 years ago there were no microphones. So if there was a wedding and there were 300 people, the musicians had to play loud enough for people to hear it and be inspired to get up to dance, because they were village people, they were tired, they worked whole days, so if the band played very soft, it didn’t work. So, one unique feature is how they play, how they use the bow, how they play rhythms in the melody, so not rhythms of the melody but rhythms which fit with the dance, with the steps. If you play the violin in a dance melody, your emphasis must be absolutely the same as what the viola and bass player plays, so they help each other. What isn’t needed in this music, is not in the music, so I love it, it’s very practical. The other things are the scales that we use in our folk music. There are different scales in the world, the Indian scales are very interesting too and unique too but Hungarian scales are interesting because we live in Europe and our scales and our melodies are absolutely different than western Europe because we came from the east. If you listen to a singer from a village, recorded 50 years ago, or 20 years ago, or nowadays, they use these scales but they don’t know if it’s a specific scale, they don’t know the notes, they don’t know the name of the notes, sometimes they can’t read and write, just in their minds it’s the normal scale. And it’s not just in the singing, but if you listen to the instrumental music, we very often use these scales. For example, the long flute, the hosszi furulya, has a special scale. If you listen to a violin player, they don’t always use the semitone, but play between the semitones. So, I think it’s a very unique thing that we have special scales and we have special melodies too. I love it because the world is changing, the world 100 years ago was very different to today. But the people, how they think and how they feel, was the same 200 years ago. They were scared, they were happy, and in these folk songs, these feelings are in these melodies. So, these melodies are quite old, 200 or 500 or 1000 years old, and in these melodies, these feelings are in there. It’s like a stone in a river, year by year, it will become more and more beautiful, because in the beginning it’s just a stone, and then every day water changes something small. It’s the same with these melodies. So, in many generations, all the people sang these melodies, but every generation changed a bit, and it became more and more beautiful. At the end, how we can listen to it, it’s ready. The last 50 generations’ feelings, how they were thinking, what kind of things were in their mind, it’s very natural. So now if see a rock band on the TV, it’s not natural. Someone figured out, let’s do this, whether it’s good or not, but it’s just one person, but the folk music, this became better and better through the generations. And that’s why I think the words and the atmosphere and the feelings that are in a melody are right, because many generations have lived through it and they see the most beautiful thing. But this is not just in Hungarian folk music, so if you see other nations, Aboriginal music for example, they have the same natural melodies, that’s why I prefer folk music. So, the style of how we play is unique, the melodies that we play or sing are unique, the scales that we use are unique. One more thing, if you go to a village nowadays in Transylvania, most of the musicians are dead, and because the young people in the villages don’t like this music, so they prefer new music and not the old traditional instruments, that’s why the young
generation don’t learn this style or kind of music. Nowadays if you go the village, maybe you can’t find any musicians there, but the people, most of the old people that live there, they think in a different way. So, I always tell the students, go to Transylvania, or go to a village far away and talk to the old people, because they are natural and they can tell you things, they don’t have the internet, but they can say important things that can help you in your life to understand the world, to live with the people. Nowadays in the cities, in towns, it’s a big problem. This folk music is the music of those people so that’s why I say it’s very natural, because the folk music is the music of the people, what kind of people, of the natural people. I think it was working for 100 years and now what we see in the world, there are some problems, I don’t know if it will work for the next 50 years, but it was working for 500 years. Do you understand?

TV: Yes, I do. I think you’ve answered the last one but I’ll ask you anyway. Has the music changed and evolved or has tradition kept a certain way?

PA: My life, in my life?

TV: Yes. Do you think it’s changed?

PA: Okay, so not in my life or what I play?

TV: No, as in the culture, or do you think it’s stayed the same?

PA: It’s a difficult question. I think, it’s very important to keep the traditions. Of course, we don’t live like people 100 years ago, so it’s a different world I know. But what I told you, the feelings are the same. So, I want to be in love with a girl like 200 years ago, it’s the same feeling being in love, if we change everything, it doesn’t work. We have the same things in our mind, the same feelings, so that’s why I think it’s very important to keep these traditions and to show it, it’s a perfect thing. It doesn’t mean we have to be in the past because now we live in these days. Some of the young people and students say, ‘wow, folk music and folk tradition must be in the museum, it’s very interesting, it was 100-200 years ago, but nowadays it’s a different world’. But I think that’s not true because we can use the same music in a táncház, that’s why the táncház is such a fantastic thing. Before the 1970s when the folk music was just in the museum, a few dance teachers made some programs for dancers. But the táncház movement is very strange because it showed that you can do it, not just watch other people do it, but you can learn these steps and you can use it. And from that, it’s not someone else’s culture, or some old man’s culture, it’s your own. So, if I learn to play the folk music, it doesn’t mean I have to play something that 200 years ago someone played, no, it becomes my own music. It means, it works in 2017 like in 1917 or 1817. So, I think, if now we figure out, okay the folk music is much better with saxophone and synthesizer and jazz piano, there are new fashions. This is the new fashion, and this is the many hundred years’ traditions, and it worked, so why do you want to add the brand-new fashions? Folk music is okay without these new fashions. So that’s why it gets better. For example, Bartók Béla went to the villages, collected the music and then he understood how that music works, how folk music works, and that music helped him to compose fantastic pieces. But Bartók knew the classical music, the baroque music, the romantic music, everything, and what he did, it became a new art. If you listen to Bartók’s music, the folk music is in that, and the classical tradition is in that, and it’s okay, it’s no problem, because he did something new that had not been done before him. But to say, ‘I play the traditional folk music with saxophone and synthesizer because we are in 2017’, why, it won’t be better because you use saxophone. It’s perfect music, it’s a perfect, natural, very practical music and it’s not easy to learn it, if you want to learn it absolutely correctly, it’s very hard. Because like I told you, the village musicians could only play one style, just the repertoire of one village. We have to know lots of different styles, and lots of villages, and lots of regions’ repertoire, so it’s hard enough to learn the traditional music, there’s no need to add other instruments. The problem is, some musicians learnt the folk music and said, ‘this is very difficult’ and picked an easier way. ‘Okay, I can’t learn it absolutely properly, so I’ll play it like this, it’s not like the village musicians play, like this, add a saxophone and other instruments, it will be our new style’. But it’s not a new style, it’s just mixed things, and he can’t play the folk music properly, not enough knowledge in their hand and in their mind, just ‘let’s just play something approximately like this and add a few instruments, and now we are a popular band’. I think that’s
not good, so that’s why I say, let’s try to learn it as well as we can, the traditional music, the traditional style, and if you want to compose like Bartók, you have to be the standard Bartók was, you can do it. Now if you see the world music bands, 90% of those bands are not good musicians, with not good music ideas in their pieces, just mixing lots of things, ‘it’s my style, no one else can play like me’, but it’s not good. There are a few musicians, a few bands that keep the traditions, and there a few musicians who learnt this music very perfectly, and they can add something. They can make CDs and choose special melodies. Sometimes they can add a traditional instrument to that, it might not be on the original recordings but it’s a part of traditional folk music, it’s okay if it will be good or better, that’s okay, the problem is that 90% are worse.

TV: That was great, thank you!
TV: The first question is, can you tell me a little bit about what you’ve done with folk music, or maybe where you’ve learnt the music?

CO: I first learnt how to play classical violin because I didn’t know that the folk music existed, because the radio didn’t play it. There were some folk dance clubs but original music didn’t exist, the music was just copies and not original, the music composers just did the same again and again. Hungarians copied the Russians, but these things were not real, they made the clothes and said, ‘this is traditional’ but it wasn’t traditional, they just said that they were. It was plastic folk. There was a very famous ensemble in Moscow, a state folk ensemble, but their costumes were plastic, nothing was original, and the Hungarians copied this. In 1976, some folk dance teachers went to Transylvania, where they looked at the Hungarian folk music, and they tried to bring it home, to spread it to the Hungarian children. There were big dance events, where musicians and dancers would go, everyone learns about the folk, people like Béla Halmos tried to give this original folk music to the people. And this was the cassette, because they made a record of this, this was the cassette that I got when I was 16 years old, and I felt that I wanted to know what this music was and learn it. Old people got used to this Russian copy, ‘plastic tradition’, and they didn’t want to change their lifestyle to this new thing, it was a new thing to play original folk music. So, these dance teachers and people had to convince the young, the youth, they had to make young people like this music and know. Old people thought it was Romanian folk music, they thought the originals were on the radio. They were absolutely foreign melodies and tunes. These old people didn’t know the Hungarian music at all, it was like Chinese folk music to them, but it was the original and they didn’t know it. But the young musicians didn’t give up, and the original folk music, because the young people listened to it, it became very popular. Nowadays we have dance meetings, táncház. Also there were some politics, in that time, Transylvania and original folk culture was prohibited to talk about, so the young people tried to rebel in this way. The government was very severe and in schools, they didn’t teach that Hungary was dividing to part and giving it to other countries, it was Socialist. It was dangerous when people went to Transylvania and they hear, ‘he speaks the same language as me, this is my original, this is where my roots are’. They were very watchful on the borders, the books and newspapers or any news didn’t change between the two countries. So when we went to Transylvania and collected the folk music, we recorded it on cassettes, but on the border, the police took it away because it was prohibited and dangerous. But this made us more eager, more enthusiastic. The people started to spread these folk-dance meetings for amateurs, not professional dancers or those who know a lot about of the culture, no they were just people who liked to dance and wanted to know about the original music. When I got into the folk circles, I asked the people, ‘where can I learn more about this folk music?’. Béla Halmos gave me an address in Transylvania, ‘go there and you will learn’. That address was Zoltán Kallós’ address, and he was the heart of the folk music, he was everyone’s teacher. When I went there, he asked me, ‘who are you, what are you looking for?’ So Zoltán was my guardian angel, my professor, my master who guided me along the way. After that, I made a company in the same image that he was, and then when I travelled home, I had brand new relationships everywhere in Transylvania, because they were a big dance company in Kolozsvár, where these traditional folk dance meetings were held. I had built up a lot of relationships.

TV: How old were you when you started?
CO: 16.

TV: And when you went to stay with Zoltán?
CO: 16.

TV: Okay, so it was very quick.
CO: Yes. And I was 16 years old when I was in a special camp, the first táncház music camp, like the camp we had in Perth. Béla Halmos and Ferenc Sebő were the teachers, and I was there in the summer.

TV: Okay, so we have a couple of questions about the music itself. Can you describe how the music is different, depending on the region?

CO: Hungarian folk music is unique and unified, but like you said, we can divide it into parts. In every part, it also has the same ornaments, the classic Hungarian ornaments, but every little region and village, has its own typical tunes and they bring it to the music. We can talk about little villages, so it’s very varied. When I was young, I asked Neti Sanyi bácsi, ‘what do you think about the others who are from another village, how they play the same song?’ He said, ‘he plays the same as me, just a little different’. And I said, ‘come on, they are totally different’. And he said, ‘you will find out’. And it’s true, he was right! It’s like language. It’s the same as in language, we have dialects. In the music, we have the same five dialects as in the language. These five music dialects act as the same as in the Hungarian language. Within that, we can also divide the land, it’s very professional.

TV: Okay, should we do the next question? Do you think there is improvisation used in the music?

CO: The variation here is basically in the instinct of the authentic musicians. There is always variation. We talked about these differences between the music of the villages and the regions, yes improvisation is very important and it is used, but one person from one village stays within the tradition of that village. So the tradition made its own style, in every village, in every region. So one musician can’t...In the old times, they didn’t have the opportunity to leave their own village. One good example was when a musician became a soldier and travelled, when they got home they brought their experiences into the music also. But after time, he converted back to the old style because he had to play the way people wanted to hear, the traditional way. A good example is when I went to a wedding and the bride was from one village and the groom was from another, and they both brought their own band. One of the bands played the other village’s music, and they didn’t enjoy it, they didn’t know it, they were just 2km away from each other. For them, it was totally different. Transylvania is very complicated because of Hungarian and Romanian locals, the villages that are only 2-3km from each other, they play the same tunes and the same music, but the Hungarian and the Romanian people say ‘no, that is their music and I won’t dance’, there was peace but they can recognize the difference. In Transylvania, the music meets. There were no politics in it, it’s just tradition, people got used to their tunes and they recognize the other. It was very rare to have the same parties. The Hungarian had their own parties, the Romanian had their own. When I was in Transylvania, I met a Romanian person, and this person spoke the Hungarian language with the Hungarians, so I thought he was Hungarian, but he said, ‘no, I’m not Hungarian’. I thought, ‘wow, you speak Hungarian just as well as the Hungarians’, so the difference between the Hungarian and Romanian culture was made by folk music, and the folk musicians.

TV: Should we do the next one? What do you think is unique about playing Hungarian folk music?

CO: Béla Bartók said every nation has its own traditional way of life, their language, their culture, their speech, also in music. The older style of the Hungarian folk music, approximately 500 years ago, it was the first. We have a style, and we have new styles again and again, but our old styles didn’t disappear, they just fade into the new, so they exist at the same time and together they change. Compass, we can make two big parts of the Hungarian folk music, before the compass and after. Before we got to Europe, we brought many Asian characteristics, pentatonic scales. There was the pentatonic, the basic, and earlier, two hexachords, crying laments (sirató, sings an example from Szék) which are absolutely not pentatonic, this is earlier. For example, 3000 years ago, we met the Turks, we learnt of course other things, bigger descending fourths and fifths, it changed the style. After we got this, we received this European style, we mixed these two styles but this Asian pentatonic impact was so deeply rooted that it overcame every style, it’s very strong in our music. Kodály said that Hungarian people are at the edge of the big Asian pentatonic tree, so where
Hungarians are, pentatonics are. If there are no Hungarians, there are no pentatonics. Our songs are mainly from this Asian pentatonic style, and when we got to Europe, obviously we got used to this European style. Our dances, our folk dances, are based on this European style. I tried to think about the steps, the circle dances, like when you don’t have a partner and you just dance around in a circle, these types of dances come from the ancient styles, like tarantella, ugrós or a gigue. The dance is totally European, ancient music, so that’s why we are the bridge between Asia and Europe, Hungarians. The dances aren’t national, they depend on the age and we kept the dance style and we keep this European heritage. So we have two heritages, from the Asia and of course Europe, we’ve been here 2000 years, but not the first 1000, we are a bridge.

**TV:** And do you think, for as long as you’ve been doing folk music, is the tradition mostly the same or changing with new generations?

**CO:** Nowadays in this point of time, it has closed, the music can’t do a lot more, people in the village have disappeared. Our first job is to guard this tradition and keep it alive with the younger generations, it won’t develop anymore. The dance meetings, tâncháž, there has been a revival because there are no villages. The countryside just copies the capital cities and its style, people have found their way. We have these recordings, video, sound, everything. I’m very curious as to someone like Florin, what type of music his children would listen to. Florin is very clever, he knows many melodies.
3. MARK RICHARDS

TV: Okay, so the first question is, what has been your involvement with Hungarian folk music and how long have you been playing?

MR: Okay, so I’ve been playing for a very long time, since about 1982, which is when I first came in contact with Hungarian folk music. I was studying French at the time and was looking for a job so that I could go to work and live in France. I came across an ad where someone was looking for a fiddle player to play some unusual music, and so I responded to the ad and went along to the first rehearsal which basically consisted of him putting on Széki field recordings, and me going, ‘yes, that’s truly strange’. So that was my introduction. So my intention was to make some money and go to France and when I first began, basically I just played from transcriptions. The bass player was a really good jazz player and he had great musical skills, he’d just write stuff down and I would play it, and that was it. So I didn’t have any intention that 30 plus years on, I’d still be playing this music.

TV: And you’ve been on quite a few trips yourself to Hungary as well?


TV: Okay, so the next question is, is the music different from village to village, do you feel?

MR: Yes, some more so than others, but in fact every one is different in its own way. Differences can be all sort of things; could be in terms of melody, could be in terms of ornamentation, could be in terms of rhythms, what tunes they actually play, could be the same tune but different words, so there could be a whole lot of things. Hungarian folk music can be divided up into different broad regions for example Mezőség, Kalotaszeg or Székelyföld. However within these regions there can be significant stylistic differences from village to village – or more correctly from musician to musician. Some villages had their own band, sometimes bands served a number of villages. Each musician brought their own style, however within certain regional norms. So, Kalotaszegi primáseses had things in common that formed the Kalotaszegi style and differentiated them from violinists from Mezőség or other regions. But on the other hand, I think anyway even within those supposedly homogenous regions, they can be really quite different, I think it really comes down a lot to the individual musicians. So those musicians in that place, play that way, so let’s take Kalotaszegi music. It can sound really quite different, modern Kalotaszegi music to older Kalotaszegi music, you listen to Sanyi bács and get him with his son playing next to him who’s had classical training, it’s different, you know what I mean? So I think it’s really a lot more to do with individual musicians and interacting with that group of people who are living there at that time, creating whatever happens. So I think that’s the really driving force. Sure, there’s all the musicians that have come before that will influence you, so your dad will influence you, but you can also move quite a bit away from where your dad was, or not, sometimes people don’t. Like look at Florin (Coboda), that’s an interesting case, he sounds really like his dad, of course, he’s specifically re-learnt it in a way.

TV: Yes, trying to emulate that playing.

MR: Yes, sort of like what we do, learning from tapes and cassettes, as well as obviously having heard it when he grew up. Florin grew up with the music and played with their band, but after his dad died when he was still relatively young, he made a conscious effort to learn his father’s style as he was widely considered one of the best Primáseses of his era. But often when just you do it in that more organic way, you can be subject to lots of influences, and you might imbibe a whole lot of stuff but still go in a slightly different direction because of all sorts of reasons.

TV: I guess that kind of ties in with the next question a bit, is improvisation used? Do you think there is space for individuality in the music or is it mostly just played a certain way?

MR: Definitely, there’s lots of improvisation. Say you take two violinists from the same village, they will both play different ways. But improvisation is within a very prescribed framework I suppose. So Neti will improvise but within a repertoire of possibilities, if you like, you can learn what those possibilities are, and sometimes he’ll do something a bit out of the box, and you’ll think ‘gosh
that’s interesting’, but pretty much it’s within fairly specified patterns. So it’s not like your jazz players who are free jazz, where it’s whatever goes, and you might not have heard that before. It’s more likely that when he plays a tune, you’ll go ‘that’s recognizably Sanyi bácsi’, you know, or whoever. Which means when you’re learning it, it makes it very circumscribed I guess.

TV: Should we go to the next question? What is unique about playing Hungarian folk music? And I guess you’ve got a bit of a classical background as well, you can probably bring other thoughts to this one.

MR: I think lots of things are unique. I think probably the most unique thing is the csárdás rhythm, and that’s a really unique rhythm, and I think the thing that is most unique about it is that it has an asymmetry to it which can change. That’s one thing that changes from village to village even if you’re playing the same tune with similar ornamentation, in that village they might feel the second beat a little bit more, or it’s further apart, or longer. So that’s probably one fundamental thing that makes Hungarian music different. But then I think that the technique on the fiddle, the ornamentation that they call it körülírás, it’s where you go up and down around a central note. This is only found in Transylvanian music, not music from Hungary.

TV: Yes, sort of like a turn.

MR: I don’t know, I’ve never heard that anywhere. Of course you hear a little ornament, which is fine, but to keep going with it.

TV: Yes, sort of like a continuous turn I guess.

MR: Yes, that is right. I think that is pretty unique. And that is very expressive because it can be very fast like in Kalotaszeg, or it can be quite slow, so körülírás is really quite expressive. I think that’s a key one for Transylvanian music. In music from Hungary or Felvidék (Slovakia) they don’t use this. They have a very wide vibrato and use cuts and trills which is more like other folk musics. All the other kinds of ornaments like appoggiatura and all of those different things, you can find in lots of other folk music I think. The string-based group is important, although relatively modern. Originally the music was played on bagpipes, flutes and zithers. Violin, viola and bass combination is only in the last 100 or so years flowing down from their use in classical music. The viola in Hungarian ensembles was the 4-string variety we know from classical music but in Transylvania they came up with a 3-string version with a flat bridge to allow 3 note chords without using broken chords. I think having the brácsa, is pretty unusual in Transylvanian music, just having that three stringed brácsa. And I’d say the other thing that’s really key to the Hungarian music is the focus on the off-beat, like I don’t think there’s any other kind of music where the off-beat is so important. Not only when you’re playing fast music, but also when you’re playing slow music, that constant feel of the off-beat, so I would say those are really the big things that are different.

TV: You sort of mentioned briefly before the technique, which I think is what helps to get the ornamentation, but the folk hold is quite different as well and I guess that really helps to get that sound.

MR: So I think there’s a big difference certainly. So if you want to play Transylvanian music, and particularly bring that kind of ornamentation that we were talking about, it’s pretty much impossible to go with a classical hold, you need a flat wrist. A flat wrist also allows you the movement, to do certain slides, it allows you to do the things that I think you need to do. But the music from Hungary, this is the thing, the music from Hungary as opposed to Transylvania is much more influenced by that café gypsy style. So I’d say it’s much more informed by that style which is closer to a classical technique in a way, not completely, but that technique probably requires you to not have a flat wrist certainly so much, because you’ve got to be able to move around the instrument a lot more and do some flashy stuff, which would be harder with a really flat wrist. Say something like Gyimesi music, you can’t play that without a flat wrist because it requires you to slide. That’s a characteristic of Gyimesi music, pretty much you think you’re grabbing the instrument in 2nd position, that’s where you grab the violin, and everything happens from there. And that’s the thing that gives it that character I think. The other thing I was going to say actually, and this isn’t typical to Hungarian music, but a lot of folk music I’d say, and you’d have a lot of the same issues in
classical music is the whole natural tuning versus tempered tuning. So there’s quite a lot of music where you have to use the natural tuning, so when you play a G, very often it’s not a G natural as you would play it in classical music or a G#, it’s somewhere right in the middle. It’s the same sometimes with a B…B-natural and B-flat, where it sits, you’ve really got to tune your ear into those differences. Even the other day I was thinking of when you do those final three chords, say in D major, you play a D with the F#, the F# has to be slightly lower because if it’s really close it sounds very classical, but if you pitch it down, it sounds folky, so it’s little subtle things. But that’s not just Hungarian music, that’s folk music in general I guess.

TV: So the last question is, and I know we’re in Australia so we haven’t lived through this one but...In your lifetime and experience, do you think the music has changed and evolved or do you think the tradition has been maintained to stay the same?

MR: I think there are two answers to that question. I think you have to think about it in terms of the living music that’s still in the villages although disappearing, and the folk revival people. The folk revival people, in their heads, they’ve put it in aspic and kept it, so they’re playing something, they see it as in aspic. I think the reality is that they all sound different, so even if they’re all playing and modelling the same violinist, they never sound exactly like that. Say someone like Gergö (Koncz), is the closest to sounding like Marci (Coboda) in Palatka, but it is not exactly the same – there will be differences – even if only slight. So in that sense, their whole goal is to play it exactly like it was. Of course it is impossible to play exactly the same as someone else and for me I’m not convinced that such a narrow goal is a worthwhile one. Each person should bring something to the music whilst respecting the stylistic subtleties. A question, and it is a frustration that we often come up with and it’s fine, but what do you take? Like what, do you play like when he was in his 20s, in 1963, or 1979 or 1982, so what period of time? Because obviously, they change and evolve, no one stays the same. So those musicians also, their skills develop, their knowledge develops so they do change, so I think it’s inevitable but more particularly in the village, the music has always evolved. I mean, we say, ‘I like that musician playing at that moment in time, that’s what I love’, but you know he played differently from his dad, and if you go back 100-200 years, it was bagpipes and zithers, so this string music is from a very recent couple of hundred years, and so it’s really a snapshot in terms of Hungarian folk music if you want to look at it that way. And so for Hungarians, what’s changed in the village now is that, what had kept music more homogenous was the fact that they were cut off, so they didn’t have much contact with other people and they just sort of kept to themselves. Obviously, the more things open up with radios, in the village they hear Magyar nőta from Budapest and they love it and say, great that’s what I want to learn. So if you hear Potta Géza (old primás from Slovakia famous for Magyarbődi music – now deceased) and all those guys, they have to play all sorts of tunes, American tunes, jazz standards, and they have to play waltzes, they have to play all that other repertoire as well because that’s what people want. At the end of the day, a musician, their job was to play whatever people wanted, so if they wanted that, that’s what they played. So of course, they were open always to new influences and new trends. But the folk revival movement has their stated aim of ‘protection’, so they are protecting this thing, and they reject Magyar nőta, because it is composed. So the definition, in their eyes of a folk song, is one where you can’t identify the composer. So even if a song sounds very folky and people treat it as a folk song, if someone can say ‘I know that Béla bácsi wrote that song in whenever’, then it stops being a folk song. So that’s a definition that a lot of other folk cultures don’t have, it’s good in a way, it makes it kind of clear, but I don’t think that’s how they see it in the village. Like in the village, they just say ‘this is music, you want this tune, that’s your favourite tune, I don’t care where it came from, I’m going to play it for you’. So I think it’s two different things.

TV: And I guess probably even in Budapest, there would be bands that would just play very traditionally, and then there would be other bands that have gone down the folk-fusion track, based on folk.

MR: Absolutely and I was speaking to Szalonna (Pál István) recently about this. So the point I wanted to make is, and we talked specifically about this, because he plays traditional and jazz, he’s
quite open to playing other things, of course he can play very beautifully traditional music as we know. But he himself said, ‘if I wanted to hear a really traditional band, I go to Tükrös’, that’s the top. The range goes, I’d say Tükrös would be right on the absolute end of ‘we want to play it traditionally’, to other people, there’s a whole spectrum of people going right to the other end, where they say ‘well we just want to do folky music, fusion, whatever’. So there are bands that sit right along that spectrum, but I think there are a lot of bands, more than lots of other cultures, I think there are a lot at the end saying that they’re doing traditional music. The extent to which that is true is not always...sometimes they claim to be doing things that I would say personally is not completely the case. But they still play good music, so there’s a whole gamut.

TV: That’s the end of my interview questions, I’m not sure if something else triggered while we were talking, if you wanted to say anything else?

MR: So, what’s the question you’re trying to answer, what are you investigating?

*General discussion of research topic*

MR: See, verbunks very often are csárdás played in a particular way. Within the folk tradition, it can quite often be that they can play the same csárdás melody, ultimately, it’s based on a csárdás-kind of rhythm, just more marked, certainly in the folk style. So that’s what a verbunk becomes in the end, so it’s like a csárdás, but it is specifically for this recruiting purpose. The verbunkos style was developed in the nineteenth century and perhaps was more originally associated with the cities and composed music than the older folk music emanating from the villages. Of course it crossed over into the villages. No doubt you have come across this in your research. The Verbunks are generally new style not old style (quint shifting of lines – like many of the Dunántúli ugrós tunes – which belong to this older style).

TV: A lot of these pieces (in the style hongrois), basically the formula for it, is that it starts with a slow section, like a Lassú, and some of them even have the same nóta tune which they quote. So it’s obviously these couple of tunes that are floating around, probably played at cafés, and then the second part is a Friss, it’s pretty much a csárdás. And the piano part will often have that rhythm (syncopations) like you would hear in all of our fast pieces.

*Other discussion*

MR: All of those bands like the Szatmári band, if you listen to the way they play, they’re all striving to be gypsy cigány bands, they’ll try to be like the big bands. That’s the style, personally that’s what I think they’re nodding towards, that’s what they’re aiming for. They all have varying degrees of closeness to that, but at the same time, because they’re playing for dancers, it can never be that thing, that thing can only exist with all its parlandos. Essentially, they’re (gypsies) not playing music for anyone to dance to, they’re just playing music. The traditional musicians were really well aware of whether they were playing for themselves, playing just music or playing for a dancer. And that will affect the tempo and all sorts of different things. I’d say that’s another important element. So the musicians, certainly in Transylvania but also in general, what they play is pretty much influenced by what people are either dancing or singing. If they are dancing, they follow the dancers, with the rhythms, the speeds, whatever kind of dance they want, and also the melodies. The idea was that if someone is dancing, you’d play the melody that you think they want to hear. Of course if someone is singing, wherever they start, the violinist has to follow – even if it is in a very strange key. I think that’s the other interesting aspect of Hungarian music, I’m not sure how that comes out in other cultures but, in many Mezőségi villages such as Palatka or in Szék, every tune has it’s key. So that tune you will only ever play it in that key. So then the job of the violinist becomes putting them together in a way that works in terms of key relationships from one tune to another, so you have to find a way of going to the next tune without creating some weird kind of harmonic transfer. Whereas in Kalotaszeg, theoretically, all Kalotaszegi musicians would proudly say, ‘I can play in any
key’, doesn’t matter what key. What that translates to, is that if someone starts singing in say B-flat minor, they will actually play the thing in B-flat minor, probably not beautifully, but enough to get by so they could sing. They would never say, ‘okay we’re going to do a dance, we’re going to play in D-flat minor’, they’ll play in G…mainly A, G, D, possibly C, maybe a couple of things in E, there are some Kalotaszegi legényes tunes in F. The theory there is, if you start in A you stay in A, if you start in G you stay in G. However, that’s also not quite true because this being modal music, there might be some tunes that are in A but begin in G or on some other note, you can use that as a transition point to another key. So the main reason they say you can’t change is that the brácsa player might get confused, because they know they’re in this key. Whereas if you say, ‘he’s expecting to play a G chord, if I play a G but this time, instead of in A Major it’s in G major, it’s shifted, it’s going to be okay’, you know what I mean. So the reality is, you can actually change keys. There’s also another possibility, you can say ‘I’m bored with this key’ and you can signal a change by just playing that note, that’s another thing you sometimes see. So if they really decide they need to change key for whatever reason, they do. I think all of those things are the characteristic things, but a lot of it comes down to the key factor, the musician is at the service of the people that hire them. Their role on the night is to do whatever is going to please, so the guy paying the fee, that’s the way they get the job for next time. Whereas in Classical music, the thing is to look flashy, you have to look as flashy as possible! But that’s also true to say in Kalotaszeg, within the parameters of saying, ‘Well I’ve got to play it in the right key, I’ve got to do all of these things, and I’ve got to sound flashy, because that’s the other thing that will get me a gig’. Whereas some other regions, the flashy thing doesn’t seem to be a thing. In Palatka, I think it’s really flashy but in a different way, like there’s some really fast things, I don’t know, there’s a beauty in the way they put the thing together. It’s not what you might think of flashy in the same way as Kalotaszeg, or your big gypsy orchestra thing where everyone is trying to play as many notes as they can.

**TV:** I think the beauty of that one comes in the ornamentation, just how it all fits into the melody, leading somewhere, not just decoration, but very purposeful as well.

**MR:** Yes.
TV: (What has been your involvement with Hungarian folk music/how long have you been playing?)

PR: I studied piano and first I attended chemical university. After that, I came to the Music Academy and the Musicology Department and I studied Musicology. At that time, we only had one or three semesters on folk music, and then I went to the Institute for Musicology and there I could join the work in (organising) the database of the folk music collection. At that time, it was the beginning of the 90s, and for the time it was quite a big project. The office that I began to deal with was not only music history but folk music too. One of my topics of research is the border territories between art music and folk music and what kind of sources we have from music history, from the old time, and the melodies and music material which can be found in these sources could help folk music or folk music relations. So, I’m not a practical folk musician but of course I can answer your questions. So, I’m not the same as Péter Árendás or my colleagues. And it was 2004, at the end of 2004, there was a vote about the citizenship of Hungarians who were not in Hungary but living in surrounding countries. After that vote, one of my friends Gabor, a musician who plays south Slavic music, he asked me if I had an intention to bring up a new training of folk music and if I could ask the director of the Music Academy at the time, Professor András Boto. At the beginning of 2005, I went in to Professor András Boto and he supported this idea to build up a new training program to accredit folk music. We could start with the training itself in 2007, ten years ago. Every year I taught in the Musicology Department in the Music Academy, I was involved in the teaching projects and other works in the Music Academy and I was known there and they trusted me. I could see quality. So, this is the story of how it began. So, that means, I have been a folk music teacher since 1994, and I have been involved here at the Music Academy since 2007.

TV: Is the music different from village to village? If so, how?

PR: Yes, is the music different from village to village? It depends on which part of the Hungarian language area, for example in Transylvania, because of the geography of the clan and the history of the clan, circumstances of different people, there are many differences between the repertoire and the style of performing music, not of course from village to village, but we can say small territories, for example 20km or 40km, and the next small land or territory. So we can say, there are a lot of dialects in Transylvania, lots of dialects of folk music and of course, Hungarian folk music too. You can find lots of different types of dancing, for example Kalotaszeg surrounding Cluj or Kolozsvár, and from Kolozsvár it is only 30km east of Kolozsvár and you can find an absolute other style. Of course there are stylistic similarities but they differ from each other. And of course, in other parts of Hungarian places, for example Transdanubia or Upper Land which is now Slovakia, the Great Plain, there are not such big differences between the smaller territories or parts of land. And we can see what is similar in Hungarian folk music, what can we say is universal to Hungarian folk music? Of course, there are some universal elements or features of Hungarian folk music. For example, in the music itself, when we analyse the music we can find similar scales, similar melodies, similar tunes. For example, Transdanubia, in Moldva, between them there are more than 1000km, these kind of similarities such as pentatonic melodies with fifths and sixths structures, modes and of course there are similarities in the folk customs and the musical accompaniment of these kind of customs which usually belong to religious occasions. Christian mostly but of course we have some customs which have other roots before Christian time.

TV: Is improvisation used or are melodies usually played a certain way? Is there space for individuality?

PR: Yes, of course, improvisation is not so free in folk music like in jazz. Of course it depends on the performers and what kind of genre we speak about. First of all, the ornaments. The ornaments are quite free but of course there are patterns, patterns which you must make in the ornament, but they can use it quite freely. And there is some individuality in the texts, so for
example you can say that there is a melody and this melody has a structure of eight syllables and then they can put the text under the melody. So it can be a place for individuality and of course a place for individuality of the performance style. Sometimes there can be special performers, violinists or other instrumentalists and you can recognize from the performance style who the performer is, so we don’t have to see him on a video but after listening you can recognize who plays.

TV: What is unique about playing Hungarian folk music? (Eg. Technique, ornaments, pulse, purpose of music)

PR: I think first of all, the accents, because the accents depend on the Hungarian language. And the Hungarian language is very special and there is no related language around us and so it is a unique language. So, we are unique point in the German sea of languages and that’s why the accents are important. And the accents relate some rhythmic features. Technique, I don’t think so, so the technique of singing or the technique of playing instruments, you can not say it is especially Hungarian. These techniques usually depend on the area, the people, the nationality. And the purpose of the music, that is not unique to Hungarian folk music because all people surrounding us use music for the same purpose.

TV: In your lifetime and experience, has the music changed/evolved or has tradition been successfully maintained?

PR: Yes, of course, in the tradition, needing tradition because nowadays we can say the tradition is so full of life like earlier because for this kind of tradition we need that kind of community. So, the communities of different villages share, somehow closed but not completely closed communities, earlier they did not get too much information and then they could evolve their culture. New things, new information. And of course, from this point of view, life totally changed. Now they get a lot of information, from everywhere, not only the news from the broadcast, other media, but in the music too. That’s why, the changes today are not the same kind of changes that happened earlier. So earlier, the music and tradition changed, but slowly and it had continuation of change. I don’t know how to say it but you understand. And of course, for folk traditions, this kind of tradition, it’s a new thing to come to the city to be performed on the stages and not performed according to the customs and traditions, but performed as an independent music or art entity. So that’s why the circumstances changed and that’s why we can listen to lots of new ideas based on folk music or traditional music whilst being different from folk music, the creations are absolutely different to the aesthetic of folk music. So these kind of changes could be the subject of another kind of research not the subject of folk music research.

TV: You mentioned before that you’ve looked into folk music and art music, can you tell me a little bit about that?

PR: For example, it was already Zoltán Kodály who said that the homes of village people could give the folk music, because the folk music itself, a living thing, when you find a musical historical data and source, there is nothing like it. You have to make a different way to find out how it could sound, that time, 200 or 300 years ago. And that’s why it’s very interesting when you find parallels in the historical sources, parallels in the melodies and the folk music. One part of the musical culture is the folk hymns, so we have books from the sixteenth century and seventeenth century and these kind of melodies were written there at the time, and we could collect the folk tradition at the end of the twentieth century. Also how they use it, in the historical documentation, it is always simple, you can get only the main picture, the main tones of the melody, not the whole picture of how it sounds. So that’s why it’s important and of course in the dance music too, this kind of hungaresca melodies, the sources of the sixteenth century, not only Hungarian sources but other sources of the fifteenth/sixteenth/seventeenth century, and nowadays, we can find similar dances and similar phrases of dance melodies like the historical sources. So it’s an interesting thing.
E. INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS – STYLE HONGROIS

1. LAURENCE JACKSON

LJ: It’s just interesting because like we talked about in the Bartók, Ravel and Debussy, the notation itself is so precise, what he puts downs, it’s rhythmically precise. I can understand that, particularly having worked in chamber music, you have to be so precise with French music. So I think very much, he (Ravel) was probably coming from that background, and probably Bartók in a similar way, rhythmically it has to have that precision. And when it’s precise, the gypsy elements actually have more of a chance to come through. You might think that it’s based on a more rubato approach but, perhaps, I hadn’t thought about it directly, but maybe that’s what their motivation was and so the precision shows the music in a bit of a clearer way. But that’s a great story (referencing Rudolf’s story about Heifetz), wow.

TV: Yes, it’s a good one as well because it’s always like, do you play it exactly as it’s written? Or, if you’ve got that extra knowledge, can you bring that into your interpretation? What will the audience think? Will they think you’re just doing all these weird things? It could be more informed but maybe not accepted? It’s a bit of a strange one I think.

LJ: I think it comes back to, if you present something clearly enough, like in a concert situation, and I’m not just talking rhythm, although rhythm is so important and articulation too, if you present it clearly enough, it should come over, whatever you do. And if there’s a variety of approach, variety of sound, of articulation, I think that’s also very important, because it’s very easy to have one style of doing something, and then it all blurs. If you’re always listening to what you’re doing, and expanding that range of sound, not just the quality but also the timbre, and not being frightened to make a nasty sound, to be ugly, because that gives you the contrast. Then you can present things in a way to the audience that will really interest them. I think things particularly like portamento, like we talked about earlier, it’s about having those variety of approaches. Some glissandi, they can be quite extravagant. My teacher Maurice Hasson was a fantastic violinist, an amazing player. He used to do the most amazing slides...so I used to call them bazookas. There’s one at the end of the second movement of the Paganini Concerto, top B-natural down to low B-natural on the G string, he just did one big slide...it was amazing, it was very gypsy actually. I don’t think he intended it to be gypsy-like but it was just incredibly, amazingly well done and it just worked. So I think, taking risks with the sound and thinking beyond the violin, thinking beyond what we all worry about everyday, playing in tune et cetera, but actually just listening to what you’re doing, I think that’s very important. And just experimenting.

TV: Should we jump over to the interview questions? I think we can come back to what you were saying a bit more in these questions. So what do you think are the most famous gypsy inspired pieces?

LJ: It’s interesting, there are obviously wonderful pieces, Monti Csárdás and the Hora Staccato is great, they’re wonderful. And some of the earlier gypsy music, going back to Mozart Concerto: alla turca, it seems a lot of the early gypsy...and the Gypsy Rondo of Haydn, a lot of that tends to be fast, it’s sort of a moto perpetuo, so you’ve got lots of semiquavers with syncopation. And then you get the more folk-inspired choices perhaps like Bartók and other pieces like that. I’m trying to think of other ones, there are so many actually. For me, both of the Bartók Rhapsodies are wonderful, and the violin concertos, I mean I just love them. Although that’s for me, slightly watered down, but it’s just so beautifully scored and orchestrated, it’s one of my absolute favourites. Actually, my mind has gone blank...

TV: Well I guess like Tzigane, that’s probably the most famous.

LJ: Yes, that’s probably the most famous.

TV: I guess the other one that comes to mind is Zigeunerweisen.

LJ: Yes, of course. And all the Sarasate dances are fantastic. Zigeunerweisen is perhaps the definitive one because it feels very gypsy, particularly with the Allegro section, with that rhythmical
aspect to it. It reminds me of Dvorak actually, you get these wonderful Furiant, in the Slavonic Dances you get that...it’s the rhythm, the syncopation, the speed and the repetition in fact, it’s slightly intoxicating. And Zigeunerweisen gets that, probably more than Tzigane, because Tzigane is a great piece but it’s very much Ravel. It’s fantastic, but it’s very much coming from his tradition, and from what I understand, it was very much the thing at that time for French composers to be looking to Spain. Spain was a big source of interest musically, flamenco and gypsy, Saint-Saëns did the same sort of thing as well, with Havanaise and all those wonderful pieces. So, Zigeunerweisen I think yes.

TV: It’s quite relatable that one, for an audience.

LJ: It is, it’s the right length.

TV: Also, the Monti Csárdás, it’s listenable, people can relate to it.

LJ: I think also repetition is important in a lot of this music. The listener starts to look forward to that repetition, especially when there’s a rhythmical aspect to it, if there’s a syncopation, something that’s a bit of a hook, like a hook within the line for them to catch on to. I think that’s really important, Csárdás has that in those Allegro sections. And Zigeunerweisen also has the contrast, it has that beautiful violin melody...it has pretty much everything.

TV: It’s actually quite interesting because that song, it’s not a Hungarian folk song but it’s a Hungarian art song. So, because it’s composed it’s not considered a folk song. But there are actually a couple of other pieces that have that exact same melody.

LJ: Really? Oh okay, which other pieces?

TV: There’s one by Lehar and also one of Hubay’s pieces. It’s quite interesting because then you automatically think, ‘they stole it from Sarasate’, but it’s actually an art song.

LJ: Okay, so he composed it and it’s become like an honourary folk song. Yes, interesting.

TV: I guess it’s sort of like quoting a song.

LJ: Yes absolutely. There’s a great piece by Hubay, is it Hejre Kati? So many of these pieces, but they’re not played very often.

TV: Yes, I’m looking in Hubay quite a lot, because I’d never really heard of him but he seems quite influential. He wrote 14 of those pieces.

LJ: Is Blumenleben one of them? With all the scales and arpeggios, in E Major. It’s a great piece. Blumenleben. I know it’s recorded by Ruggiero Ricci because I used to listen to it when I was a little boy, but that’s a great piece, that’s very gypsy.

TV: I’m learning Number 5 (Scènes de la Csárda No.5 “Hullámzó Balaton”) and I think that one he dedicated to Sarasate. Because a lot of people asked him to write them gypsy pieces, so he dedicated them to different people. Like that one is dedicated to Sarasate, there’s one for Leopold Auer, and that’s also one of the only recordings of Hubay playing that you can find on YouTube. It’s quite interesting. But I think Number 4 (Scènes de la Csárd) is the one you mentioned, that’s the most commonly played.

LJ: Yes, wow.

TV: Did you learn a lot of his music?

LJ: Hubay’s? No, not at all. I was given a lot of music by an aunt who played the violin, and she had a lot of old music. In England and Manchester library, there was a very big music section. I think a lot of it came from Albert Sammons, a great English violinist who I think gave the first performance of the Elgar Concerto. So he donated a lot of music to the Manchester Library, and amongst that were these volumes, all these pieces that were just unknown really, and still are probably. So that’s just how I got to know them, I used to try to play them when I was little and I didn’t have anything else to do. It was very interesting, but I’ve never performed them really because there’s not really a chance to do that. But I like actually the idea of doing concerts now, like I did in December and I’ve got another one coming up, doing a serious first half and a lighter second half. That’s rather nice. Banjo and Fiddle, a couple of Sarasate dances, Rubinstein Melody and things like that, I think it’s great to play these pieces and give them a little bit more of an airing, they certainly deserve it.

TV: That’s good, there’s just so much music out there.
LJ: Yes.
TV: Should we go to the second question? Okay, so what aspects of violin playing do you think help to create the character of this style?
LJ: I suppose with violin playing, I think actually this relates to what we have been talking about. I think it’s the variety of these things that you do. I remember, when I was in my quartet, for fun we occasionally used to put on this Hungarian folk band CD which we had, and it’s a real typical village band. I have to say, it sounded like they were each playing the wrong instrument or swapped, it was the most amazing sound. You’ll know far more about this I’m sure, every note sounded like it had a trill on it, whether it’s the vibrato or they’re doing some kind of…
TV: Yes, there’s a lot of different ornamentation.
LJ: Yes, it’s absolutely amazing. They do a scale but it’s almost like jazz, nothing is ever regular, a simple scale is not straight but it’s almost swung. Maybe that’s to fit in with the ornamentation, what they’re doing with the left hand, because it sounded as if they were doing a trill. It’s just incredibly ornate but it was the most crazy sound, we used to just, we did find it very funny but it was also great, because it’s just totally out of what we normally do. But I think, ornamentation is something I know absolutely nothing about in terms of gypsy. But I imagine that…also, how that works with the bowing as well? I mean, do they, like in jazz, do they slur over things?
TV: It really depends what sort of dance it is, because there are lots of different dances, like if it’s a couple’s dance…usually the men’s dance where they do all the slapping, those are usually pretty fast and a dotted rhythm. So it really just depends what dance it is and which region it comes from.
LJ: Yes, I see, okay.
TV: There’s a lot of variation. Like, say the brácsa, which is the viola, usually that has three strings and a flat bridge, so it’s played vertically…everyone is always like, ‘that violinist plays in a strange way’, but it’s not a violin. So the brácsa just always plays chords and once again, depending what dance or what village, their rhythm might be like…(sings a syncopated rhythm and then a different rhythm), so it sort of changes the overall feel and the sound of everything as well. Which I guess in these sort of gypsy pieces it’s found more in the piano part, you might have the left hand playing a syncopated rhythm, that sort of rhythm, you might not hear it so much in the violin part.
LJ: It’s very interesting. In my old job, the Principal Viola was Hungarian, and in concerts sometimes, he would just turn his viola. We’d be in the middle of a Mahler Symphony and he’d turn his viola, and we’d all be thinking, ‘he’s not really doing that is he, don’t look!’ He was a very good player, a terrific player, and he, Adam played a lot of Hungarian folk music as well. He’s a great guy and if you ever want to speak to him, I’m sure you’ll meet lots of other Hungarians, but he’s a Hungarian I could certainly put you in touch with. Adam Römer is his name and he’s the Principal Viola in CBSO, one of the two. And so he knows a lot of Hungarian folk, he’s on Facebook as well, so he’s a great guy and I’m sure he’d be more than happy to talk to you or help out in any way he could I’m sure, a very nice guy. But yes, he used to play like that a lot, it’s very interesting. But the ornamentation, I don’t know anything about. Portamenti, I think, like with vibrato as well, it’s about having variety, I think in terms of performance style and performance practice, it’s very important to have that range of sounds that you can do, so it’s never just one way.
TV: I think we’re on number 3 now. Aspects of performance maybe not captured through notation, maybe with a piece like Tzigane or Zigeunerweisen, is there anything that you think you would bring to the piece that’s maybe not written?
LJ: Yes, I think sound like we talked about, using a little more sul ponticello, listening to what you’re doing so there’s a variety of sounds there, you’re pushing the boundaries in terms of that aspect. So it’s not just rubato, it says rubato but actually, in terms of these pieces which we are playing, from a classical point of view, I think rubato can be spontaneous but there has to be a reason for it. Rubato is not just something that happens, it begs to happen in a way, the music needs that and it makes sense within what you’re doing within the phrase. So I think it’s the intelligent use
of rubato and the range of sounds, so playing over the bridge, and actually using perhaps no vibrato as well in terms of what we can do to help that as well. And intonation-wise, playing nicely out of tune and just enjoying being bright or leading notes can be really high, as long as they’re corrected well, it’s fine, it’s great, that gives the listener, the audience a lot of satisfaction when something is out of tune and then comes into focus again. That’s an aspect which can be brought out, definitely.

**TV:** I guess there’s lots of augmented 2nds and folky sounding scales, you could push the intervals to the extreme.

**LJ:** Yes and if you do that in conjunction with the bow, you feel it through the bow in a way, the bow helps that sound. You might be speeding up or slowing down with the bow just to emphasize that, not in a heavy way, but just to bring it out. Also bending a note, as if there’s a little hairpin on that F-natural in *Tzigane* (Figure 2), then you push with the bow, push up theintonation, make it brighter, that’s great, because it always comes back down to the B-flat, so it’s a slightly out of tune 5th, but the audience is still enjoying it because you’re always coming back to it, it feels logical. So all these little things can actually add up and make it a bit more interesting.

**TV:** In your opinion, would knowledge of Hungarian folk music be useful when learning pieces like *Tzigane* or *Zigeunerweisen* or Bartók, I mean definitely for Bartók, but you know, these other gypsy inspired pieces.

**LJ:** Oh I think undoubtedly, yes. I wish I knew Hungarian folk music, I think it would be really helpful. Absolutely because you need to know, particularly with Bartók, you want to know obviously where they’re coming from. I suppose with Ravel, it’s coming much more from the classical, from the establishment, and all those other pieces even perhaps, and Sarasate was...I don’t know much about Sarasate, I’m not sure of his background. But certainly Ravel, Saint-Saëns and those French composers were coming much more from a classical background so I think it would be helpful but you still have to approach it in a classical way. But for Bartók, yes it’s good to know, it’d be very helpful, particularly because rhythmically it’s so strong. It’s so important to feel that rhythm, not playing metronomically but in time, that’s something that you have to feel, and that the audience has to feel as well. So yes, I think it would be really helpful to know a bit about it, but I think it’s just one half of the equation. It’s important but it mustn’t override the instrumental side of it, that’s very important.

**TV:** Okay, last one. Are you aware of any common misconceptions of performances in the *style hongrois* which is the gypsy style?

**LJ:** I think, we talked about the down bows, and that aspect, but that’s not necessarily a misconception at all. I’m not convinced, I’m wondering, sometimes you hear a lot of gypsy music played very fast and I wondered actually if that was...I mean, they can play amazingly fast, I’ve heard some incredible playing, the fastest spiccato you could imagine from gypsy violinists. But I wondered how authentic that is, or whether speed matters, or whether it doesn’t matter and it can be any speed, it’s up to the individual. So I don’t know whether that’s a valid misconception, sometimes you hear young players, some people think speed is the ultimate thing and I always wondered about that. Because actually there’s the dance element to it as well, if it’s too fast you lose some of the character as well.

**TV:** And I guess because a lot of it is, with the fast bit, it’s usually for dancers. I mean, obviously if the band wasn’t playing for dancers, they could play at whatever speed they want but it doesn’t mean that they would go to the default fastest possible, they might even just go slower.

**LJ:** Yes, that’s true, exactly, absolutely.

**TV:** But it has sort of become this thing, the faster you can play...

**LJ:** Yes, it does leave me unfulfilled sometimes when I hear things so fast, but I don’t know, it can be incredibly exciting. But I’m afraid I don’t know any other misconceptions, apart from down bows and up bows. And I think, each to their own.
2. RUDOLF KOELMAN

TV: In your opinion, which late nineteenth/early twentieth century “gypsy” inspired (style hongrois) violin pieces are the most famous?
RK: In my opinion, Brahms, the piano quartets, Opus 25, they’re very famous pieces. Then of course, you have the Haydn, but it’s not nineteenth century, alla Hungaresa. What else do we have?
TV: You said Zigeunerweisen.
RK: Of course, and Tzigane, Ravel. Gypsy inspired, for sure. And wasn’t Carmen, wasn’t she a gypsy? Yes so, Bizet, also gypsy inspired. Maybe the melodies not so...yes, I think so. It’s like playing with cards, you know? Then Fritz Kreisler, he wrote two gypsy pieces as far as I know.
TV: Is that La Gitana?
RK: Of course, and Zigeunerweisen. We played a gypsy melody from Adam Skoumal. A Czech composer and he wrote this for my orchestra, very fun piece. It also has these folk melodies in it, Hungarian folk melodies.
TV: Which composers wrote in this “gypsy” style?
RK: La Gitana, that’s a nice piece, yes. And of course, there’s Zigeunerweisen. We played a gypsy melody from Adam Skoumal. A Czech composer and he wrote this for my orchestra, very fun piece. It also has these folk melodies in it, Hungarian folk melodies.
TV: Of course, Sarasate, Ravel, Brahms, Haydn, but that’s not your centuries. Kreisler and there must be many more.
TV: Yes, they’re probably the most famous, the biggest pieces.
RK: Of course, Csárdás from Monti.
TV: Yes, that’s right.
RK: That’s almost the most famous.
TV: Yes, I think that’s probably the most famous.
RK: So then, next question. What aspects of violin playing do you think help to create the character of this style? Yes, the vibrato, the intensity, bow pressure, that you sustain the notes, this is very important. Portamento means glissandi, right?
TV: Yes.
RK: Of course, yes. I think that you have to master the different glissandi. You have to sustain the bow pressure in the glissando. Not as we learn, ‘oh don’t do a glissando’.
TV: Yes, it’s okay for it to be heard.
RK: Yes, you can just play. But always when you do that, keep in mind that the glissando is not the important thing, but the leading note, the note you are going to.
TV: Yes.
RK: That has to be intense with vibrato. But of course, Brahms, he wrote the Hungarian Dances.
TV: Yes, there are many.
RK: 24.
TV: And then I guess there’s Liszt as well, but that was more for piano.
RK: Yes, and you know Brahms also did a lot of Hungarian things in the Violin Concerto. You wouldn’t say, but some passages sound very Hungarian, even right at the beginning. (Plays the opening passage from the Brahms Violin Concerto, Bars 90-92).
Some passages in the Brahms Violin Concerto and Zigeunerweisen even sound similar. (Plays an excerpt from Zigeunerweisen, Bar 4. Plays an excerpt from the Brahms Violin Concerto, Bars 304-308 and then an excerpt from Zigeunerweisen, Bars 13-15).
Yes, it’s very similar. Also, the opening of the Third Movement of the Brahms Violin Concerto (Plays an excerpt from the Brahms Violin Concerto, Bars 1-4)
So, he loved Hungarian music and Hungarian culture.
TV: Can you describe aspects of performance that might not be captured through written notation? (Eg. Dance character, rubato)
RK: So, the style, the vibrato and the portamento are aspects that might not be captured through notation. Also dance character and rubato. But that also relates to your fifth question actually, in your opinion, if you know Hungarian folk music, if you get into that and you hear all these gypsies play, will it help with understanding the different styles? I think also articulation is important, like with guitar, you get a different articulation too. Shorter things, for example the melody in Zigeunerweisen (sings an example from Zigeunerweisen, opening of the Allegro molto vivace)...there is really dancing there, but if you would look in the scores, you would play it like a classical musician, it’s not fun.

TV: I think sometimes with the short articulations, like the staccato, we would automatically think very short, as a classical player, but a lot of the time when it’s written, it’s a different character.

RK: Yes.

TV: In your opinion, would knowledge of Hungarian folk music be useful when learning and interpreting music of the style hongrois? If so, how?

RK: The knowledge of Hungarian folk music, of course. I’m not sure if you’ve seen it, a documentary where they go from India, they go over the Silk Road, visiting all these countries in between. They go to Spain, and they always compare with playing, with guitar and different instruments, that the style slowly changes from country to country because of the instruments. It’s very interesting. I don’t know the name, I saw it maybe 25-30 years ago, you were not even born! And I always remember that as being one of the most interesting films I ever saw. This flamenco music, guitars, you really hear the Indian influence in that if you point it out. Different instruments, but you still hear this. Gypsies of course were travelling a lot, they are free, there are no borders for gypsies.

TV: Do you play any folk music yourself?

RK: Not so much, no. But my son has a Balkan band and they are quite successful, they have a lot of concerts. He has more concerts than I do. He plays twice a week, they play everywhere. And he invites clarinet players from Serbia, trumpet players, really famous people they invite. But they only play this folk music.

TV: Would you mind telling the Heifetz story again? (Just in case it didn’t record).

RK: From Ravel? Heifetz always had these anecdotes you know. When I was playing Tzigane he said, you know I had the premier in Paris. You hear that and you can just imagine, wow what an honour, such a famous piece, wow. At that time, it was probably not so famous. It was in Paris and Ravel was going to come, and so Heifetz practiced a lot. Ravel came to the hotel room and there was a request that he would like to hear in advance before the concert, Heifetz playing Tzigane. So Heifetz allowed Ravel to come and they met in the hotel room and Heifetz played. Ravel said “If you play like this, I will walk out of the concert hall.” And during your playing when the composer walks out, it’s not so good. It was the next day, so Heifetz agreed that he would play the specific version that Ravel wrote, with all the little signs. But then also Heifetz argued that he has to sell the piece and Ravel can write it but he had to play it and sell it to the audience. So that is a strong argument. And then Heifetz played the original version at the premiere and it was a big success. Ravel didn’t walk out of the room and he had a very good review in the newspaper. Ever after, he played his own version and as he said, he was quite successful with that! So that’s the story!

TV: So he even left out a couple of those little bits as well?

RK: Yes, as I told you, he left the flageolets (harmonics) out (bar before Figure 3). And then in the last page, he plays an octave higher (Rudolf demonstrates the passage, Figure 29 Bar 5 – Figure 31 Bar 4). Actually, what you can do is listen to the recording and then you will hear some changes. For instance, (Rudolf demonstrates Figure 13 Bars 8-9) I think Heifetz played with the bow and not pizzicato, but I do pizzicato. And Ravel writes pizzicato. And at the ending (final bar), Heifetz said when you play with orchestra, you have to play with the bow and not pizzicato otherwise you won’t hear it. He also held the last note longer.

TV: So, do you do those things as well?
RK: No, I don’t. I only do the octave here (Rudolf demonstrates Figure 29 Bar 5 – Figure 30) instead of how it’s written lower, because that really goes up.

TV: Yes, the register is not great.

RK: On the other hand, you’re in very high position so you already pre-tell the ending. The ending goes very high, so you could also argue with that. To start lower and then build it up to the higher position.

TV: Just one last little thing, do you know much about Hubay?

RK: No

TV: Do you play his pieces at all?

RK: No but of course I’ve heard recordings.

TV: That’s okay, I was just interested because in Australia, I’d never really heard of him and I was just curious as to whether in Europe he was more played.

RK: There is a piece called The Violinmaker, I cannot recall how it goes but he wrote many pieces.

TV: I was just curious whether in Europe he is more known, more played, maybe more in Hungary.

RK: This is before Kreisler I would say.

TV: He would’ve written around the time of Zigeunerweisen and Tzigane and those pieces.

RK: So he was after Kreisler or during?

TV: He was late 1800s/early 1900s. But I guess when you have such big famous pieces like this, Tzigane and Zigeunerweisen, if it’s not on the same par, and once something comes into the violin repertoire, then every violinist wants to play that piece.

RK: But I’m sure that you could do some research on Hubay. Did he write a violin concerto?

TV: Yes he wrote four. He wrote 14 pieces, like gypsy pieces, with the slow first movement and then a fast second movement, sort of like Zigeunerweisen, or any of these really. And he dedicated them to all his violinist friends because they all wanted him to write gypsy pieces for them.

RK: Yes, in the old days they used to do that, now they don’t do that anymore.

TV: So there’s one for Sarasate, there’s one for Auer.

RK: Great.

TV: So I was just interested as to whether...

RK: No, I’m not so into it. But I think once I was teaching a violin concerto of his. I’m not sure which one it was but I didn’t find it such a good piece. It was very difficult also, a lot of octaves. But maybe I’m mistaking him and there’s no violin concerto of Hubay.

TV: No, there is. Do you have anything else that you’ve thought of?

RK: No, in the gypsy things? I told you about Skoumal and the gypsy melodies...now I will probably sit on the plane and think ‘why didn’t I remember this?!’

TV: That’s okay, you can always email me. Excellent, thank you!
VS: Hubay, actually his gypsy style was a little bit like Franz Liszt, but Jenő Hubay was like an amateur composer in the gypsy style. And of course it’s like salon music, what they were trying to do, of course Liszt realised it you know, and Hubay too, because you find recordings in his violin concertos, and any movement, I didn’t find any gypsy playing style.

TV: In Hubay?

VS: Yes, in his more serious music, there are many gypsy-root oriented music, of course, it’s interesting in that way. It does not deny that he liked, for example, Brahms so much. Gypsy music, gypsy playing, and they even studied as far as I know, like how the gypsy musicians are so much educated in classical music and in their own repertoire. And nowadays especially, we have many more gypsies involved with concerts here, like playing quartets, soloists, orchestral musicians, on an absolute exempt manner. So there were far less gypsies who were running along the streets, playing in the pubs or something, and that makes me really overjoyed, because seeing the time change after 100 years, this was a complete assimilation of the gypsy musicians, of course not every one, but it was nice that there was no border between the classical and gypsy music, especially musicians. So going over this topic, Hubay was Head of the Hungarian Violin School, good friend of Vieuxtemps and Sarasate, an unbelievable man and figure at his time. But I’m wondering like, why he was attracted to this gypsy music, because, yes, he wrote a lot of these gypsy style pieces and even I’ve played them, Scènes de...

TV: Scènes de la Csárdá?

VS: Yes, they’re unbelievable, and many of them played by his very well-known, famous students and nowadays found on YouTube: the very old recordings. At least YouTube puts up good material, otherwise you always see the same. I think he was also good at experimenting, like Liszt, looking at the roots of the music. Because at that time, there was an indication of searching how deep our Hungarian or art music notes are rooted in the mother soul and whether it’s gypsy music or something else? Because at that time, no one knew, like Bartók later who went out collecting songs and folk music, but he was right after that stream of Hubay, and especially much later than Liszt. These pieces are likely Hungarian, so I think it’s interesting, but it was only a short, or more-or-less short way to show this. So you are asking, or it is written, the Hungarian style. Actually the Hungarian style is much more grab-able in the music of Weiner, Dohnányi, Bartók, Kodály, Lavotta and beg your pardon if I’ve left anyone out, but I think these composers basically constructed the basis of twentieth century music. For example Kodály, he wrote a wonderful Duo for Cello and Violin, it’s based on folk music and a little bit also the Serenade for 2 Violins and Viola, which is one of the most loveable chamber music pieces written by him. Not to mention the Dohnányi, actually the Dohnányi repertoire is trying to avoid gypsy orientation but it’s completely based on the Hungarian folk songs. I mentioned the Kodály era, but also I should mention Bartók. So Bartók was another case, he was avoiding the gypsy roots or gypsy blood, but he was interested in discovering even the North-African, and Arabic, Slovakian, Romanian, all kinds of neighbouring countries’ folk music. And at that time of course, it was much easier to go down to a village and see...nowadays can we find anyone, everyone is on their smartphones. And turning back to the topic, Hungarian style, the five notes, the pentatonic, which is based on the folk music. There are many sharp rhythms inside, the syncopations, but of course, the whole figuration and the constellation of these notes, it is more or less possible to recognise the Hungarian sound. Also, I think what Liszt more or less discovered or knew was changes of harmonies. I think it’s most important in Bartók’s music, the specific thirds usage, so like 1-3, 3-5, 5-7, 7-9, it’s actually the normal, but that way if you try to count back from the top, like 4-1, 4-1, then it would be very Hungarian. Roaming inside of the notes, if you hear that, then it’s already close to Hungary. What else to mention, basically the instrumentation and a lot folk song involvement, so I don’t know if I sift through their major pieces, for example the First and Second Rhapsody, nothing else, just folk music at every corner. If I think of the Second Rhapsody, folk but sometimes it is kind of artificial music, so it’s real music. Violin Concerto (2), already it’s just
pentatonic. Even the Violin Concerto is written in a scientific way because one third of the violin concerto is pentatonic, one third is twelve-tone, and the last third is a mixture of both, so it’s unbelievable how much they were thinking about folk music. That’s why if I see influence of gypsy music and the Hungarian style based of folk music, the rate is like around 9-1 to the Hungarian folk music. So Bartók of course, and for example, Ravel Tzigane, or the Hubay showpieces, they are yes, they are using these pieces as a source of music, so it’s very interesting.

TV: Do you have any other pieces which you think are really famous gypsy inspired pieces? Well you just said Tzigane and Hubay.

VS: Even going through Sarasate music, it’s difficult to find what is only gypsy. Probably the gypsy players were inspiring, like Bihari for example is a Hungarian, earlier in the nineteenth century, mid-nineteenth-century, he was a real gypsy person who was earning money almost like jumping on the table, playing like one hour at the weddings. But he became so famous later on, I heard he was invited probably to Austria to play for the Emperor, no one knows if it’s really true, it’s kind of a rumour still. It’s difficult to find. You know, Tzigane, was composed for a classical musician Jelly (D’Arányi) who was far from a gypsy, it’s interesting. Of course, it’s a little bit like Turkish music in Mozart, because Mozart, after the Turkish army went away, was so happy to listen, because they were always running up and down the walls of Vienna, but that’s it, they just guessed that it was Turkish music. So almost, it’s more or less, the resemblance is kind of similar. Actually Brahms, the Hungarian Dances was a little bit inspired by gypsy music because actually Brahms and Hubay were visiting very frequently the gypsy violinists part. This melody, (sings the opening to Brahms’s Hungarian Dance No. 5) it’s far from a Hungarian melody, so probably just the name is Hungarian. So if you are good enough, or you have enough patience, to search for the origin of that, probably I’m not far from the truth, you can easily find some gypsy melody.

TV: Well, let’s talk about the playing style and how you approach the music to try and create the character. So what sort of things do you think you would do in your playing to bring that out? Maybe the vibrato or portamento?

VS: Yes, of course these sort of things, and right hand techniques kind of like flying bows, half-staccato, portamento, just like you mentioned. Also, in time, how much freedom is possible to generate in one passage, and it’s of course up to the character, up to the ornaments, or it’s own configuration, also the harmonies. Also the vibratos, wider and broader vibratos, not the Mozart kind of very small and almost nothing. Of course the sound, the heaviness, the volume, all are part of this. I think this kind of rough, emotional passion, big fortes, always trying to get to the peak as many times as possible.

TV: And do you think, when you look at the music, do you think it captures the style? Or are there things that you do to bring out the character?

VS: Actually, I don’t really believe real Hungarian music, or real German music, nowadays everything is international, it’s much easier to cross borders, in a good or a bad way. I think everyone or anyone who wants to search and understand styles can get it within some hours, the real knowledge of how to do so. So I don’t think there’s a special Hungarian secret or way of playing, rather I believe the honesty or sincerity in music is the key or the code for understanding deeper, of local source of something. Hungarian style has a lot of features like being a little bit capricious, a little bit easy, hot blooded, hot tempered, without consideration doing everything, not much like Germans full of consideration and plans inside, for example like me, but if you study a little more you will be like this and at once, you will lose your Hungarian origin, what’s not so bad. Nowadays, I think the entire country underwent this change and I think it’s very good. Actually, the earlier Hungarian behaviour was rather that, and it’s why we lost 1956 because it was not very carefully prepared and it was many ad hoc movements by the government. Even historically, many tragedies happened because of the Hungarian mentality. I think nowadays the Hungarian mentality or Hungarian style is going to a much more comfortable, still powerful, but more conscious and educated and polite. So this kind of stuff, one of the major headlines in the future, how to behave and why to behave like this. Even inside this music, of course we are very emotional, we are
passionate, we are crazy in one sense, like working or loving or that kind of thing, but not anymore losing our temper so easily, and that’s good. But back to the topic, music of course, it’s written opposite, like headless, running, breaking, smashing, but nowadays, even the music has calmed down a little. I think even our blessed anthem is rather painful than Hungarian, like this headless running or something. History is an interesting thing, what really inspires or sets people of the country.

TV: Do you think that having knowledge about the Hungarian folk music would help in interpreting?

VS: Absolutely, yes this is for sure because the Hungarian folk music is so rich and the text, the lyrics are of utmost importance, because they really contain the essential moments and feelings, all kinds of really precious, heartfelt things, which is probably what the Hungarian spirit is in folk music, it’s written down. That is, I think probably the best question, because that detail means the country, the folk music, very much.

TV: Okay, so the last one? Have you noticed when people play this sort of music, is there something that they do, you think, that is completely wrong?

VS: No I think like what I mentioned earlier, good musician bad musician. No I don’t believe like we have the secret case of something. This country is rich in musicians, in heritage, in music, in composers, but doesn’t know anything better than anybody else, or any other country. We are all very happy to live together and appreciate the other’s precious virtues, and joys, and heritage. I think if you study a little more than two days of one country’s music, you can get to almost the same level as the average player. After, of course, it’s up to you, how far you want to soar or ascend. I think also in interpretation, disastrous mistakes, it’s not because of not being Hungarian or not German, but because of wrong musician. Of course, anyone who thinks they know something, that’s already bad. Without daily study, there’s no life beyond the culture. The culture is so rich, bringing things to our life, and always changing and always surprising me. I feel rather worse and worse, like I’m much less educated than I thought earlier, because it’s really like the galaxy, it’s stretching. Or maybe I didn’t know earlier enough, it’s amazing, I’m not talking just about music, but also science, how fast it’s improving and all kinds of beyond. Endurance, I think is like the number one thing in life, like if you are still wanting and fighting for something just one time, I think that completely decides life and our future. There are many good countries and nations, so I’m not so confident about myself but I’m confident about our future.
ERIKA TÓTH

TV: So we were just talking before about the three separate styles; the folk, the verbunkos and then the gypsy style, they are all very different. So, we’re looking more at the gypsy style and the verbunkos. Some of the pieces I’m looking at are by Hubay and even though it’s not Hungarian, Tzigane by Ravel, so those sorts of pieces. Are there any that you think are really important in the violin repertoire, maybe some that you do with your students?

ET: Through the classical repertoire, already Haydn wrote not violin pieces but chamber music pieces, there is a gypsy trio called Gypsy Trio, the fast movement, Gypsy Rondo and there is a string quartet movement called alla zingarese. So it’s already in Haydn’s time, it showed up, we don’t know actually what it is was, where, probably in the village somewhere he worked, that rhythmical music and that feeling, that’s probably what he heard. Later on, of course Brahms is quite famous for writing the Hungarian Dances. What he probably heard, there is no evidence how far ago, but he probably heard it in a café or restaurant in Buda or in Pest or maybe in Vienna, because there were Hungarian restaurants. Hungarian gypsies were playing throughout Europe. Gypsies, played all sorts of music, Hungarian music as well, but they had a special way of playing with a lot of improvisation. They never played twice the same, just like in jazz. So I would say, the early twentieth-century gypsy inspired music not necessarily original Hungarian...In Hubay’s case, it’s probably the old traditional verbunkos music that he heard, showing his strong national feeling towards his country. He wrote so many pieces for violin, chamber music, orchestral, operas or operettas. Not very often played today. The other part, like Sarasate and Ravel, I would say, in music history, I would put them... Because Wagner went to the very end harmonically and in style and became a big question, which way to go on. Many composers like Debussy, Ravel, Stravinsky or Bartók, they were experimenting, searching for something completely different. And I think they got their inspiration from those exotic music styles like gypsy music, like gamelan music, like Bartók went to the villages collecting very old village music. Then of course came Schoenberg who said the 12-tone system is the only way to go on. So there are so many different ways in searching for a new direction. I would say Hubay’s music and gypsy style of music in Hungary was a sort of popular style music, not very revolutionary in the history of music.

TV: You know how you mentioned before Bihari, those composers, and Lavotta, where do you think they fit? Sort of like Hubay?

ET: They were the first representatives of the verbunkos music, the music of the Hungarian aristocracy and developing bourgeoisie around the 1830s. They were all violinists. Hubay has pieces mainly operas and operettas in that style too, but his music was influenced by other European performer-composers of his time, like Liszt or Vieuxtemps for example.

TV: Because he travelled quite a lot as well, so he would have had a lot of influences from different countries.

ET: They say his violin playing style was French, the most French style violin playing because he had such a virtuoso bow technique, very brilliant bow technique. I don’t know if you’ve read books about his teaching...

TV: I’ve read a bit. Wasn’t he the longest serving member at the Academy?

ET: Yes, he was.

TV: And he had a lot of famous students.

ET: Yes, a big school, a big violin school, really famous.

TV: He was the Head of the Hungarian Violin School.

ET: Yes, the Liszt Academy was formed in 1875. Hubay’s father was the first teacher on the violin. They started off teaching violin and piano only at the beginning. About ten years later, when Jenő Hubay got back from Belgium, he formed the artists section of the Music Academy.

TV: So, should we talk about playing style a little bit? The gypsy style when we look at pieces like Tzigane or Zigeunerweisen, gypsy inspired, not necessarily Hungarian inspired, but gypsy inspired. So, say you were to look at the music and play exactly how it’s written, it probably won’t
have the same character, are there things you think you would do in your playing to perhaps bring out the character a bit more?

ET: Yes, of course it’s hard to explain what you do and how much you do it, it’s very hard to feel. It’s the same as, I probably won’t be able to play jazz because it’s not in my blood so it would be very difficult for me to learn, some people have more talent in that style. It’s hard to tell exactly. In the Ravel (Tzigane), of course it’s the Introduction, the big violin solo, this is the most Hungarian part which one can say the gypsies…it’s a very decadent sort of music, because it is always down at the end of the motives or phrases. It has that feeling of gypsy, or the accenting, how to accent, and of course that (Figure 20 of Tzigane), it sounds very gypsy of course. Also, when the piano come in after the violin cadenza, that could be a cimbalom. The Sarasate piece, there are of course lots of tiny notes, that’s when you can play free with lots of rubato and high played rubato.

TV: Up to the individual again?

ET: Yes, you can play it all sorts of ways. Have you heard there are a couple of performances by Sarasate? He was a very brilliant and virtuoso player.

TV: Do you think there is anything that isn’t written in the music that would be useful for the style, maybe the vibrato..?

ET: Yes, but it’s in every kind of music there are many things, we are always looking behind the notes, that’s what it’s about. One plays the notes and it’s nothing, everything starts afterwards. So, it’s of course, for that music, the improvisation has been written down, so it should sound like an improvisation, that’s the main thing I think. Of course, with the vibrato, everyone has a different vibrato so it’s hard to say that this vibrato is the one. Of course, sometimes you can start without vibrato and then start it later on, you can shift or using portamento, just like in the language, it makes a difference where you put the accent. So with the shifting, you have to have a taste for it, where to put the portamento. It’s hard to say, ‘you only do the portamento when...’, it’s really hard to say. And how Hubay played, how he taught...the kids today don’t feel music in the same way, they don’t have or it’s not fashionable or trendy to play in that style anymore. They play those pieces but not always in the right style. It’s hard, it has a special flavour, special sound, very sensitive, overly sensitive, you know, but you can hear if you listen to Sarasate, or Kreisler, or Mischa Elman or even Heifetz’s playing, you hear that very violinistic, very sensitive, they are all different of course, but in that sort of style. So we teach Hubay’s pieces here. Some of them of course, there are so many. And even for younger students, there are some excellent pieces.

TV: He wrote so many.

ET: So many. For every student, for the exams, he probably saw some problems with their technique and then wrote them a piece. Not necessarily as a composer, but as a teacher. He was a great figure in the Hungarian’s music life and in his time, he was amazing.

TV: Most people that I’ve spoken to in Australia hadn’t really heard of him. It’s amazing how many pieces he wrote, and he was a chamber musician as well, travelling soloist, everything.

ET: Conductor, composer, he played string quartets as well, he did everything.

TV: There are a couple of recordings on YouTube of him playing, so I will learn those pieces as well.

ET: But that was actually the time I think, like Auer, he was Hungarian as well and he did everything in his life the same. Of course, he was the most famous teacher too, but he started off playing string quartets in Germany and then he went to St Petersburg and he was the Concertmaster of the opera. And he was a conductor later on, so he did everything too, so that was the time I think. Those great figures, sort of Romantic style even.

TV: Interesting, so much music out there! So, I’m also learning Bartók’s Second Rhapsody.

ET: Sure, you know that’s Romanian, mostly Romanian folk music. The first one (Rhapsody) is Hungarian.