

**ZOLTÁN GÁRDONYI'S CHAMBER MUSIC:
A FANTASIA FOR VIOLIN AND ORGAN INSPIRED BY THE TUNE
OF THE HYMN ENTITLED „AZ ÉN IDŐM, MINT A SZÉP NYÁR”
("MY TIME IS LIKE THE SHINY SUMMER")**

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SUMMARY. This paper analyses Gárdonyi Zoltán's musical work *Fantasia for Violin and Organ inspired by the Tune of the Hymn entitled "Az én időm mint a szép nyár"* (*My Time is like the Shiny Summer*). The musical work is placed in the historical context of its creation. Starting from the analysis of the basic song, the paper presents the architectural scheme of the piece, the proportions of the component sections, their metre and tonality. Then, it describes the musical content of each section, by illustrating the description of its content by musical examples.

Keywords: Gárdonyi Zoltán, Fantasia, Violin, Organ, chamber music, hymn, analyse

Chamber music has an important place in the musical oeuvre of Zoltán Gárdonyi, along with choir pieces and orchestral music. Playing music together with other family members and friends, especially in the drawing room of his quarters in Budapest stimulates his keenness to compose in this particular genre. Dezső Karasszon mentions in the biography of the composer that „*It is impossible that it would be by mere coincidence that most of his musical pieces composed in the '20s and '30s are compositions for piano, songs with piano accompaniment and chamber music for piano, namely the exact same genres that were repeatedly played in his Üllői road quarters. While the three sonatas for two pianos (1928, 1929, 1938) offer us a glimpse to those extraordinary moments when Mária Weigl and Zoltán Gárdonyi played chamber music together.*”²

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² Karasszon, Dezső, *Zoltán Gárdonyi*, in: Magyar zeneszerzők 8., Mágus kiadó, Budapest, 1999, p. 4.

Zoltán Gárdonyi handed down to posterity many chamber music pieces as the list of his works made by his son (Zsolt Gárdonyi) proves.³

Besides ecclesiastical and secular choir pieces a cappella and with accompaniment, besides orchestral music, solo pieces for piano and organ and transcripts he composed also many songs for voice and piano and chamber music pieces for strings and winds.

Table 1

Chamber music for strings

- Piano trio no 1 – 1922; no 2 – 1923; no 3 – 1928
 String trio no 1 – 1927/1949; no 2 – 1928; 1st perf = Munich 1929
 First sonata, violin, piano – 1929
 String sextet – 1932
 String-quartet no 1 – 1933; no 2 – 1936; 1st perf = Sopron 1939 (This piece was destroyed during the war and the composer wrote it down again from memory in 1946-47, 1st perf = Budapest 1947)
 Second sonata for violin, piano – 1937, 1st perf = Sopron, 1938 (author, József Horváth)
 Piano quartet – 1939
 Rondo capriccioso for violin, piano – 1941, PUB = EWM 1997
 Sonata for two violins – 1941
 Quintet with a piano (Hungarian divertimento) – 1941, 1st perf = Eger 1948
 Serenade for violin, piano – 1942
 First sonata for viola, piano – 1944
 Third sonata for violin, piano – 1944
 Sonata for cello, piano – 1944, 1st perf = Budapest, 1944 (author, Ferenc Mihály), PUB = EMB 1986
 Two folk songs for four violins – 1948
 Second sonata for viola, piano – 1950, PUB = EWM 1998
 Suite for doublebass, piano – 1952
 Hungarian dance fantasia for doublebass, piano – 1953
 Third string-quartet – 1954, 1st perf = Budapest 1954, PUB = EMB 1970
 Two small rhapsodies for cello, piano – 1954, 1st perf = Budapest, Fészek Club 1955 (Zsolt Gárdonyi and the author), PUB = EMB 1956, A = for his son, Zsolt for his 8th birthday
 Roundel for violin, piano – 1954, 1st perf = Budapest, Fészek Club 1955 (Hajna Gárdonyi and the author), PUB = EMB 1956, A = for his daughter, Hajna for her 9th birthday
 Third small rhapsody for violin, cello, piano – 1955
 Girls' dance for violin, piano – 1956

³ Idem (continue to: idem), pp. 23-32.

- Melody for violin, piano – 1956
Sonata for doublebass, piano, „Il serioso ed il giocoso” – 1957, 1st perf = Budapest 1957, PUB = EWM 1997
Easy violin duos – 1961, PUB = EMB 1961
Fantasia for violin, organ – 1968, 1st perf = Oroszlány 1968 (author, Hajna Gárdonyi), PUB =EWM 1996
Hommage à Händel for violin, piano/organ – 1972
Variations for a dance melody for flute, violin, piano, cello – 1958/1982

Chamber music for Winds

- Wind quartet – 1926, lost
First Wind Septet – 1926, lost
For Furulya⁴, for a group of flutists in 2-3 voices – 1939, PUB = MK 1939
Small concert for three Furulya – 1939, PUB = MK 1939, EMB 1969
Sonatina for two Furulya – 1942, PUB = EMB 1969
„Merry music” for two and three Furulya – 1943, PUB = MK 1944
Second reed seventh (Jubilee Pictures) for oboe, clarinet, bassoon, horn, trumpet, trump, tuba – 1948, 1st perf = Budapest 1948
Sonata for tuba and piano – 1948/51, PUB = EWM 1998
Fantasia for oboe and piano – 1956
Wind quintet for flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, horn – 1958/61, 1st perf = Budapest 1958, resp. 1965, PUB = EWM 1998
Sonatina for clarinet and piano – 1959
Sonata for flute and piano – 1960
Sonata in memoriam G.F. Händel for trumpet, organ – 1977
Cassazione für 6 Blockflöten – 1980, 1st perf = Wiesbaden 1980, PUB = Musikverlag Zimmerman Frankfurt 1980
Furulya sound, folk songs for voice with 1 and 2 Furulya, PUB = MK 1940, EMB 1969; vol. II: with 2 recorders, PUB = MK 1948, EMB 1968 (entitled „Furulyázzunk!” /”Let us play to the Furulya!”)
Pastorale for three Furulya, PUB = MK 1940⁵

Composing and playing chamber music was an important part of the Gárdonyis's life also in the period when he lived in Sopron, since he was the president of the Franz Liszt Musical Association of Sopron. „...*although most of the time the choir and the orchestra had their own performances at the concerts given by the Association and their repertoire contained quite often chamber music pieces, songs with piano accompaniment and solo pieces*

⁴ Furulya = “a six-holed flute used in Hungarian folkmusic, in major or Mixolydian scale”, in: *Terminorum Musicae Index Septem Linguis Redactus*, Akadémiai kiadó, Budapest, 1978, p. 216. (Eng. shepherd's pipe)

⁵ Karasszon Dezső, U.o., 26-27. old.

with instrumental accompaniment (...) The basis for the intense work done at the Association and the secret of his professional success was the enviably rich chamber music culture of the town. In Sopron groups composed of colleagues and friends with the most varied membership played music together, one could say daily, not only on the occasion of concerts, but also at family gatherings and social events as well and soon Zoltán Gárdonyi found himself to be the piano accompanitor of the entire town. This is the reason why Sopron 'could become Köthen' for him as a composer: for besides the chamber music repertoire of the 18th and 19th centuries, especially playing Beethoven's, Schumann's and Brahms's sonatas, piano trios, quartets and quintets there was wide room for one to try out and present one's own compositions as well.⁶

He composes and offers as a gift chamber music pieces also for the birthdays of his two children, in 1954. I quote from a letter written by the composer's son (dated 1st November 2016): *"also these two pieces are very dear to me: I received the "Two small rhapsodies" for my 8th birthday (1954) and shortly after I played them in public, at the festival of pedagogical pieces, in the Fészek Club in Budapest, while my father accompanied me on piano. At the same time another piece was composed, the "Roundel", for my sister, Hajna's 9th birthday. A year later we received as a gift from father the "Third small rhapsody", another fine piece of music for violin, cello and piano (which we presented together, the three of us)."*

Out of Zoltán Gárdonyi's chamber music compositions I will do a detailed study of his fantasias. The particularity of this genre is that it sheds a light and formulates the feelings, thoughts and fantasies of the composer. This genre allows the composer to let his fantasy fly and he no longer necessarily follows even the rules and formal schemes of music or the traditional stylistic and compositional techniques. He just plays his instrument free from restrictions. And if he decides to put his composition on paper, posterity is lucky since such a piece offers a glimpse into the most intimate part of the composer's soul. I consider that due to the improvisational nature of the genre a fantasia offers a composer the space to be absolutely honest, to be himself.

I looked up "fantasia" in the title of his several hundred compositions. He has decided eight times to use this genre in the following pieces presented in chronological order:

⁶ Footnote: *"This is the reason why the dates of the first performance of his chamber music pieces composed in Sopron are unknown and it is practically imposible to find them out through research, since the compositions have been presented to small audiences and thus they usually did not get a review"* (D. Karasszon, Op. cit. P. 15)

Table 2

<i>Fantasia super „Vater unser im Himmelreich”</i>	1934	Organ piece based on a chorale tune		
<i>Advent fantasia</i>	1943	Organ piece based on a chorale tune		Published by: Magyar Kórus, Budapest.
<i>Easter fantasia</i>	1950	Organ piece based on a chorale tune		
<i>Hungarian dance fantasia for doublebass and piano</i>	1953	Chamber music piece for string		
<i>Fantasia for oboe and piano</i>	1956	Chamber music piece for winds		Published by: Hangvilla Bt., Debrecen
Fantasia for violin and organ inspired by the tune of „Az én időm, mint a szép nyár”	1968	Chamber music piece for string	1st perf: Oroszlány, 1968 (Gárdonyi Hajna, author)	Published by: Ed. Walhall, Magdeburg, 1996.
<i>Psalm fantasia inspired by the tune of the 107th Genevan Psalm (Dedicated to „his son, Zsolt”)</i>	1976	Organ piece based on a chorale tune	1 st perf: Wildeshausen, 1976	Published by: Ed. Walhall, Magdeburg, 1999 (Psalm-Fantasie)
<i>Fantasia „Victimae paschali laudes”</i>	1980	Organ piece based on a chorale tune	1 st perf: Debrecen, 1981	

I acquired the fantasia for violin and organ entitled „Az én időm, mint a szép nyár” (*My Time Is Like the Shiny Summer*) composed in 1968 and completed on 2nd October in the form of a copy of the original manuscript written by the composer. The manuscript is literally fine looking. It denotes a man with clear thinking, an orderly, accurate, disciplined, serious, slightly somber, conformist and demanding man.

The composer defined the duration of the composition: 8 minutes.
The fantasia is inspired by the following hymn:

E.g. 1

Az én i - dőm, mint a szép nyár.
Men - ten el - jár, Nem mesz - sze tő - lem a vég.
Ám a lé - lek el nem c - nyész. Söt bé - re
lesz Jó, vagy jaj: po - kol, vagy ég.

The hymn has 10 more stanzas besides the above mentioned one. Sándor Berkesi writes about this hymn in 1998 in the *Reformátusok Lapja* (*Reformed Review*): "The tune of this hymn was composed by Mihály Holéczy (the hymn book mistakenly writes Sámuel Holéczy), a Lutheran cantor of Rév-Komárom and it can be found in his register for choral pieces entitled *Psalmodia*.

In the case of music teaching it is important to know that rhythm denotation can be tricky. The basic unit of the proper tempo in this case is not the quarter, but the half note. The halved notes of the Lutheran hymn book suggest the correct tempo."⁷

The 14 measures of the song are divided into two periods of 7 measures each, in which the motives are 3 + 2 (addition) + 2 / 3 + 2 (addition) + 2 for the measures and they form the following structure:

⁷ Berkesi, Sándor *Gyülekezeti énekiskola (Ecclesiastical School of Music)*. *Az én időm, mint a szép nyár*, in: *Reformátusok Lapja*, 1998.

The image displays four staves of musical notation in G major, illustrating the structural analysis of a song. Each staff includes lyrics and structural annotations:

- Staff 1:** Lyrics: "Az én i - dóm, mint a szép nyár." Annotations: α (spanning the entire phrase), x (spanning "Az én i - dóm"), and y (spanning "mint a szép nyár").
- Staff 2:** Lyrics: "Men - ten el - jár, Nem mesz - sze tő - lem a vég." Annotations: "addition (motivic cell)" (spanning "Men - ten el - jár"), Y_{var1} mirror (spanning "Men - ten el - jár"), x (spanning "Nem mesz - sze tő - lem"), and Y_{var2} (spanning "a vég").
- Staff 3:** Lyrics: "Ám a lé - lek el nem e - nyész, Söt bé - re lesz." Annotations: α_{var2} (spanning "Ám a lé - lek el nem e - nyész"), "addition (motivic cell)" (spanning "Söt bé - re lesz"), z (spanning "Ám a lé - lek"), and y (spanning "el nem e - nyész" and "Söt bé - re").
- Staff 4:** Lyrics: "Jó, vagy jaj: po - kol, vagy ég." Annotations: α_{var1} (spanning "Jó, vagy jaj: po - kol, vagy ég"), x (spanning "Jó, vagy jaj: po - kol"), and Y_{var2} (spanning "vagy ég").

Zoltán Gárdonyi follows the original breakage into cells and motifs of the basic song also in his fantasia for violin and organ. The composer delimitates the 147 measures of his composition clearly and obviously into several parts. The structural schema is:

Table 3

<i>Poco Andante</i> ($\text{♩} = 72$)				
Introduction	Part I. (A)	(addition)	(intermediate part)	Part II. (Av1)
(measures 1 - 7.) 7 measures	(m. 8 – 29.) 21 measures	(m. 29 - 31.) 2,5 measures	(m. 31 – 42.) 12 measures	(m. 43 - 54.) 12 measures
4/4 metrum				
<i>a minor</i>				<i>f sharp minor</i>

			<i>con</i>	<i>Tempo primo</i>	<i>tranquillo</i>			
Part III. (Av2)			(intermediate part)	Introduction+ Part IV. (Av3)	(addition)	(intermediate part)		
(m. 55 - 79.) 24 measures			(m. 79 – 84.) 6 measures	(m. 85 – 100.) 16 measures	(m. 101 – 103.) 2 measures	(m. 103 – 114.) 12 measures		
6+6	4	8		2 +	14 measures	4+	4+	4
4/4	3/4	2/4		4/4				
<i>f sharp</i>	<i>a minor</i>							

Part V. (Av4)	(addition)	(intermediate part)	Coda
(m. 115 – 128.) 14 measures	(m. 129 – 132.) 4 measures	(m. 133 – 134.) 2 measures	(m. 135 – 147.) 13 measures
<i>A major</i>			

This summary of the scheme reveals how flexibly the composer handles the structure. In this respect the duration of the main parts, which are based on variation, is unsettled: Part I = 21 measures, Part II = 12 measures, Part III = 24 measures, Part IV = 14 measures and Part V = 14 measures. While parts I and III are almost double the length of the other parts. Besides this the structure is made lighter also by intermediate parts,

additions and small introductions placed between the main parts. Not even the introduction has the same number of measures as the Coda. The Introduction has 7 measures, while the Coda 13. Besides these two structural parts, the composer uses uneven measures also in Part I and in the addition after Part I (Part I = 21 measures, the addition 2,5 measures). But after measure 31 all the following structural parts have an even number of measures.

The Introduction begins in *Poco Andante*, playing the first two lines of the song in the lower registry.

E.g. 3⁸

The violin begins to play the first two sentences of the main tune at the beginning of Part I, in the 7th measure. Naturally the tune is composed under the violin clef and it starts from sound A, but the composer in his playfulness arranged that if read in *F* the tune reflects the pitches of the original tune transposed to an octave lower.

E.g. 4

⁸ The examples from the score are copies of the original manuscript of the composer, made available by the son of the composer, Zsolt Gárdonyi to whom acknowledgements are offered hereby.

The composer creates and varies the cells and motifs of the accompaniment from the cells and motifs of the main tune during the entire piece. In measure 15 the third line of the main tune is played by the lower register of the organ. The third line is taken over from the organ and repeated by the violin in measure 22, thus continuing the clef-transpositional game.

E.g. 5



The even rhythm of the main tune is counterbalanced by the accompaniment with syncopes, syncope strings and off-beat rhythm. The entire first structural part and the first musical period of the intermediate part are in highly chromatinized *a minor*. The closing musical phrase of the intermediate part is already in *f sharp minor*. The tempo remains steady in *Poco Andante*.

E.g. 6



In Part II the main tune is also obvious and clear, in a voice of its own in *f sharp minor*, alternating evenly between the bass register of the organ and the violin. The accompaniment is rich in parallel sixths. In the first two introductory parts the *mezzoforte* and the *piano* dynamics alternate. The rhythm of Part II is related to that of Part I. The tune of the song of inspiration is presented completely and in a voice of its own only in these starting two

parts and later in Part IV. The composer drops the last phrase of the main tune in Part II of the structure. The lyrics would have been: "Swell or woe: hell or heaven." Instead, in measure 55, Part III bursts upon us using an illustrative programmatical feature, denoting a perfect sense for musical drama, playing on the specific tune of the bolero, in a rough, brazen *f sharp minor*, with *leggiero* mode and the introductory part of the theme being torn up into small *staccatos*.

E.g. 7

The image shows a musical score for Example 7, consisting of two staves. The top staff is for the violin, and the bottom staff is for the organ. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The violin part begins with a melodic line featuring several triplets, some of which are circled. The organ part starts with a sustained pedal point in the left hand, marked '55. ped. pf' and 'molto legato'. The tempo is marked 'f' and 'leggiero'.

This structural part is divided into four segments, (6+6) + 4 + 8 in the case of the measures and the composer changes the metrum three times: 4/4, 3/4 and 2/4. Starting with the second segment (measure 61) the highly chromatinized musical process unfolds with the sustained pedal (point). The uneven measure of 3/4 appears in *agitato* and when it turns *piú forte* it brings back the basic key of *a minor*.

E.g. 8

The image shows a musical score for Example 8, consisting of two staves. The top staff is for the violin, and the bottom staff is for the organ. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The violin part features a highly chromatinized melodic line with sixteenth notes and is marked 'agitato'. The organ part includes a sustained pedal point in the left hand, marked '65' and 'mf', and is also marked 'agitato'. The tempo is marked 'f'.

With the rapidly undulating sixteenths in the sextolets of the voice of the violin, *con licenza, colla parte*, the composer makes a transcendence from Part III to Part IV. The original tempo returns and also the meter goes back to 4/4.

E.g. 9

Handwritten musical score for E.g. 9. The top staff is for the violin, marked *Tempo piccolo*, showing sixteenth-note patterns with '6' markings. The bottom staff is for the organ, marked *Tempo primo*, showing quarter notes with *meno f* and *legato* markings. The score is in C major and includes the instruction *(Man.)*.

While in part IV the violin emphasizes the tune of the introductory part of the theme in the form of undulating sixteenths, the organ concentrates on the tune of the original song made up of even quarter notes and again on the complete presentation of the original song.

Part IV closes with a trill in high register unique in the entire piece and after the *forte* the violin descends with a single *tranquillo* tune and alternative accompaniment through a three part transition to Part V.

E.g. 10

Handwritten musical score for E.g. 10. The top staff is for the violin, marked *Sp* and *triquillo*. The bottom staff is for the organ, marked *Ped.*, showing a wavy line indicating a tremolo effect. The score is in A major.

Part V turns into *A major*. During its entire duration the voice of the violin ascends to the three-line octave through an undulating two bar rhythm full of syncopes and based on sequences, while the organ repeats the head of the theme in quarter notes and sequentially.

E.g. 11

Handwritten musical score for E.g. 11. The first system shows a violin part with the instruction *mf cresc.* and an organ part with *mf* and *Mm.*. The second system shows a violin part with a slur and an organ part with *mf* and the number 125. An arrow points from the first system to the second.

After a four bar addition and a short transition which varies the intervals of tune of the cambiata (introducing a fourth instead of the third) in a solo (measures 133-134) follows the closing Coda of the piece in chromaticized *A major* and also having musically at its basis the head of the theme. The Coda resounds in a sustained organ point like *smorzando* in *pianissimo* with a beautiful, summery resonance of the *A major*.

E.g. 12

Handwritten musical score for E.g. 12. The first system shows a violin part with *mf* and an organ part with *mf* and the number 135. The second system shows a violin part with *mf* and an organ part with *mf* and the number 145. The organ part in the second system includes a *smorz.* marking and a final chord marked with a double bar line and the number 145.

As a conclusion, Zoltán Gárdonyi uses plenty of imagination in his composition, he moves freely about in the realm of music, but still following a guideline with a sound logic.

Translated from Hungarian by Danel Zsuzsa

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