

Abstracts

Claudio Veress: Emigrating – where, when, how? On the Prehistory of Sándor Veress's Emigration

Sándor Veress's emigration from Hungary to Switzerland between February and November 1949 was the somehow accidental result of a rather complicated process over a whole decade, starting with a longer London stay in 1939, from where the composer returned to Hungary shortly after the outbreak of World War II. The paper sharpens its lens on five biographical stations – Rome 1940/41, Rome 1942, Budapest 1945, London 1947, and Rome 1949 – in order to obtain a more precise picture of the experienced dilemma between *staying* and *leaving* in Veress's crucial midlife years. The presentation is based on newly discovered documents preserved at the Hungarian National Széchényi Library (OSZK), the Hungarian National Archives (MNL), and the Basel Paul Sacher Foundation (PSS).

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Claudio Veress: On an Unexpected Find in the Music Collection of the Budapest Széchényi National Library (OSZK). Sándor Veress's incidental music for Imre Madách's *Az ember tragédiája* (The Tragedy of Man)

In 1947, partly during his London sojourn, Veress composed a *Kísérőzene* (incidental music) for Imre Madách's drama *Az ember tragédiája* (The Tragedy of Man) from 1862, which was to be newly staged in September 1947 by the Hungarian National Theatre. For decades, the work was believed lost – at least outside of Hungary. The paper gives a short account on the state and extent of the orchestral material, as it recently came to light in the Hungarian National Széchényi Library (OSZK) and could be roughly sighted by the author in November 2019.

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Sándor Veress: New Trends in European Music since World War II

Thomas Gerlich: In Conflict with the Avantgarde. On Sándor Veress's Lecture »New Trends in European Music since World War II«

»New Trends in European Music since World War II« is the text of an English lecture, which has been found in the archive of Sándor Veress and is published here for the first time. Written around 1965, the text reflects the cultural situation and the compositional developments in the post-war decades. The main point of reference is Webern reception in the serialism of

the Darmstadt School, from which aleatoric music and sound composition emanated. Veress takes a critical position towards these compositional approaches and can recognise them only as »paramusic«. In contrast to the post-war avantgarde, Veress describes an evolutionary modernism, i. e. a group of composers ranging from Strawinsky and Bartók to Hans Werner Henze, who adhered to melody as a formative element, something that remains central also to Veress's own musical thinking. – The commentary (In Conflict with the Avantgarde) discusses Veress's argument in the context of the controversies about new music since the 1950s and considers especially, among others, the paragraph about his former student György Ligeti and his orchestral piece *Atmosphères*.



Peter Laki: A Dauphin in Exile: An Overview of Sándor Veress's Life and Work

Sándor Veress's career divides into two periods of equal length: the Hungarian (1907–49) and the Swiss (1949–92) periods. The article offers a brief survey of the composer's most important works from both halves of his artistic life, against the background of the respective musical scenes in the two countries where he lived. Considered the most important Hungarian composer in the generation following Bartók and Kodály (with both of whom he had studied), Veress was steeped in the Hungarian tradition which regarded folk music as one of the most important sources of modern music. After his emigration and resettlement in Switzerland, he had to completely reinvent himself as a composer, increasingly incorporating Western elements (including dodecaphony) in his works. Hungarian composers eventually had to go through similar processes of artistic renewal as well, but they could do so only much later; in fact, only the younger generation, born in the 1930s, was able to achieve the goal from the '60s on, in contrast to Veress who was able to start this process already in the late '40s. An influential and inspiring teacher who was rigorous in his thinking and exacting in his demands, Veress rejected the Darmstadt avantgarde, but he was never a backward-looking conservative. In a series of major works written in Switzerland, he placed Hungarian elements in a new context, creating an oeuvre unique in style and invariably flawless in execution.



Roland Moser: Musical toys with permeable margins in *Sonatinen für Kinder* and *Orbis tonorum* 1935/86

Some notes to Sándor Veress composing an early *Sonatina for children* and the late *Orbis tonorum*. Attempts to analyses of elementary phenomena in

»easy« and »complex« compositions, both written with equal care. His affinity to theories about form in Paul Klee »Das bildnerische Denken« with annotations in pencil by his hand. (Estate Paul Sacher Stiftung Basel). Form as a process, not as a result.

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Dagmar Schmidt-Wehinger: Formal strategies as a source of musical expression in the *Sonatinen für Kinder* (1932–35). Sándor Veress as a music educator

Sándor Veress's *Sonatinas for Children* were part of his plan to create modern, demanding literature for instrumental music teaching in the 1930s. The article is about the form and syntax of the first movements and systematically examines the means of composing used by Veress. It is shown how musical themes emerge from playing with the smallest elements and how these determine the entire musical construction.

Special attention is paid to the formation of syntactic units, the shaping of sound and the structural interaction between formal sections as well as their effects on the perception of time. Technical and interpretative dimensions are included in the reflections. This shows how children can grow into an understanding of musical structures and formal processes while playing – which is a fundamental ability for creating musical expression.

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Peter Laki: A »Japanese Episode« in Sándor Veress's First Symphony?

Sándor Veress composed his first symphony in 1940 and submitted it for the celebrations of the 2600th anniversary of the Japanese Empire; the work was performed in Tokyo in December of the same year. Subsequently, Veress suppressed the work which, with a single, poorly documented exception, was never again performed during his lifetime. Since it is an important, large-scale composition that enjoyed great success at the premiere, this state of affairs is rather surprising – until we remember the uncomfortable political circumstances surrounding the work's genesis.

Veress's close friend, the musicologist János Demény, stressed that Veress did not compose the symphony *for* Japan, but simply submitted a composition he had composed independently from the anniversary. Yet there is a certain passage in the last movement of this symphony that sounds vaguely Japanese, although most critics at the time and even later did not seem to notice it – with the exception of a single Japanese reviewer of the premiere. The possibility that Veress really intended to make an allusion to Japan cannot be ruled out. Andreas Traub has shown that there was an early draft of the symphony that contained an unrealized sketch for a finale that has noth-

ing to do with the movement we know today and therefore, at least the finale received its final form *after* the call from Japan. There are sketches to the first and second movements at the Paul Sacher Archives, but not to the last one, and it is possible that these were destroyed by the composer. Furthermore, in a 1952 letter to Alfred Schlee, director of Universal Edition Vienna, Veress insisted that the last movement had to be revised before it could be published; presumably he was thinking of removing this potentially embarrassing »Japanese« episode. He never carried out this revision, however, allowing instead the symphony to fall into oblivion until its posthumous revival in 2000.



Ioana Baalbaki: *Quattro danze transilvane* by Sándor Veress

Quattro Danze Transilvane is a string orchestra suite composed by Sándor Veress in two stages, during the 40's. It consists of four movements in styles of traditional dances from the Transylvania region. Three of the movements – *Lassú*, *Ugrós* and *Dobbantós* – were composed in 1943 for a Transylvanian tour held by an ad hoc orchestra. The nowadays third movement – *Lejtős* – was added in 1949 on the request of Paul Sacher and played for the first time by Kammerorchester Basel in 1950. In composing the pieces, Sándor Veress does not quote traditional folk songs, but creates new thematic material in the style of Transylvanian traditional dances.



Andreas Traub: On the twelve-tone composition in the 2nd movement of the String Trio (1954) by Sándor Veress

This essay is a supplement to the study of the 1st movement of the String Trio presented in Sándor Veress's 80th anniversary publication (1986). The compositional basis of this central work of the 1950 s is thus described throughout.



Heinz Holliger: Sándor Veress: *Passacaglia concertante* for Oboe and String Orchestra (1961)

The focus of this essay is the *Passacaglia concertante* for oboe and string orchestra, composed in 1961, a work that has no predecessors or descendants in the concert literature. The first listening impression: a large-scale, almost symphonic prologue of 100 bars brings the exposition of three themes: The Dux, the actual Passacaglia theme with its Comes, and finally the far-reaching contrast subject. This is followed by six very different concertante varia-

tions, which bundle into three pairs of movements in the tempi Allegro – Andante – molto Allegro, and then end in a calm, chamber-musical coda (epilogue).



Gregor Wittkop: Refused harmony. Sándor Veress sets Hermann Hesse to music

The Hesse cycle by Sándor Veress not only refers to the novel of the same name and its program in the opening poem *Das Glasperlenspiel*. Rather, the *Glasklängespiel* as a whole problematizes the Castalian refusal of the biographical and creative in favor of a timeless musical thinking. That is why Veress does not work on Hesse's verses mimetically and affirmatively, but in a musical objection procedure, which becomes clear in the treatment of central verses, the antiphonal rearrangement of stanzas and the general cyclical structure.



Bodo Bischoff: »... forming, rejecting, changing ...«. To the compositional process of the first movement (*Madrigale I*) from Sándor Veress's composition *Das Glasklängespiel* based on the sketches and drafts

Drafts for main theme titled *Madrigale* of Sándor Veress's composition *Das Glasklängespiel* in which the poem *Das Glasperlenspiel* by Hermann Hesse is set to music, are used to exemplify Eduard Hanslick's dictum that »composing (...) is a work of the mind in intellectual material«. This is the first attempt within the Veress research to trace the logic of the compositional process inherent in music and to justify the compositional decisions associated with it.

The sources that have been handed down illustrate how Veress is »creating, rejecting, modifying« the final shaping of the compositional material. Aspects of form-building and the linking of form-parts are also discussed, as well as his unconventional handling of speech-generated melodies that exhaust the twelve-tone total.

One focus of the considerations is the discussion of the gradual approach to the »crystal« motif, which is of outstanding compositorial and substantive importance for the entire movement. Its discovery leads to a breakthrough in the setting of the third verse and to new compositorial solutions from which far-reaching and, in the sense of a musical logic, stringent consequences are being drawn.



Bodo Bischoff: »Like constellations they sound crystalline«. To a harmonical motif in the *Madrigale I*-movement by Sándor Veress's composition *Das Glasklängespiel*

The starting point for this article was the observation that Veress in the first movement *Madrigale I* of his composition *Das Glasklängespiel*, devotes more than half of the bars of the entire movement to the setting of the meaningful attribute »crystal«.

The assumption that Veress had occupied himself with the harmonic research of Hans Kayser, who had also lived in Switzerland since 1933, gained plausibility when it became clear that Veress owned the second edition of the book *Akróasis – The Doctrine of the Harmonics of the World* by Hans Kayser.

The holistic approach of a comprehensive interdisciplinary understanding of the world, art and science is said to have had a lasting effect on Hermann Hesse and especially on his novel *Das Glasperlenspiel*.

It can be seen as a cipher for the composer's fundamental art-aesthetic position that Veress set the poem *Das Glasperlenspiel* to music in the first of the five movements of the composition *Das Glasklängespiel*; he has given the attribute »kristallen« (crystals) an almost confessional meaning both quantitatively – by the disproportionate number of bars in which it was set to music – and qualitatively – by the applied artistic means staged in this movement.

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Andreas Traub: On the *Madrigale II* in *Glasklängespiel*

Complementary to essays in *Sándor Veress, Komponist – Lehrer – Forscher*, ed. by Anselm Gerhard and Doris Lanz (2008) and *Liber amicorum – Bodo Bischoff zum 60. Geburtstag* (2012), the fourth movement of the choral songs after poems by Hermann Hesse, composed 1977–78, is described. The focus of the investigation is the relationship between parts that are free of series and parts that are bound to series.