Hungarian Suite for Jazz Chamber Ensemble

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Hungarian Suite for Jazz Chamber Ensemble

by

Christopher Paul Varga

A Doctoral Document

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The Graduate College at the University of Nebraska
In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements
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Major: Music

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Hungarian Suite for Jazz Chamber Ensemble

Christopher Paul Varga, D.M.A.

University of Nebraska, 2015

Advisor: Thomas Larson

*Hungarian Suite for Jazz Chamber Ensemble* is an original composition in three parts, each part using a separate Hungarian folk melody as its source. Written for a maximum instrumentation of 13 players, the suite employs a four-piece rhythm section paired with three reeds, three brass, and three strings. The folk melodies are from a collection of studio recordings made under the supervision of Bela Bartok in the 1930s, notable for not being field recordings and as such exhibiting a higher quality of sound. Although crude copies of Bartok’s highly detailed transcriptions of selected melodies are included in the liner notes to the album, I did not refer to them. In addition to a practical desire to work from written transcriptions that were akin to a jazz style “lead sheet”, by personally transcribing the material I became much more familiar with the melodies, therefore providing a more organic compositional process.

A varied approach to instrumentation, musical devices, and compositional methodology was employed for each movement. The manner and degree to which the folk melodies retain their original pitch collection, rhythm, and embellishments was consciously manipulated in order to create contrast between the three parts. In part one, *O Love, O Love*, the relationship to the original melody is most distant. I used distinctive musical elements, e.g., specific intervals or characteristic motives, as sources for entirely new melodies, resulting in an obscure resemblance between the folk song and my composed music. In part two, *The Cemetery's Gate*, the similarity
between the original melody and my adaptation is most overt, in that I arranged the initial presentation of the melody in a rubato fashion and with sparse and simple accompaniment. In part three, *Beautiful is the Spring*, the transformation is perhaps the most complex. I retained the pitch content and general pacing of the original but placed it in a specific meter (7/4) and groove (triplet-based).

While I did not use the lyrics as a guide to shape the musical content, I believe the music shares some of the same bittersweet and melancholy qualities as the texts.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Hungarian Suite for Jazz Chamber Ensemble

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1. O Love, O Love

**Instrumentation**

Soprano Saxophone  
Tenor Saxophone  
Trumpet 1  
Trumpet 2 (Flugelhorn)

Vibraphone  
Guitar  
Bass  
Drumss
O Love O Love

Active drum n bass groove

Fill

Fill
O Love O Love
O Love O Love

Sop. Sax.

Tpt. 1

Vib.

Gtr.

Bass

Dr.

F₆/A♭

Gb/B♭

D♭maj7(#11)

B♭(add2)/D

Fill
SOLO
F# phrygian Maj 3rd

Tpt. 2

E

Vib.

Groove sim. 6

76 77 78 79

Sop. Sax.

Ten. Sax.

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Vib.

Gtr.

Bass

Dr.

80

A^9(sus4)

G^9(sus4)

O Love O Love
O Love O Love

G(sus9)

Vib.

Gtr.

Bass

Dr.

Half-time feel

phrygian Maj 3rd

Fill 2nd x back to drum n bass groove

Fm(maj7)/Ab
(Vib. solo cont)

F(add2)/A

(drum n bass groove)
O Love O Love

\[124\]
\[F_{m(maj7)/Ab}\]
\[\text{Vibes, Drums only}\]
\[F(\text{add2})/A\]
\[\text{Vibes, Drums only; more active}\]

\[128\]
\[\text{D}_{b}\text{maj7(#11)}\]
\[\text{B}_{b}(\text{add2})/D\]

\[\text{Sop. Sax.}\]
\[\text{Ten. Sax.}\]
\[\text{Tpt. 1}\]
\[\text{Vib.}\]
\[\text{Gtr.}\]
\[\text{Bass}\]
\[\text{Dr.}\]

\[131\]
\[\text{Fill}\]
\[\text{Break}\]

\[132\]
\[133\]
Vib.

Bass

Dr.

bass and drums only

sudden stop
2. The Cemetery's Gate

Instrumentation

Tenor Saxophone
Vibraphone
Bass
Drums
2. The Cemetery's Gate

*Transposed Score*

Varga

**A**

**Tenor Sax**

**Rhythm**

**B**

**Tenor Sax**

**Rhythm**

**Transposed Score**
The Cemetery's Gate

Ten. Sax.

In-time, slow
Vibes only
add bass

Rhythm

Tenor Solo

E/G#  C/E  F#m11  Dm11  E/G#  C/E  F#m11  Dm11  OPEN

Ten. Sax.

Rhythm

D/F#  Bb/D  Em11  Cm11  D/F#  Bb/D  Em11  Cm11  OPEN

26

ON CUE

Ten. Sax.

Rhythm

A/C#  Cmaj7  G/B  Eb/D  A/C#  Cmaj7  G/B  Eb/D

34
3. Beautiful is the Spring

**Instrumentation**

- Reed 1 (Soprano Saxophone, Flute)
- Reed 2 (Tenor Saxophone, Clarinet)
- Reed 3 (Baritone Saxophone, Bass Clarinet)

- Trumpet 1 (Flugelhorn)
- Trumpet 2 (Flugelhorn)
- Bass Trombone

- Violin
- Viola
- Violincello

- Vibraphone
- Guitar
- Bass
- Drums
3. Beautiful is the Spring

Transposed Score

Varga
Beautiful is the Spring

Reed 1

Reed 2

Vln. 1

Vla.

Vc.

Clarinet in B♭
Beautiful is the Spring

(Stay on flute)

To Cup Mute

Open (Harmon off), To Flug.

(8th notes are lightly swung)

Catch figures while keeping time on ride
Beautiful is the Spring

Triplet-groove, quasi Afro-Cuban; emulate hand percussion
Beautiful is the Spring
Groove as before, more aggressive. Ride cym
Beautiful is the Spring

Fl.  
Cl.  
B. Cl.  
Tpt.  
Tpt.  
B. Tbn.  
Vln. 1  
Vla.  
Ve.  
Vib.  
Gtr.  
Bass  
Dr.  

(Stay in cup)  

To Tpt.  

Fill  

ff  
fp  
f  
p  
46  
47  
48  
49  

Stay in cup
Beautiful is the Spring

- Vln. 1
- Vla.
- Vc.
- Vib.
- Gtr.
- Bass
- Dr.

Very sparse, suggest "quarter-time" feel

[Music notation details]
Beautiful is the Spring
8th notes lightly swung

Beautiful is the Spring
Beautiful is the Spring
Beautiful is the Spring

Fl.

Vln. 1

Vla.

Vc.

Vib.

Bass

Dr.

Sparse noodling for 8 bars

C/D D♭maj3

C/D D♭maj3

(Stay on flute)
Beautiful is the Spring

\[85\]

Vln. 1

\[86\] \[87\] \[88\] \[89\]

Vla.  

\[82\] \[83\] \[84\] \[85\] \[86\] \[87\] \[88\] \[89\]

Vc.  

\[85\]

Vib.  

\[82\] \[83\] \[84\] \[85\] \[86\] \[87\] \[88\] \[89\]

Gtr.  

\[82\] \[83\] \[84\] \[85\] \[86\] \[87\] \[88\] \[89\]

Bass  

\[82\] \[83\] \[84\] \[85\] \[86\] \[87\] \[88\] \[89\]

Dr.  

\[82\] \[83\] \[84\] \[85\] \[86\] \[87\] \[88\] \[89\]

\[93\]

Vib.  

\[90\] \[91\] \[92\] \[93\] \[94\] \[95\] \[96\]

Gtr.  

\[90\] \[91\] \[92\] \[93\] \[94\] \[95\] \[96\]

Bass  

\[90\] \[91\] \[92\] \[93\] \[94\] \[95\] \[96\]

Dr.  

\[90\] \[91\] \[92\] \[93\] \[94\] \[95\] \[96\]

"Shift towards straight feel"
Beautiful is the Spring

Fl.

Cl.

B. Cl.

Vln. 1

Vla.

Vc.

Vib.

Gtr.

Bass

Dr.

Straight feel

C/E \( \text{Dbmaj}^3 \)

\( \text{C/D Dbmaj}^3 \)

\( \text{(fill)} \)

Straight (cross-stick groove)

w/ flute

END SOLO
Beautiful is the Spring

Fl.

Cl.

B. Cl.

Vln. 1

Vla.

Vc.

Vib.

Gtr.

Bass

Dr.

C/D  Dbmaj13
Beautiful is the Spring

Fl.  
Cl.  
B. Cl.  
Tpt.  
Tpt.  
B. Tbn.  
Vln. 1  
Vla.  
Vc.  
Vib.  
Gtr.  
Bass  
Dr.
Beautiful is the Spring
Beautiful is the Spring
Beautiful is the Spring

\[\text{Vib.}\]

\[\text{Gr.}\]

\[\text{Bass}\]

\[\text{Vib.}\]

\[\text{Gr.}\]

\[\text{Bass}\]

\[\text{Vib.}\]

\[\text{Gr.}\]

\[\text{Bass}\]
Beautiful is the Spring

\( \text{Sop. Sax.} \)

\( \text{Cl.} \)

\( \text{B. Cl.} \)

\( \text{Tpt.} \)

\( \text{Tpt.} \)

\( \text{B. Tbn.} \)

\( \text{Vln. 1} \)

\( \text{Vla.} \)

\( \text{Ve.} \)

\( \text{Vib.} \)

\( \text{Gtr.} \)

\( \text{Bass} \)

\( \text{Dr.} \)
Beautiful is the Spring
Beautiful is the Spring

Fl.:
148
Bell tones
149 (Stay on flute)
150
(Stay on clarinet)
(Stay on bs. clar.)
(Stay in cup)
(Stay in cup)
Mute off

Cl.

B. Cl.

Tpt.

Tpt.

B. Tbn.

Vln. 1

Vla.

Vc.

Vib.

Gtr.

Bass

Dr.

SLIGHTLY FASTER
SLOWER

Colors
Bmaj7/D#
Arco
Color and fill

Bell tones

Bell tones

Bell tones

Bell tones

Bell tones

Bell tones

Bell tones

Bell tones

Bell tones

Bell tones

Bell tones

Bell tones

Bell tones

Bell tones
Beautiful is the Spring

To Sop. Sax.
To Ten. Sax.

(Cup)
Open

? (Cup)

Crash cup

poco accel.
Beautiful is the Spring

B. Cl.

B. Tbn.

Vln. 1

Vla.

Vc.

Vib.

Dr.

16th note-ish ride

Solo fill.

Big!

f
Beautiful is the Spring
Beautiful is the Spring

\[176\]

Gtr.
\[G^7\]  \[G^7\]  \[G^7/F\]  \[G^7\]  \[Bb^6\]

Bass
\[G^7\]  \[G^7/F\]  \[G^7\]  \[Bb^6\]  

Dr.

Light time (hand-percussion-ish)

\[180\]

Gtr.
\[G^7\]  \[G^7/F\]  \[G^7\]  

Bass
\[G^7\]  \[G^7/F\]  \[G^7\]  

Dr.

Bass rhythm continues

\[184\]  \[Bb^6\]

Gtr.
\[A^b\text{maj7}\]  

Bass
\[A^b\text{maj7}\]  

Dr.

Fill
More aggressive groove
Beautiful is the Spring
Beautiful is the Spring
Beautiful is the Spring
Beautiful is the Spring
Beautiful is the Spring
Beautiful is the Spring
Beautiful is the Spring

Tempo: $\frac{3}{4} = 56$

Tpt.

Tpt.

B. Tbn.

Vln. 1

Vla.

Vc.

Vib.

Gtr.

Bass

Dr.

Very Slow

Con sord.

Con sord.

Legato

Arco

Mallets; colors in and out of time

P
REFERENCES


1. O LOVE, O LOVE

"Primitive" flute and male voice; free tempo, somewhat stilted.
2. THE CEMETERY'S GATE
Female voice; slow moving in non-strict triple meter.

3. BEAUTIFUL IS THE SPRING
Female voice; rubato, but animated tempo.
APPENDIX B

FOLK SONG TEXTS

1. O Love O Love

O love, O love,
O cursed pain,
O love, O love,
O cursed pain.

Why do not they blossom
The leaves of all trees?
The leaves of all trees,
The top of the cedar?

Ah, a rose is not
What flowers in the garden,
A rose is indeed
Those loving each other.

2. The Cemetery’s Gate

The cemetery’s gate
At last it is opened.
Through it they carry me
Into that black grave.

Both sides of my grave
Are lined with roses.
The famous girls of Korosfo
Did play them there, crying.

Pluck them off, girls,
Pluck them off from my grave.
One rose only, that brown one,
Don’t you tear that one off!

3. Beautiful is the Spring

Beautiful is the spring,
more beautiful the summer,
How beautiful to form a couple,
If one has hit on the right one.

The spring wind dries the road,
All birds are choosing a mate,
My God, whom should I choose,
So that I don’t remain alone?

My mind roams about like a cloud,
My heart is decaying like the years;
People tell me, I am not sad
Because I don’t cry on the streets.

My mind roams about like a cloud,
My tears are falling like rain,
They washed a ditch on my cheek,
Like the rain on the road.

Oh, my God, please punish him,
On account of whom I wear mourning clothes.