

Rediscovering Zoltán Kodály Piano Works Beyond the Method

Presented by Soohyun Lee

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- **Kodály's Philosophy and Ethnomusicology**
His dedication to preserving traditional music can be found in both his teaching philosophy and works. He traveled throughout Hungary and neighboring countries to collect folk tunes and presented those folk tunes he collected during his fieldwork.
- **Goals of this presentation**
 1. Explore compositional techniques and features of Zoltán Kodály.
 2. Highlight a few of his works and their artistic and pedagogical value.
 3. Discover how these rarely heard compositions offer fresh insight into his ethnomusicological roots and extend his legacy beyond the renowned Kodály Method.
- **First Piece: Marosszéki táncok (Advanced)**

Rondo Form	- Different types of dances for each section - Different pulses/registers/variations - Each return of the A section introduces new rhythmic, registral, and textural variations - Each part has different folk music elements - ABACADAE - Ends with a coda-like virtuosic and grand "E" section
Asymmetrical rhythm	- The left and right hands are written in different meters - The C section features a <i>duda</i>-like right hand melody: - The right hand presents free, singing, and flowing scalar passages over a simple left-hand accompaniment
Hungarian National Instrument "Cimbalom"	- Mechanically similar to the marimba, with strings struck by wooden hammers to produce sound - The cimbalom produces a gentle yet distinctive sonority; however, its metal strings and smaller, more focused hammers create a more direct and plucked-like sound compared to the marimba

	- In Hungarian piano repertoire, the cimbalom effect is often evoked through rapid repeated notes or recurring rhythmic patterns
Variante	- Having multiple variations allows the work to be adapted to different performance settings (e.g., orchestral versions, ballet productions, etc.) - Performers can select the option that best suits their preference or the specific stage setting

- **Children's Dance No. 8 (Intermediate)**

- No. 8 "Friss" from 12 Short Dances
 - Friss is the fast section of the Hungarian dance style "Verbunkos"
 - The style Verbunkos, which consists of Friss and Lassú, originated from military recruitment dances and later became a symbol of honoring soldiers' dedication and celebrating through music and dance
 - In contrast to Friss, Lassú features a slower and more lyrical character

- **24 Little Canons on the Black Keys (Early)**

- From Kodály's Notes
 - Sing first with solfège initials provided
 - Nos. 1-16: presented without staff notation
 - Develops pitch accuracy and solfège skills
- Some pieces are included in the Australian Music Examinations Board syllabus
- Great introduction to contrapuntal writing
- Excellent for group classes

- **Valsette (Late Intermediate)**

- Short and fast-paced
 - (approx. 1.5 minutes)
- Spinning-song-like right-hand pattern
- Hemiola-like left-hand ostinato creates a sense of 4/4 rather than the typical 3/4 waltz rhythm
- Gradual ascending and expanding build-up toward a long and dramatic climax
- Features extensive octave passages and wide hand stretches

**References
and readings**



**More of his
piano works**



Questions?



Playlist

