



MAGYAR STUDIES OF AMERICA

# Magyar News Online

[www.magyarnews.org](http://www.magyarnews.org)

Simándy József as  
Bánk Bán

November 2018 Issue 126

## Sírjaim/My Gravesites

By: Papp Faber Erika

Nagyanyám sírja Erdélyben fekszik,  
ott, hol tündöklük a hunyadi vár.  
Ő vele ottan két fia is nyugszik:  
csöpp Alajos és tizenéves Pál.

Száz éve múlt, hogy együtt pihennek  
Kiúzték\* férjét s a többi gyereket.  
A sírhelyet már nincs ki gondozza.  
Kétszer láthattam a fakult sírkövet.

Nagyapám nyughelye viszont Budán van.  
Hál' Isten! nem élte át az ostromot.  
Másfél év hosszát nem járt posta,  
azt sem tudtuk, hogy közben elhagyott.

Apám szüleit Pesten temették.  
Sírjukat már átvitték máshova.  
Nehéz eljutni, bátyám mesélte,  
ő látta még, a sír mily mostoha.

Szüleimet New York-ban temették.  
Azóta messze kerültem, ide.  
Hosszú az út, és nagyon forgalmas,  
alig viszek virágot oda le.

Aki még maradt a szűk családból  
rajtam kívül, sírban van idekint,  
Connecticutban tért nyugovóra.  
Már vár rám az én helyem is és int.

Sírjaim hirdetik népünk sorsát,  
hányatott századunk történetét.  
De meghalljuk mind a harsona hangját,  
s majd odaát együtt leszünk megint!

November is the month to remember our departed family members. My various gravesites are scattered: in three countries, on two continents, and five cemeteries, symptomatic of the history of Hungary in the 20th century.

*\*Lásd: Magyar News Online, Nov. 2014, "Impact of World War I and Trianon: Aunt Edit's personal memories, part I)*



*Házsongárd cemetery, Kolozsvár*



*Erika at her grandmother's grave in Transylvania*

# Observance of October 23rd in Fairfield, CT

"...Ever more people now are  
sking,  
Stammering and not understanding  
They who received it as legacy - :  
Is it such a big deal to be Free?..."

translated from Mennyből az angyal  
by Márai Sándor

## Here are some excerpts from Consul dr. Szakács Imre's speech:

...That fall, 62 years ago, was an exceptional, fate-changing moment. A moment which occurs only rarely, and which is granted only to a few. It was the extraordinary moment of national cooperation ...

Every Hungarian has memories of the great moments, even if they are so small that historians do not consider them worthy of recording. In how many families did they relate stories of 1956, even when one could only whisper the word "REVOLUTION". Here in the United States there was no such prohibition, one did not have to be afraid, here one could remember the heroic revolutionaries, one could openly tell the truth.

I too listened to my father's many stories, including the one about the scratchy radio broadcast, never omitting the sentence which, by today, has been repeated *ad nauseam*: "We lied at night, we lied during the day, we lied on every wavelength."

The embittered citizens wanted change, because they could no longer tolerate the lies that were woven through everything. They could not tolerate that a power system, which had been lied about to seem beautiful, but had lost its mask and was actually rotten to the core, should threaten the lives of thinking people and people who wanted to think.

Millions of Hungarians united and acted together because their oppressive living conditions embittered and made their daily lives impossible. They revolted because they were hindered in the expression and realization of their free will, even though this right is the foundation of freedom and civic democracy.

The Revolution of 1956 showed the nation's energy and vitality, and the struggle for freedom and change brought about the nation's solidarity and rebirth. Order into chaos, clear voices into the forced silence, honest words into the flood of lies administered as so much bitter honey, the soul's liberated calm within the harassment of a system bent on the total annihilation of souls...

Today we are able to celebrate together. Our celebration is, at the same time, paying respect to our fathers and grandfathers who, 62 years ago proved, in these days, that there is no such tyranny which will not collapse from the common will of a nation. Let us remember them; we cannot forget their deeds!



## **dr. Szakács Imre, Konzul, Nemzeti Összetartozás Tanácsosa teljes beszéde az október 23-i Fairfield, CT-i ünnepélyen**

Igen tisztelt emlékező Közönség!

Kedves fairfieldi magyarok!

Lengyel Zsuzsanna felkérése nyomán  
nekem jutott az a megtisztelő feladat,

hogy az '56-os forradalom és szabadságharc évfordulójára köszöntsem Önöket. Emlékezzem a *nagy kiáltásra*, amely 62 évvel ezelőtt valóban végigzengett szerte a földgolyón: kelettől nyugatig és észak-tól délig.

Kossuth Lajos tollából olvashatjuk a következőt:

*„Én a forradalmat a népek szent jogának tartom és vallom, de egyszer mind oly végeszköznek tekintem, melyhez a népeknek csak azon esetben szabad nyúlniuk, midőn vagy nemzeti létüknek vagy jogaiknak s szabadságuknak akár vissza-szerzésére, akár megvédésére más módjuk nincs ... vagy amidőn boldogságuk szabad fejlődésének valamely fennálló rendszer annyira útjában áll, hogy minden áron való eltávolítását a nemzet szent érdekei követelik ...*

*„Lázadásokat lehet csinálni, forradalmakat soha. Azok nem csinálódnak...”*

Igen, így *csinálódott* spontán, szervezetlenül, 1956 októberében soha addig nem tapasztalt összetartással a forradalom. Spontán – mert nem előre elhatározott tervek végrehajtása volt, hanem „egy végletekig feszített húr elpattanása, egy megkínzott, megalázott nemzet felhördülése ... Tízmillió ember talán nem tudta pontosan, mit akar, de azt mindegyikük meg tudta fogalmazni, hogy mit nem akar ... nem akarja túrni a nemzeti és egyéni megaláztatásokat, a hazudozást, minden önálló gondolat meghurcolását, a nemzeti kultúrális hagyományaink megalázását...” írta Jotischky László.

Tisztelt Hölgyeim és Uraim!

Az a 62 évvel ezelőtti ős sorsfordító, kivételes pillanat volt. Olyan pillanat, amely csak ritkán és csak keveseknek adatik meg. A nemzeti összefogás kivételes pillanata volt, melyről a Magyar Írók Szövetségének 1956. október 23-án megjelent kiáltványa eképp fogalmazott:

„Történelmi sorsfordulóhoz érkezünk. Ebben a helyzetben csak akkor tudunk helytállni, ha az egész magyar nép fegyelmezetten, egy táborba tömörül...”

Tisztelt Emlékezők!

A nagy pillanatokról minden magyar-nak van emléke, még ha oly kicsi is, hogy a történészek nem tartják feljegyzésre érdemesnek. Hány családban meséltek '56-ról, még akkor is, amikor Magyarországon csak suttogva mondhatták: FORRADALOM. Itt az Egyesült Államokban nem volt ilyen tiltás, nem kellett félni, itt meg lehetett emlékezni a hős forradalmárokról, el lehetett nyíltan mondani az igazságot.

Én is hallgattam apám sok-sok történetét, köztük a recsegve szóló rádióadásról, soha ki nem hagyva a ma már szinte utig ismételt mondatot: „Hazudtunk éjjel, hazudtunk nappal, hazudtunk minden hullámhosszon”.

Az elkeseredett polgárok változást akartak, mert nem tűrhették tovább a mindent átszövő hazugságot. Nem tűrhették, hogy egy széppé hazudott, de álcát vesztett, és valójában velejég romlott hatalmi rendszer a gondolkodni képes és gondolkodni akaró emberek életére törjön.

A magyarok milliói azért fogtak össze, s mozdultak meg együtt, mert nyomasztó életkörülményeik megkeserítették és ellehetetlenítették mindennapjait. Azért lázadtak fel, mert

megakadályozták őket szabad akaratuk kinyilvánításában és érvényesítésében, noha ezen jog a szabadság és polgári demokrácia alapja.

1956 forradalma az ország tetterejét, életerejét mutatta, a szabadságért és a változásért való küzdelem a nemzet összefogását és újjászületését hozta. Rendet a káoszban, tiszta hangokat a kényszerített némaságban, őszinte szavakat a keserű mézként adagolt hazugságáradatban, a lélek felszabadult nyugalomát a lelkek totális megsemmisítését célzó rendszer zaklatottságában.

A Szabad Nép 1956. október 29-i „Hajnalodik” című vezércikkében ez olvasható:

„Ha csak a szívünkre hallgatnánk, akkor most csupán egyet mondhatnánk: miért nem engedtek erre lehetőséget már előbb, miért nem történt mindez előbb ... miért nem lehetett megér-

teni, hogy az egész nép akarja, forrón, évek óta elfojtott, de már visszafojthatatlan szenvedéllyel akarja, hogy Magyarország valóban Magyarország legyen?”

„... Hajnalodik magyar hazánk felett. Köszöntsük ezt a hajnalt, a felnőtt, a győztes nép figyelő szemével – de békével, renddel, nyugalommal!”

Nemzeti ünnepünket, 1956. október 23-át immár 28 esztendeje, Magyarországon is szabadon ünnepelhetjük. És a sorsfordító napok cselekvő részesei közül szerencsére sokan itt vannak még közöttünk. Apák és anyák, nagyapák és nagyanyák. Sajnos azonban nem éltek meg mindannyian ezt a pillanatot, a forradalom hősei és túlélői közül sokan elmentek, mielőtt 1956 álmai beteljesülhetek volna. De a szabadság hősei tudják azt is, hogy az álmok, ha nem azonnal és nem is egyszerre, de előbb-utóbb valóra válnak. Csak akarnunk kell, soha el nem múló hittel és reménységgel.



dr. Szakács Imre, Consul; Oroszlány László; Szíki Károly; Fehér Irén; guests; Csonka Tünde

# Wallingford Hungarian House Celebrates 100 Years!

By: László Papp

*Congratulations on a great milestone!*

The circle of friends of the oldest Hungarian House in Connecticut, but most likely in all of the United States, celebrated a hundred years of existence on October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2018. After Mayor William Dickinson, local leaders and representatives greeted the audience that filled the large hall, Christopher Ball, professor at Quinnipiac University, remembered the sacrifices of the founders in his speech. Ákos Horváth, current President of the House, expressed his thanks to the team that maintains the House, and Consul Imre Szakács conveyed greetings from Ambassador László Szabó, wishing much success for friendly Hungarian get-togethers in the upcoming 100 years. Dr. Balázs Somogyi, who presided over the celebration, could officially close the event only long after midnight.

Wallingford lies in the Quinnipiac River Valley and is a city of 40,000 inhabitants. Founded by 38 families in 1667, it is the largest settlement between Hartford (capital of Connecticut) and New Haven (where Yale University is located). At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, its important lead and silversmithing industry attracted many European immigrants, including Hungarians. Many of today's inhabitants are descendants from these. Unfortunately, we have no figures concerning the number of Hungarian immigrants, but by the turn of the century, they had seven organizations and a Reformed

church. Of these, two societies decided to establish a Hungarian House in 1918. At the same time, a Workers' Home was also established, which presumably became part of the Hungarian House. The Reformed Association, the Roman and Byzantine Catholic

established a lamp factory in the area, many of whose 300 workers belong to the Hungarian House. Since then, Christian Sauska has expanded his factory to Hungary as well.

Wallingford is the cultural center of the area. Oakdale Theater and the Wallingford Symphony Orchestra attract large crowds. This is where one of the most prestigious prep schools of the United States – Choate Academy – is located. The Hungarian Club has "adopted" the Beodray Ferenc Scout Troop, Connecticut's first.

Outstanding among the Hungarian House's numerous annual programs are the May Ball, the Hungarian

Festival, the Annual Picnic, the *Székely* Ball, Octoberfest, New Year's Eve Shindig, as well as numerous musical and literary events. One of the most active Hungarian Societies, the Hungarian Cultural Society of Connecticut is also a member of the Hungarian House and holds some of its events here. Dr. Balázs Somogyi, President, and Lenke Kata, Secretary, lead the team which unites Hungarians of the area.

*László Papp, Hungarian-born architect, living in Connecticut, was the moving force behind the 1956 Memorial Monument set up in New York last year. He is also known for his design of the Hungarian Museum of New Brunswick, New Jersey. In October of 2017, he was awarded one of the highest decorations of the Hungarian government. He is an Extern Member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and Vice President of the American-Hungarian Foundation. He writes frequently about issues of concern to the Hungarian American community.*



Association, the Szent László Society, the Rákóczy Society, the Zrinyi Miklós Society, the leaders of the Hungarian and Slovak Society, as well as Reverend Béla Kovács of the Reformed Church pledged monetary assistance for the construction, for a total of \$4,675.

The Buza and Bazsila Construction Company finished construction of the Hungarian House at 147 Ward Street by the end of 1923. On January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1924, the Hungarian House Society was officially formed, which to this day is the owner of the building. The building was expanded to its present-day size in two phases: in 1948, they enlarged the back of the building, and in 1958, the front.

Similar to other old industrial settlements of the East Coast, the economy of Wallingford and its surroundings has been significantly transformed over time. The old "rust belt" has been replaced by the contemporary chemical and precision instrument industries. Two ingenious Hungarian engineers es-



*Top: Dr. Balázs Somogyi, the guests, Christopher Ball, Honorary Consul. Bottom: Previous President Vilmos Kovács, Current President Ákos Horváth, singer Floros Zoi, Wallingford Mayor William Dickinson*

## **In Memoriam Kányádi Sándor – 1929 - 2018**

*By: Szíki Károly, Hungarian; István Arató, English*

*Kányádi Sándor, the great Hungarian contemporary poet, passed away last June. He was also a translator and a major contributor to children's literature. Many of his poems have been set to music.*

*Here we present reminiscences by actor Szíki Károly, and an English introduction to the poet's life and work by István Arató.*

**Nagyváros, nagyváros, ne csábíts te engem, maradok holtomig, itt, ahol születtem!**

*-In Memoriam Kányádi Sándor-  
Szíki Károly*

*Csak a költő halála után derül ki,  
hogy az volt-e, amit élete alatt  
hittek  
s olykor maga is annak hitte  
magát.*

1982 nyarán egy csoport kiváló kortárs író ajánlólevelével indultam el Debrecenből Erdélybe, hogy a tabudöntőgető *Befalazott szószerék* című zenés irodalmi összeállításomban a beszerkesztett költőket meglátogassam, és a versek keletkezési helyszíneit, hangulatait meglessem, megérezsem. Így jutottam el életemben először többek között Kányádi Sándorhoz is. Az ajánlólevelél jónak

bizonyult, mert nem csak az ajtók, de a szívek is megnyíltak.

Harminchat év telt azóta. A varázslat ereje nem tompult három és fél évtized távlatában sem, s talán nem túlzás, ha azt mondom, a szeretet ereje legyőzte az időt. Még akkor is így van ez, ha többen végleg elmentek már, és művészi tollforogatóink jelesei a mennyei kávéházakban írják verseiket.

Most éppen aktuális halottunkat, Kányádi Sándort gyászoljuk.

Kedves Sándor! Először be kell vallanom 1982-es félelmeim! Amikor beesteledett, az ajánló levéllel kezemben elindultam felkeresni a *Befalazott szószerék*be szerkesztett költőket. Mindig be volt osztva, kihez megyek. A legfélelmetesebb a Te lépcsőházad volt. Szerintem lidérces álmaim innen is származnak. Akkor

már ismertem az újfasizmus ellen írott *Könyvjelző* versed, a megaláztatás meghűlt véredényeit, a rém dalamára kocogó fogak ritmusát. Kezemben egy kis balta, amelyet magammal hoztam, mert a sátorverés után valamiért hozzám nőtt.

Élém buggyannak ezek a rémséges esték és nagyon szégyellem bevallani akkori félelmeimet, bozontos rettegésemet. Hívtál, mentem, persze, hogy igen. Egy lépcső, még egy, még ötven, csengetés és fény! Megmenekültem. Ez volt az első felvonás. A második könnyű volt. Szólt a zene a rádióból. A rádió mindenkinél szólt. Ültél a saját gipsz maszkod alatt és verseket mondtál, a legújabbakat olvastad fel, melyeket aztán átadtál, hogy ottlétem alatt tanuljam meg és adjam oda X szerkesztőségnek, de a papírt nem vihettem át a határon.

Két marokra fogta szívem újra a félelem, mert tudtam, lassan el kell köszönnöm, a lépcsőházból valahogy ki kell jutnom a kocsigi. Az elköszönés olyan volt, mintha sosem találkoznánk már, mert ezek a búcsúk mindig különös jelentőséget kaptak.

Gondolatban még most is lerohanok a Hórea emeletéről és bevágom magam a kocsiba. Bezárom minden ajtót és várok. Percekig állok még a háza előtt, mint aki megmenekült a haláltól: kilihegem magamból a félelmet.

Három évtizede, mint amikor megállunk a szocreál épület előtt a Főtér sarkában. Szorongva belépek vele a súlyos kommunista idők jeleit hordozó emeletes épületbe, s ő már mondja, miért hozott ide: *Harminc évet töltöttem itt a Napsugár szerkesztőségben.* Elővesz egy könyvet, dedikálja és én megértem, ez a kezdet, de mi lesz a vég.

A csend hangjai ülnek közénk a Házsongárdi temető naplementéjében. Sándor feláll, maga elé néz és nem létező bajusza alatt megszokott, soha le nem hervadó mosollyal mondja: *Püspökök, harcosok, írók, filozófusok, tanárok, bibliográfusok, építészek valamikori létét őrzik e sírok.*

*Mondd: lehet ez épeszűség, hogy még élek?*

Ott voltam vele Fehéregyházán, ahol az utolsó pillanatban letiltotta a romángóg, hogy verseit mondjam. 1984-et írtunk akkor.

Verseivel házaltunk a kanadai és magyar közösségekben, ahol ismerték már öt korábról, hiszen személyesen is járt köztük 1984-ben egy hosszabb, észak- és dél-amerikai előadókörúton vett részt. Simon Bolívarról szóló verse (Koszorú) ekkor született.

Megrázó egyszerűséggel beszélt Vancouverben Tamási Miklós a Mesterről, akitől csak annyit kért Sándor, hogy az indiánok közé vigye el őt, mert sor-sunk, mondta, hasonló az indiánokéhoz.

Mindezeket az életcserepeket úgy mondtá Kányádi, hogy a nevetés és fájdalom könnyei egybemosták a múltat a jelen ünneplő közönségével...

Soha meg nem unható művész volt, kiről azt hitte az ember, úgy szereti a Hórea utcai házat Kolozsváron, hogy sosem lesz pesti író. De már nincs ott, s itt sincs már.

És itt voltunk Egerben, ahol fát ültetett az Érsek kertben. Kányádit nem más hozta Budapestről Egerbe, mint Alexander Brody író és reklámszakember, Bródy Sándor unokája, Hunyadi Sándor unokaöccse.

A diófánál Kányádi életélményének tükörcserepeit szállította közönsége elé. Érezhetően Isten kegyelméből egy erkölcsi tartóoszlop vendégének érezte magát mindenki, egy fáradhatatlan mester műhelyében járhatott. S kezében a lapáttal elültetett Egernek nem csak egy fát, hanem egy erdélyi életszemléletet, a kisebbségi magyar megaláztatásnak, a kiszolgáltatottságnak belakott végtelen horizontjait, hogy figyelmeztessen mindenkori faladatinkra: nem ért véget a küzdelem.

Kányádi létrát támasztott hallgatóin keresztül a nemzet érzékeny fiaihoz,

lányaihoz, hogy közelebb kerüljünk az Úrhoz és közelebb a nemzet égető gondjainak megoldásához. Eközben üzent odaátra is: még várjatok anyagok kicsit, míg elkészíték néhány kutatást itt, aztán visszamegyek Gyimesfelsőlokra Berszán atyához, mert ott is szomjasak a gyerekek.

Amikor beszállt a mikrobuszba, éjjel volt már, de csak mondta, mondtuk fennhangon a verseit, mert olyan ő, mint a kiapadhatatlan kút, amelybe ha belekóstolsz, örökké szomjazol, innod kell.

Ő volt az, aki felkerekedett és elment a pápához, hiszen mint gyerekkorában öt liter petróleumhoz vásárolt jogot, most pedig a létrán való felmászáshoz: közelebb az Úrhoz!

Szavait szomjazó emberek itták minden estén. De a szomjúság nem szűnik Kányádi közelében, erősen nem szűnik. Sokáig éltesen a Teremtő téged, Mester!

Mondják: pótolható mindenki. Mondják: jön majd valaki más! Nem jön, nem lehetséges. Vannak pótolhatatlanok.

Hányszor mondtam verseit, házaltam velük huszonéves suhanc, mert belőlem nőttek ki, mint Szilágyi Domokos versei is, értem születtek, helyettem írták, helyettük mondtam és mondom: Mozart, Bartók, Számvetés...

Némi öröm a boldogtalanság kapujában, hogy sok csirkefogót sikerült túlélnie. Rossz filozófia? Lehet. De kit érdekel, ha megtörténhetett gonosz ellenlábás kis- és nagy csirkefogók, bábok, bábmozgatók, maszkok virtuóz világában! És ezért az Úr is megbocsát. Kányádi nem valami hasonlót énekel meg a fekete-piros enciklikában, ebben a magyar-széki imában? A szíkiiben? Fekete-pirosban, csütörtök vasárnap délután, amikor kimenős a lány...? De igen, nagyon hasonlót énekel meg.

*Sziki Károly, actor, has been awarded the Hungarian Gold Cross of the Order of Merit, and is the recipient of some*

other State awards. His ancestors came from Szék, Transylvania. He studied at the Academy of Dramatic Arts in Debrecen, and then played leading roles in Eger. Between 1998 and 2003, he was Director of the Harlekin Színház (Theater). In 2003, he founded a private theater named Varga László Polgári Teátrum. For the last 30 years, he has performed among the emigrés in the US, and has made films and written books about these trips.

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## An Introduction to Kányádi Sándor

István Arató

Kányádi Sándor, the great Hungarian contemporary poet, passed away last June. He was also a translator and a major contributor to children's literature. He had a degree in Hungarian language and literature from the former Bolyai University. Kányádi published his first volume of poetry at age 26.

His themes say a lot about the villages' issues with great passion. Kányádi belonged to the Hungarian Academy of Arts, and was a Kossuth prize-winning poet along with many other awards during his life. After the political changes in 1989, he also warned that tyranny still lives in our society.

He was born in Nagyalambfalva, a village in Transylvania (now part of Romania) and his works have been translated into many languages.

Kányádi used to visit schools and libraries in small towns to recite his poems and the Hungarian classics. One of his well-known and probably the most important volume is "Dancing Embers", which is also the first one to be published in English. The international literary magazine World Literature Today says that "Kányádi's vivid poems display an impressive range of styles, moods and forms... these poems are alive with history, and history is alive in the poems – beaten down in the present,

perhaps, by the forces of political repression, but not defeated."

There is also a children's short film called "The Widely Traveled Little Mouse" – *A világlátott egérke* – written by Kányádi, easily available to watch online; a very delightful movie that even I in my fifties enjoyed very much. Perhaps there is always an opportunity to appreciate good writing – for children or adults. He will be greatly missed.



## Valaki jár a fák hegyén Kányádi Sándor

valaki jár a fák hegyén  
ki gyújtja s oltja csillagod  
csak az nem fél kit a remény  
már végképp magára hagyott

én félek még reménykedem  
ez a megtartó irgalom  
a gondviselő félelem  
kísért eddigi utamon

valaki jár a fák hegyén  
vajon amikor zuhanok  
meggyújt-e akkor még az én  
tűzennél egy új csillagot

vagy engem is egyetlenegy  
sötétlő maggá összenyom  
s nem villantja föl lelkemet  
egy megszülető csillagom

valaki jár a fák hegyén  
mondják úr minden porszemen  
mondják hogy maga a remény  
mondják maga a félelem

## Somebody Walks Atop the Trees Translated by Peter Zollman

somebody walks atop the trees  
who lights your star and makes it fade  
those do not fear their destinies  
whom hope has finally betrayed

my fears my hopes don't disappear  
this is the grace that helps me stay  
this caring providential fear  
has held my hand along the way

somebody walks atop the trees  
when I must tumble one fine night  
will he then kindle one of his  
new stars with my departing light

or will he crush me to a grain  
a dark abandoned piece of grit  
and never light my soul again  
when infant stars are newly lit

somebody walks atop the trees  
he cares for every crumb it's said  
it's said he is the hope we breathe  
it's said he is the fear we dread

*István Arató, son of Hungarian immigrant parents, was born in São Paulo, Brazil, where he was a journalist. He came to the US in 1996 and now works in the hospitality/restaurant business. He attends the Hungarian School sponsored by Magyar Studies of America in Fairfield, CT, and is a member of the MNO Editorial Board.*

## Várpark – A Park of Castles/Fortresses

By: *viola vonfi*

*On the southern shore of Velencei tó – the third largest lake in Hungary, located between Budapest and Székesfehérvár – lies a village*

map of pre-World War I Hungary, each maquette is located in its proper position within the country. He chose lesser known and mostly ruined fortresses to include in his park. Judging from photos that include people, many of the fortresses are probably as high as

plans to add another 35 maquettes. On certain days, the fortresses are lit up after sunset. Periodically, "knightly days" or "warrior days" are organized.

The *Várpark* is an excellent place for young people and old to re-



*called Gárdony-Dinnyés. (The second largest lake is Fertő tó in western Hungary.) Recently, Dinnyés has become known for an unusual tourist attraction: a "castle or fortress park", which this past January made the Guinness Book of Records for having the largest display of castle replicas.*

The *Várpark* is the brainchild of Alekszi Zoltán, who constructed the 35 replicas of medieval fortresses in his backyard. What makes this park unique is that, for the sake of authenticity, he used the same type of wood and stone building materials of which the original castles had been constructed. Laid out within an outline

five feet.

Alekszi first began to think seriously about the project in 2012. A great deal of research and study went into the planning of the park.

A walk forms the boundary line of the map, and is lined with posts, each of which memorializes a Hungarian king, Transylvanian prince or governor, in three languages.

According to one source, Alekszi



*Aerial view of Várpark*

fresh their knowledge of Hungarian history.

Congratulations to Alekszi Zoltán for his unique achievement!

# The Two Triumvirates: Bánk Bán and its Creators

By: Olga Vállay Szokolay

On November 3<sup>d</sup>, 2018, the Hungarian State Opera presents Erkel Ferenc: *Bánk Bán* at Lincoln Center's David A. Koch Theater in New York City.

Enjoying theater, presenting history's unusual events, is taking one to other lands, other eras, other problems. Or are the problems really unusual? Intrigue, jealousy, conspiracy, rape, murder is all too familiar to us here and now. To witness them in historic distance and environment wraps them in the veil of drama and mystery. We are entertained and comforted by the conclusion that there is nothing new under the sun.

The story of *Bánk Bán*, a 19<sup>th</sup> century opera of a 13<sup>th</sup> century intense historic tragedy, was written as a stage play by playwright *Katona József*, whose (227<sup>th</sup>) birthday we should celebrate on November 11<sup>th</sup>. The original play, dealing with basic human feelings involved with, and depicting the murder of Queen Gertrud, wife of King II Endre of Hungary, is presented in five acts.

While the inner struggles with personal and public problems and conflicts of the characters remained the same, the original storyline was modified in various ways before it was turned into an opera in three acts. *Egressy Béni*, a multi-talented composer, librettist, translator and actor wrote the libretto. In his short life of 37 years, he was more famous as an actor than for his permanent heritage in music and literature. He wrote the *music* to the "Second Hungarian Anthem", the *Szózat* by Vörösmarty Mihály and libretti to three operas of Erkel Ferenc, including *Bánk Bán*.

The composer of the opera *Bánk Bán*, *Erkel Ferenc*, was born on November 7, 1810, at Nemetgyula. (Wow, we seem to have another birthday coming!) His father, Erkel József, came from a dynasty of educated musicians and was one himself. His marriage to Ruttkay Klára produced 10 children, Ferenc being

the oldest surviving, after their first-born died in infancy.



*Bust of Erkel Ferenc*

The boy received his first musical instruction from his father and grandfather. He progressed rapidly with his studies and often participated at the music gatherings of the adults. At age 10, he occasionally played the organ in his father's lieu, and was 11 when he first played the piano for an audience. Ferenc started his secondary education at Nagyvárad and continued at Pozsony, where he could receive an excellent musical education. He attended the opera regularly, thus he became acquainted with the classics of operatic literature as well as having a chance to hear violinist Bihari János and a concert by Liszt Ferenc. By age 17, he finished his studies, having mastered the basics of composition and becoming a virtuoso on the piano.

Around 1828, accepting an invitation to Kolozsvár, Transylvania (now Cluj, Romania), the young Erkel took a job as piano teacher. This move marked

the start of his musical career. His friends and mentors there encouraged him to get acquainted with and utilize Hungarian folk songs in composition. In a few years he became the city's concert orchestra conductor. He attributed his musical awakening and later success to his years spent at Kolozsvár.

In 1835, he moved to Buda where, as conductor of the Castle Theatrical Group, he soon turned into the most popular leading musical persona of Pest-Buda. The group's aim was the cultivation of Hungarian dramatic arts and music. Yet, due to the difficult approach to the theater building, they had to close its doors, forcing Erkel to accept an offer to be conductor of the *German Theater* of Pest.

In 1838, however, after the new *Hungarian Theater* of Pest opened, he took a position there, securing him full control over orchestra, choir and soloists who came from the Castle Group. His debut with a Bellini opera opened on January 25, 1838. On March 13, an unprecedented flood inundated Pest, leaving the theater closed for a month, imprisoning actors and musicians for several days.

Erkel's private life came to a significant milestone: he met the accomplished pianist, Adler Adél, daughter of the famed conductor of the Buda Castle Coronation Church, whom he married on August 19, 1839. During their honeymoon to Gyula, together they gave a concert for the benefit of the new county hospital. Their first son, Gyula, was born in 1842, the second, Elek in 1843, the third, László in 1844, followed by seven other offspring.

Encouraged by the success of his *first opera*, *Bátori Mária*, a joint venture with Egressy Béni, Erkel commis-

sioned him to write a libretto to *Hunyadi László*.

The opening of that opera in January 1844 resulted in mixed reviews by the critics but the audience loved it. With that work Erkel raised Hungarian national opera to European ranks.

It was also in 1844 that Erkel won the competition for composing music to Kölcsey Ferenc's *Himnusz*, which later became, and to the present day is the *National Anthem of Hungary*.

Despite his undeniable successes, supporting his growing family became a huge task. He was forced to teach: in 1851 he took a job as musical educator of Archduke Albrecht's daughters. While Liszt Ferenc conducted Erkel's Hunyadi-overture in Vienna and scheduled the opera's performance in Weimar, he never received the material because the composer could not afford the copying expenses. This and many others fell through for this reason.

Erkel often escaped from the crowded apartment in Pest to Gyula and spent most of his summers there. His father died in 1855, his younger brother, József in 1859. He became morose, withdrawn, cold and unfriendly. He could still relax in music, but his love of work diminished. Their marriage deteriorated, and they divorced. Besides music, his only pleasure was chess playing that he enjoyed, well above amateur levels. He founded the chess club whose president he was until his death.

For 17 years he hadn't composed anything significant. When he awoke from his slumbers, he stepped out with the most valuable of his life's work, *Bánk Bán*.

It is a double cultural treasure: the historic drama of Katona József is just as unparalleled in Hungarian literature as Erkel's opera among historic Magyar music. Librettist Egressy Béni must have finished his work by 1851, since in July of that year he died. The composer finished the orchestration of the opera in October 1860.

*Bánk Bán* opened on March 19, 1861, with gigantic success. Celebration of the composer equaled a political demonstration and signified the apex of his career.

The rest of the 32 years of his life was a conglomeration of less important compositions, official roles and posts, professional cooperation and deaths in the family, attacks and celebrations, but nothing ever came close to the importance of *Bánk Bán*. Surrounded by his children, he died in Budapest at age 82, on June 15, 1893.

It took three geniuses to create *Bánk Bán*: Katona, Egressy and Erkel.

Where is the "triumvirate" in the *opus* itself?

Let's examine the storyline. King Endre II is fighting abroad while his queen, Gertrud of Merania lavishly entertains members of the Court, all foreigners. The King's deputy, Bán (Viceroy) *Bánk* is touring the poverty-stricken country while the Queen's brother, Otto is trying to seduce *Bánk's* beautiful wife, Melinda. Bán *Petur*, with a group of Magyar nobles, is plotting a conspiracy against the queen, worried about the fate of the country and the honor of *Bánk's* wife. He sends for *Bánk*, to recruit him for their cause. *Bánk* arrives but is revolted by the plot to threaten the throne, until he learns about Otto's advances toward Melinda.

The distraught *Bánk* prays over his nation and his good name. *Tiborc*, an old peasant, a vassal of the Bán who had once saved his life in battle, tells *Bánk* about the desperate poverty of the country caused by the extravagance of the foreigners at Court. When Otto, with the Queen's approval, tries to seduce Melinda without success, he drugs and rapes her. She staggers to her husband, half insane with shame. He, in his grief curses his own little son, then embraces him

and comforts his wife. He asks Tiborc to escort Melinda and the boy to their castle in East Hungary, beyond the Tisza River.

In the throne-room, *Bánk* calls the Queen to account for plunging the country into poverty and for the honor of his betrayed wife. Gertrud angrily draws a dagger that *Bánk* wrests from her hand, and in the scuffle, he stabs her fatally.

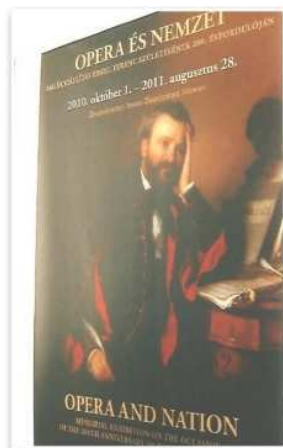
Tiborc and his charge reach the Tisza River where Melinda, in a fit of insanity, throws herself and her son into the waves.

The King returns, and *Bánk* admits that he killed the Queen deliberately. They face each other with swords drawn when Tiborc arrives with the corpses of Melinda and the child. The sword drops from *Bánk's* grip, and he falls over the bodies of his wife and son. All pray for the repose of the dead.

Both *Petur*, representing the nobles and Tiborc, the peasants of Hungary, expect help from *Bánk* who, in the center of events, is riddled with personal problems.

The Triumvirate is without winners.

*Olga Vállay Szokolay is an architect and Professor Emerita of Norwalk Community College, CT after three decades of teaching. She is a member of the Editorial Board of Magyar News Online*



*Playbills, with poster advertising Erkel exhibit on the 200th anniversary of his birth*

## Coffee Parfait

*At a church function, one of the ladies had with her an old "Hungarian and American Cook Book", compiled and published in 1955 by the Ladies' Guild of the Holy Trinity Greek Catholic Church of Bridgeport, CT. Besides it being an unusual dessert, it offers a little nostalgic look into the past.*

1 ½ cups strong coffee  
1/3 cup sugar  
½ cup milk  
1 envelope gelatine  
3 eggs, separated  
Pinch of salt  
¼ cup cold water

Mix coffee, milk and sugar.  
Soak gelatine in cold water for 5 minutes and then add to mixture.  
Heat in double boiler.  
Beat egg yolks slightly; add to hot liquid.  
Add salt and continue cooking, stirring constantly until thick.  
Remove from heat and add stiffly beaten egg whites.  
Pour into wet mold.  
Chill and serve with whipped cream.



## Paradise Lost and Found

*By: Olga Vállay Szokolay*

*Rarely do we see business and creative art successfully coupled in the same person. Does it sound presumptuous to say: it takes a Hungarian?*

From September 6 to October 7, 2018, the Exhibition area of the Pequot Library in Southport, Connecticut featured a collection of photographs titled "Paradise (Lost)" by *Árpád Krizsán*, Best in Show winner of the Library's 2017 Art Show.

The opening reception was jam-packed, despite the adversity of inclement weather. Parking was quite a challenge in the pouring rain.

Prior to this exhibit, Krizsán participated in several others over the years in various locations, being awarded numerous prizes. His first one-man-show, however, was in Connecticut, at the Westport Library in 2015. He has been a resident of that town since 2004.

The artist is an amateur photographer. The material for some of his pictures was taken with an I-phone camera!

To make a living, he is Managing Director and co-founder of Enterprise Research Group, LLC, a financial consultant firm in Westport, CT, after having served in various positions with other financial companies in the United States and in London, England. He holds a master's degree from Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs.

Árpád Krizsán was born December 4, 1964, in Stockholm, Sweden of Hungarian parents who had left their homeland in 1956. In 1974, the family moved to Graz, Austria, where Árpád attended schools and spent most of his childhood and formative years. Of that city he writes:

"...the façade was mostly impenetrable – everything picturesque and displayed in petit bourgeois perfection. Yet, while the beauty was true, there were hidden secrets creating a stifling environment of rigidity regarding cultural norms... Somehow Graz managed to emerge as a center for avant-garde art, attracting artists from around the world to participate in the *Steirische Herbst* (autumn) festival, providing a glimpse into an unknown and unpolished world beyond the picture-perfect façade."

(Wow, it seems we even have a poet lurking here...)

This revelation prompted him to escape. He explored the numerous art and photo books they had at home, featuring masters such as Brassai, Kertész, Capa, and Munkácsi.

During one of their trips, his father gave him his first camera, instructing him *to look*. The camera and works of those incredible artists opened his eyes to a new world and provided him with the ability to uncover the realities behind and beyond façades.

While studying in Vienna, in the late 80s, he earned his living as a photo-journalist, documenting the crumbling of another, very real façade erected by the Communist regimes all over Central and Eastern Europe. Krizsán traveled "from one revolution to another". Later, he continued by traveling and ultimately settling in a new world.

Those events shaped his style of photography. He recognized "the chance to capture the moment, the unstaged reactions and expressions." He strives "to look *beyond* undisturbed beauty, to see what is lurking just around the corner or *behind* closed doors." Krizsán's passion for photography goes past the superficial. His work is driven by "an attempt to scratch the surface, to look at the other side or what others wouldn't see; yet finding beauty in all of it."

Árpád Krizsán opened his exhibit with a quote from Milton's *Paradise Lost*:

"The mind is its own place, and in itself can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven."

He chose the title of the exhibit to reflect his enchantment with the duality of this world: from Adam and Eve's story of being expelled from Paradise and Satan's fight against the Heavens, to man's critical thinking in search of the truth and his desire to create the best possible world, albeit flawed but willing and be able to improve it. Black and White, Heaven and Hell on Earth, indeed.

Krizsán never lived in Hungary but claims to be Hungarian; that for him is a *state of mind*, not a nationality. It influenced him in every possible way and how he views the world. His parents deserve full credit for Árpád's remarkable command of the language.

The exhibit certainly was an enjoyable eye-opener, making us wait for the next one with anticipation.



*Adam and Eve out of Paradise; Stairway to Heaven?; from China to Hungary - Home*

*Olga Vállay Szokolay is an architect and Professor Emerita of Norwalk Community College, CT after three*

*decades of teaching. She is a member of the Editorial Board of Magyar News Online On November 17th, 1918, the*

## **A Date in Hungarian History: November 3rd, 1918**

By: EPF

*One hundred years ago, on this date, representatives of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy signed the Armistice, ceasing hostilities with Italy.*

*For the Monarchy, this ended World War I, which had begun with the declaration of war against Serbia on July 28th, 1914.*

On this date, General Viktor Weber Edler von Webenau, representing the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, signed the declaration of Armistice at Villa Giusti, outside of Padua. It stipulated the withdrawal of the Austro-Hungarian troops to the 1914 borders. The declaration did not contain any military or territorial stipulations. But because the troops were so exhausted by the end of

October 1918, their commanders were forced to sign the Armistice.

It was scheduled to go into effect on the following day, November 4th, but the Austro-Hungarian commanders unilaterally ordered an end to the fighting on the third.

On the six "fronts" which had developed –

- the Russian front
- the Balkan front – against Serbia, Montenegro, Romania
- the Italian front – after Italy changed sides in 1915
- the Romanian front – after Romania also changed sides, in 1916
- the Near Eastern front – where Austro-Hungarian troops were involved only symbolically

– the Western front – which was maintained by the Germans, but

where Austro-Hungarian

troops were of secondary importance, Hungarian casualties numbered an estimated 531,000 to 661,000 (the exact statistics were destroyed in the 1950's); 743,000 to 1.5 million were wounded; and 734,000 to 833,000 became prisoners of war.

Following such catastrophic blood-letting and such a blow to the country's manpower, it may be understandable that the Hungarian Minister of War, Linder Béla echoed a popular sentiment when he declared: "I don't want to see any more soldiers!" But his shortsighted policy, of totally disbanding the army, immediately left Hungary open to invasion: on the South by the Serbs (beginning November

7th); in the North by the Czechs (beginning November 8th); the South-east by the Romanians (into Bukovina on November 11th, Kolozsvár on December 24th). Troops of the Serbian-Croatian-Slovenian Kingdom occupied the Muraköz area on December 25th.

On November 17th, 1918, the Austrians publicly demanded parts of western Hungary (see Magyar News Online, June 2018 issue).

On February 6th, 1919, representatives of Romania, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia sent a joint memorandum to the Paris Peace Conference, containing their demands of Hungarian territory, and objecting to the plebiscite proposed by Hungary.

Only the Ruthenian national assembly declared, on March 15th, 1919, that it did not want to be joined to the Czechs, but belonged to Hungary.

Thus the hastily signed Armistice left Hungary – the only country which had NOT wanted to go to war in the first place! – totally defenseless against the onslaught of its neighbors. It was the precursor of the devastating Treaty of Trianon.

## It's a Small World

*László Tibor Laky*

*Sometimes a guardian angel appears just when you need him most, and he even might speak Hungarian!*

Anikó Laky, a Hungarian mother of six, who lived in Dallas, Texas with her husband, Tibor, was at home caring for her family on a fall day in 1985, also caring for her elderly father, László Hodosy, following the recent death of her mother, Anikó. She noticed that her father was no longer in the kitchen at the table, and she called out for him but he was nowhere to be found. She sent her youngest, Árpád, to search for her father and just then, a Dallas Police cruiser stopped in front of their home. A tall dark-haired young Police Officer was helping Nagypapa

from the car and Anikó met them on the driveway. Dallas Police Officer Alex Császár greeted Mrs. Laky in Hungarian and explained that her father had been walking home and had gotten disoriented. Anikó expressed her relief and appreciation at the return of her father to her home safely.

Later, as she relayed her story to us kids, she expressed that God had sent a guardian angel to rescue Nagypapa, because Nagypapa spoke very little English, and the Policeman who brought him home spoke fluent Hungarian. Keep in mind that Arad, Nagypapa's home town in Hungary was 9,258 kilometers away from Dallas, so the chance of an Officer finding him who spoke his native language fluently was extremely slim. On this particular day, Officer Császár's regular partner, Steven (István) Tóth, also Hungarian, hap-

pened to take a day off, or it would have been two Hungarian Officers. As I learned later, it was actually Officer John Carr who found László, but he could not understand him. But he did recognize the name as Hungarian and called Officer Császár on the radio to assist.

Just last month, we learned that now Retired Sergeant Alex Császár was suffering from Early Onset Dementia and was near death. I contacted the family and arranged to bring a priest native to our homeland, Father Julius Leloczky, O. Cist. from Our Lady of Dallas Cistercian Monastery to Alex's room at the Nursing Center in Plano, Texas to administer the last rites, or as it is called today, the Anointing of the Sick. Fr. Julius has ministered to hundreds of Hungarian immigrants in his 57 years of being a Roman Catholic priest. And as it turns out, Alex's parents and Fr. Julius are all 56-ers,



*Villa Giusti*



*Table at which the Armistice was signed*

as they are known, Hungarians who escaped Soviet occupation and the Hungarian Revolution of 1956.

It is a small world indeed!

*László Tibor Laky is first generation Hungarian, a motorcycle Officer who escorts funerals, parades, dignitaries, and sports teams. He is one of six children of immigrants Anikó Hódosy of Arad and Tibor Laky of Székesfehérvár. He and his wife Lynette are certified volunteer storm spotters with the National Weather Service. He is MNO's Texas Correspondent.*



*Nagypapa László Hodosy*



*Sergeant Alex Császár*



### Did you know ...

... **that** the Budapest Opera House is one of the most beautiful in the world? (Judge for yourself!)

The horseshoe-shaped theater's wood paneling and the ventilating system which runs under the floor, as well as the somewhat hard seats contribute to the good acoustics. Seats are not crammed together, but are comfortably spaced.

At the time of its construction (1875), its stage was considered very modern, having been built with mostly metal instead of wood. The chandelier weighs close to two metric tons, and is lowered by a hand-operated winch when the lights have to be changed.

The ceiling fresco, depicting The Apotheosis of Music, is the work of Lotz Károly, who depicted himself as the figure of Zeus, and his daughter as Aphrodite.

Only two kilograms of extra-thin

gold leaf were used for gilding the interior of the Opera House, applied with brushes made of squirrel hair. (Human touch would have turned it into powder!)

Emperor Francis Joseph supported building of the Budapest Opera House, but stipulated that it could not be larger than the one in Vienna. When completed, he is supposed to have said, "It truly is not bigger, but I forgot to mention that it should not be more beautiful either!"

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