



Melyiket a kilenc közül? (népmese) - Which One of the Nine?

This is a folk tale about a poor bootmaker who had nine children. His wife had died and he tried to make the best of it. One Christmas Eve, he had nothing to give the children by way of presents, only a beautiful Christmas song of joy and celebration that he taught them. And the children sang and made merry. The rich owner of the house, who had no wife nor children and was bored, was bothered by the children's singing. He offered to adopt one of the bootmaker's boys and make him a great lord. But the bootmaker could not part with any of them. Then the houseowner offered him a thousand pengős if they would just not sing. The bootmaker accepted, but then could not stop singing. He ran to return the money to the houseowner, because for him, being able to sing whenever he wanted was worth more than all that money.

We have included the song they sang in the story. It is an old one, going back to the 17th century, and is widely known.

Élt egyszer egy szegény csizmadia a nagy Pest városában, aki semmiképpen nem tudott a mesterségéből meggazdagodni. Azért nem tudott tudniillik semmi gazdagságra jutni János mester, mert az Isten olyan különösen megáldotta, hogy minden esztendőben született neki egy gyermeke.

- Oh én uram Istenem! - sóhajtozék gyakran János mester minden újabb számnál. Amint lón hat, lón hét, lón nyolc. Egyszer aztán eljőve a kilencedik; s aztán az asszony meghalt; és János mester egyedül maradt a kilenc gyermekkel a világon.

Mikor cipőt kellett szabni, egyszerre kilenc cipőt, mikor kenyeret kellett szelni, egyszerre kilenc karéj!, mikor ágyat kellett vetni, egyszerre az ajtótól az ablakig az egész szoba ágy, tömve, dugva, apróbb, nagyobb, szöske, barna fejekkel.

Egy karácsony estén János mester későn tért haza a nagy szaladgálásból, kevés pénzecskét szedett be; ami ismét mesterségéhez, meg a napi szükségek fedezéséhez kellett.

- No, gyerekek: egy, kettő, három, négy, mind itt vagytok? Tudjátok-e azt, hogy ma van karácsony estéje? Ünnepe az ez. Nagyon örvendetes ünnep. Ma este nem dolgozunk semmit, hanem örülünk valamennyien.

A gyerekek úgy örültek annak, hogy ma örülni kell, majd felvetették vele a házat. - Megálljatok csak hát még ha megtanítalak benneteket arra a szép énekre, amit én tudok. Erre a napra tartogattam, karácsonyi ajándéknak! Majd én előbb elénekelem: ti pedig majd aztán utánam.

„Krisztus urunknak áldott születésén...” A nagyobb fiúk és leánykák első hallásra megtanulták a dallamot, több baj volt a kisebbekkel, azok mindig félrevitték a dalt. A kilenc egyszerre vékonyan zengedezé azt a szép dalt, amit ma-

guk az angyalok énekeltek azon az emlékezetes éjszakán. Bizonyára a gyermekek énekének örülnek odafenn a mennyben. Hanem annál kevésbé örülnek odafenn az első emeleten.

Ott egy gazdag úr lakik, egymaga kilenc szobában. Ennek sem felesége, sem gyermeke, annyi pénze van, hogy maga sem tudja, mennyi. Ez a gazdag úr éppen nyolcadik szobájában ült az este, és azon gondolkodott, hogy miért nincs az ételnek íze? Miért nincs a ruganyos ágyban csendes álom? Amidőn János mester földszinti szobájából elkezdet elébb lassan, aztán mindig erősebben hangzani fel hozzá ama vidámságra ösztönző ének. Eleinte nem akart rá ügyelni, hanem amikor már tizedszer is újra kezdték, nem állhatta tovább a dolgot.

Összemorzsolta kialudt szivarját, s lement maga, hálókabátban a csizmadia szállására.

- Kend János mester, a csizmadia, ugye? - kérde tőle a gazdag úr.

- Igenis szolgálatjára, nagyságos uram: parancsol egy pár fénymázás topánkát?

- - Nem azért jöttem. De sok gyermeke van kendnek!

- Van biz, nagyságos uram, kicsiny, nagy is. Sok száj, mikor evésre kerül a dolog.

- Még több száj, mikor énekelnek. Hallja kend, János mester: én kendet szerencsés emberré akarom tenni. Adjon nekem egyet a gyermekei közül, és azt fiammá fogadom,

Krisz - tus U-runk - nak ál - dott szü - le - té - sén,
Mond - junk an - gya - li dalt meg - je - le - né - sén,
Mely Betlehem-nek mezején nagy ré-gen Zengett ekképpen:

A magasságban dicsőség Istennek
Békesség legyen földön embereknek,
És jóakarát mindenféle népnek
És nemzetségnek

A nemes Betlehemnek városába'
Gyermek született szüztől e világra,
Örömet hozott Ádám árváira,
Maradékira

Eljött már, akit a szent atyák vártak
A szent királyok, akit óhajtottak,
Kiráól jövendőt próféták mondtak,
Nyilván szólottak.

Ez az Úr Jézus, igaz Messiásunk,
Általa vagyunk bűntünkből váltságunk,
A mennyországban örökös lakásunk,
Boldogulásunk.

Hála legyen mennybéli szent Atyánknak,
Hála legyen született Jézusunknak,
És Szentléleknek, mi vigasztalónknak,
Bölcs oktatónk!

Ó, örök Isten, dicső Szentháromság,
Szálljon mireánk mennyei vigasság,
Távozzék tőlünk minden szomorúság,
Légyen vidámság!

felneveltetem, úr lesz belőle.

János mester szörnyű szemeket
meresztett erre a mondásra; egy gyer-
meket úrrá tenni! Persze, hogy
odaadja!

- No, válasszon kend közülük hamar
egyet!

János mester hozzáfogott a válasz-
táshoz. - Ez a Sándorka. No, ezt nem
adom. Ez jól tanul; ebből papnak kell
lenni; a második: ez leány, leány nem
kell a nagyságos úrnak; ez Ferencke:
ez már segít nekem a mesterségben, e
nélkül nem lehetek el; a Jánoska: lám,
lám, ez meg a nevemre van keresz-
telve, nem adhatom oda; a kis Józsi,
ez meg egészen az anyja formája,
mintha csak őtet látnám, ez ne lenne
többet a háznál? No most megint leány
következik; azután itt van a Palika. Ez
volt az anyjának a legkedvesebbje: oh,
szegény asszony, megfordulna a

koporsójában, ha ezt idegennek ad-
nám; no ez a kettő meg még nagyon
kicsiny, mit csinálna velük a nagyságos
úr! Úgy járt, hogy már a végére ért,
mégsem tudott választani. Azután alul-
ról kezdte felfelé; de csak az lett akkor
is a vége, hogy ő bizony nem tudja,
melyiket adja oda, mert ő valamennyit
szereti.

- No porontyok! Válasszatok magatok;
melyiktek akar elmenni nagy úr lenni!

A gyerekek mind az apjuk háta mögé
húzódtak. János mester nem állhatta
tovább, odaborult közéjük, átnyalá-
áabolta valamennyit, s elkezdett a fe-
jükre sírni, azok pedig vele együtt.

- Nem lehet, nagyságos uram, nem
lehet. Kérjen tőlem akármit a világon,
de egyik gyermekemet sem adhatom
senkinek, ha már az Úristen nekem
adta őket. A gazdag úr azt mondta rá,
hogy legalább annyit tegyen meg a

kedvéért, hogy ne énekeljen
többet a gyermekeivel ide
alant, s fogadjon el tőle ezer
pengőt ezért az áldozatért.

János mester soha még csak
kimondva sem hallotta ezt a
szót: „ezer pengő”, és most
a markába nyomták. A
nagyságos úr megint felment
a szobájába unatkozni. János
mester pedig nagyot bámult
azon az ismeretlen alakú e-
zerpengős bankón, és elhall-
gatott. Hallgatott az apróság
is. Nem volt szabad énekelni:
a nagy úr odafenn meghallja.
Maga János mester gorombán
kergette el magától azt a kis
porontyot, aki feleségének
kedvence volt, amikor oda-
ment hozzá, s arra kérte,
hogy tanítsa meg őt újra a
szép énekre, mert már elfe-
lejtette.

- Nem szabad énekelni. Aztán
leült és szabdalta, míg egyszer
azon vette észre magát, hogy
maga is elkez-
dúdolni: „Krisztus urunknak
áldott születésén”. Először a

szájára ütött, hanem aztán meghara-
gudott, nagyot ütött a tőkére, kirúgta
maga alól a széket, és kivette az ezer-
pengőt, s futott fel az emeletre a
nagyságos úrhoz.

- Nagyságos jó uram! Instálom alás-
san, vegye vissza a pénzt, hadd éne-
keljek én, mikor nekem tetszik; mert
az többet ér ezer pengőnél! Azzal
letette az asztalra a bankót, s nyargalt
vissza az övéihez, sorba csókoltá vala-
mennyit, közéjük ült alacsony székére,
s rákezdték tiszta szívből újra:
„Krisztus urunknak áldott születésén.”
S olyan-olyan jó kedvük volt, mintha
övék volna az a nagy ház!

Akié pedig volt az a nagy ház, nagy
egyedül járt kilenc szobáján keresztül,
s gondolkozott magában, hogy vajon
mi örülni valót talál más ember ebben
a nagy unalmas világban.

Our First Christmas in America, 70 Years Ago

Remig A. Papp, with introduction by EPF

These are excerpts from Family News #24, written by my Dad in Princeton-Junction, NJ, on December 31st, 1949. We had arrived in America on July 11th of the same year, sponsored by my Aunt and Uncle, Louise and Raul Vajk. They had returned to the US just a few short years earlier, and had to start from scratch themselves. (To spotlight what I mean: my cousin Antonia, two years older than I, had to stay home from school when her single pair of shoes had to be repaired!) Nevertheless they had sent life-saving packages of food, as well as clothing, to us in Germany for several years after the War.

So my parents wanted to reimburse them, in instalments. The amount they agreed on was a thousand dollars, which in 1949 was a great deal of money! So it took us longer to get on our feet.

In September of 1949, we moved into the right wing of a Texaco gas station in Princeton-Junction which the owner, Mr. Hall had transformed into a very simple apartment. We lived there for two years until Dad's commuting to a draftsman's job in New York became too expensive.

Here I sit at the typewriter on the last day of the year, to write the last of this year's News.

Christmas too is over. I didn't get to Paprikás Weiss (*a Hungarian specialty store in New York at the time*) any more, but it was just as well, because if I remember correctly they advertised the real Hungarian *szaloncukor* (Christmas candy) at \$1.50 (or perhaps \$1.20) a pound, when sugar sells for 9 (nine!)

cents – to be more precise, 10 pounds cost 91 cents. That's why, instead, Vivy made six different kinds of *szaloncukor*, and the whole family cut the wrapping and wrapped them the night before.

Remy suggested that we should get a small machine to cut the *szaloncukor* wrappers because, as we counted, we had cut the wrappers ourselves more often than we bought the beautiful Stuehmer brand. It's interesting that this kind of wrapping is unknown abroad.

There was trouble with the candle



The right wing of this building was our apartment.

holders too, because you can't get them here either (you probably can, it's just that I haven't found their source yet). Here everyone uses electric candles and globes for decorating, so Vivy and Remy, with great difficulty, fastened the pretty little red candles to the tree with wire, and together we put up the red, white and green wrapped *szaloncukor*. Only Erika did not help, because after last year's visit of the angels, she now declared that she would rather not take part in decorating the Christmas tree but would rather like to see it when it was finished.

In the morning, Erika and I delivered our small gifts around the village – a few small items for the Vajk family, and two *beigli* (poppyseed rolls). But we had our comeuppance with that, because the last night Louise set to work in earnest and baked a finer *beigli* than ours. Although ours

was prepared a week earlier to be sent away...

We took a small tray of *beigli* to the Wards, to our landlords and to Elizabeth Good, that is, Jóó Erzsébet. The Wards are a little round couple, who have a grocery store half way between Raul's and us, in a small white wooden shack under large trees, next to the fire station. It is also the post office, located at the back of the grocery store, with some 100 P.O. boxes and a small counter. Every Sunday morning, the Wards take the Vajk children and Erika to church in Princeton in their beautiful black car. They do it out of kindness and that's why we brought them the *beigli* now.

Jóó Erzsébet was delivering the mail with her car; for her, we merely put the small package on her porch, and we also hung a few *szaloncukor* on it. This moved the little old round lady so much that while I was taking a nap in the afternoon, her car stopped in front of our door (literally!) and she handed Vivy a package containing canned fruit, a bottle of wine, and a box of apples.

In the afternoon, having decorated the tree, we placed everyone's presents on Remy's bed which was covered with the *cserge* (a rough woolen blanket from Transylvania, often used as a bedspread), as well as on the covered nightstand and the floor, and covered each of them with a silk scarf, so they wouldn't see their presents ahead of time. For me, we also put the typewriter there, and for Vivy, the electric iron. Vivy lit the candles and we sang several beautiful Hungarian Christmas songs.

Vivy received a silver-plated butter dish (*since butter had been a very scarce commodity in Germany after the War, this was symbolic of our improved situation. EPF*), and a breakfast set of dark green glazed earthenware, which was very inex-

pensive in one of the department stores in New York. Vivy was very happy because, after five years, she was very tired of having four or five different cups or saucers for the four of us, according to what we managed to get from here or there. So our breakfast table looked very good the following morning, it's just that we still don't have a decent tablecloth.

From Louise, Vivy received all kinds of kitchen equipment, and a crocheted runner that had been made for her Dad (*who died two weeks after we left Budapest. EPF*) She received a book on Tillman Riemschneider from Germany, but it was not the same as the one that we left behind at home. From Remy she received a broom, and from Erika a small cooking pot. The children considered the practical side.

Erika had a German book, the first one she was able to read and one that she loved, because it was about a little dog named Haidjer. She has read it to tatters. Now she received two more Haidjer books, the first in the series, and the last. Further, she received five half-yards of material for doll clothes, a nice large album from Antonia for photographs she will be taking in the future, two aprons her Mom put together, a new pair of shoes and stockings, and some small items.

Remy's chief present was also a pair of shoes, and he received in addition a Webster (a spelling dictionary and an encyclopedia all in one).

I had asked for apples and a wastebasket, and I would have liked a pair of leather gloves, because for want of anything better, now that the weather had turned cold, I was wearing those gray mittens Erika had knitted (*a needlework project at school in Essen*) for Remy last year. (Remy has other knit gloves.)

We were very satisfied with Christmas, because finally, after six years, this was the first Christmas we could spend in our own apartment. Somehow we were even finished quite

quickly, and on the 23rd we were able to be in bed by 10 o'clock, unbelievable as that seems, because over the past years the last few days were so exhausting that it was barely worth it. Here, we knew how far we could go, and we didn't have to run here and there ten times for every little thing, as in Germany during inflation, but we simply went into a store and bought what we had targeted.

There was wine soup followed by ham, and roast duck the following day. We were invited to Raul's for Sunday afternoon, who kept us there for supper for delicious roast turkey. There was a lot of playing with the electric train, that Remy also joined in.

We too sent and received a lot of Christmas cards. According to local custom, Vivy also strung several lines over the fireplace (*which was a fake! EPF*) and hung the cards we received on them. There were three lines, but there were enough cards for four, and one line is Erika's.

Our landlords also came in for a little while to see our Christmas tree, and brought a box of candy. Mr. Hall, having taken a good look at our tree, ran out into his store and brought four candy canes. It seems this is the custom here, to have them on the Christmas tree; in some places there are such candy canes on the lit-up pine branches that are displayed on outside doors.

For today, Sylvester evening, we decided to by a bottle of Mumm. We have not had champagne for New Year's Eve for six years, and we believe, or hope, that our lot during the coming year will be better if we greet the New Year with champagne. For a short while we will light the



Side view of our apartment, with front door; bottom: The Wards' grocery store and Post Office

candles on the Christmas tree, will think over the past year which has brought so many and such great changes in our lives and look forward to the new year with a bit of hope. We think a lot about those left at home as well, and wish them all a happy New Year, which for them – it already being ten o'clock at night here – has already come four hours ago. May God give strength and health and peace, a little humane way of life and rest and recreation after all the well-done work.

Remig A. Papp (1901-1985), father of Erika Papp Faber, was born in Budapest of Transylvanian Armenian stock. He obtained a diploma in Civil Engineering from the Technical University of Budapest, and worked in Germany and France before the Depression. Returned to Hungary, he designed the winter harbor of Budapest, among other projects. He left with his family to escape the siege, and emigrated to the US in 1949, where he worked his way up to Associate in an engineering consulting firm, designing dams and other structures.

Another Christmas Custom: Kántálás

EPF

Akin to our caroling, this ancient custom is still alive in some areas of the country.

In addition to the well-known *betlehemezés**, the custom of *kántálás*, or chanting was also popular at Christmastime. The chanters would go from house to village house asking, "Would you like some angelic rejoicing?" Whoever answered with "yes" would be entertained with Christmas carols, either under the window or in the house. In return, they would receive walnuts, apples, pastries, pretzels. Nowadays they might get some money too. Then they would proceed to the next house.

People would strew hay under their window on which the children would stand while singing. Afterwards, that hay would be placed in the henhouse to improve egg-laying by the hens.

Different age groups would go around at different times of the day. The children would start around noontime, young people in the afternoon, and the married men and other grown-ups late at night.

The number of *kántáló* songs exceeds by far all our other holiday-related songs. Verses of season's greetings and rhymes requesting donations were often added.

Kántálás was also called *mendikálás* (derived from the Latin word for begging). This seems to indicate that, centuries ago, it was the mendicant (begging) monks or perhaps students who used this method to collect much-needed funds.

In Somogy County, the custom is called *bölcsőcske* (little cradle), because the singers carry a small cradle with



them and stand or kneel around it. Some Transylvanian villages would have held dances at Christmastime that would last several days. These were introduced by *kántálás*, which continued with offering good wishes to the Stephens and the Johns (December 26th and 27th, respectively) for their feast days.

In the Kalotaszeg region, the dance lasted four (nowadays only three) days. It began with *kántálás* on the morning of December 24th, in front of the church after the church service, with the invitation of the girls. The young men chosen for this task asked each girl by name. The actual dance began on the afternoon of the first day of Christmas. It continued on the 26th, ending on December 28th, feast of the Holy Innocents.

(Source: Karácsonyi ünnepkör, by Kerkay Emese and: Kézikönyvtár, Magyar néprajz VII)

**Betlehemezés usually involves the carrying of a miniature church by children or grownups, dressed as shepherds, angels, Mary and Joseph, and the retelling of the Christmas story. Frequently, one of the shepherds is portrayed as being hard of hearing, giving rise to comical misunderstandings.*



Karácsony in the name

Karolina Tima Szabó

We often wonder where the names of towns come from, as our colleague, viola vonfi did in several previous issues earlier this year..

December is the month of Christmas; in Hungarian it is *Karácsony*. According to hu.wikipedia.org the word *Karácsony* possibly came from a Slav word that they took from the Bulgarian "karun", which means stump, referring to a pagan bonfire tradition. Another possibility is that it is derived from the Hungarian "*kerecseny*" meaning flying the falcon, a Hungarian tradition around the end of December. Or, it may be from the Latin "*incarnatio*", God's appearance in a human body. Regardless of the origin of the word, we Hungarians celebrate the birth of Christ on the day of *Karácsony*.

Wherever it came from, I was interested whether any name of a town in Hungary contains the word "*Karácsony*". The first one I found is **Nagykarácsony** (Great Christmas) in Fejér County. Relics have been unearthed in the area from the era of King Béla IV (1206 - 1270). There were small settlements in the region by the Cumanians: Előszállás, Szőlőhegy, Karácsonyszállás. The Cumans were shepherds, moving cattle from one area to another. By Christmas they moved to Karácsonyszállás. The village was mentioned first as "Karácsonyszállás" in the 1702 census report, and in 1953 the name of the town officially became Nagykarácsony. Current population is approximating 1,600.

The Hungarian postal services have been operating a Christmas post office in the town since 1993. Greeting cards, packages can be mailed with a special stamp and marked "*Nagykarácsonyon keresztül*" (via Nagykarácsony). Although Santa and *Mikulás* are both based on the original Saint Nicholas of Myra, they



Top: Nagykarcsony-Roman Catholic Church, Mikulásház, Middle: Mikekarácsonyfa- Hétfájdalmas Szűz Mária church, crest, church stained glass window, Bottom: Karácsond- Beretvás castle, Ave Maria Chapel

are really two different characters. But it seems that Santa is becoming popular in Hungary too. Now the post office also accepts mail to Santa, children can visit and can meet him. The Christmas program is growing each year; *Mikulásház* (Santa's House) opened in 1995. A few weeks ago, fire broke out in a closet there, and Santa's chair was destroyed. No one was hurt, as the *Mikulásház* was closed at the time. Santa's reindeer was rescued.

(That's another difference: *Mikulás* always walks, with a sackful of toys on his back.) The number of visitors keeps growing; there is even a plan to create a *Mikulásfalu* (Santa's Village) in the future.

Another town is **Mikekarácsonyfa**, which is actually a small village in Zala county, in the Gőcsej area, with a population of about 330. The village officially became Mikekarácsonyfa in 1941, with the combination of two even smaller villages, Mikefa and Karácsonyfa. The names originally ended with "*falva*" (village), but as is typical of the Gőcsej area, it was shortened to "*fa*". Mikefalva was mentioned first in 1394, the shortened version in 1773. "Mike" is possibly a nickname of Miklós or Mihály. Karácsonyfa is mentioned in a document dating back to 1211 as Karasun, in 1549 as Karachonfalwa, in 1612 as Karachonfa.

The town population consisted of a few nobles, Czigány, Garázda, Garáth and Lóránt, and their serfs. The serfs suffered much from the Szecssziget fort captain. Sometimes they spent weeks in prison for refusing to deliver material for the fort. Fifteen men from the village fought in the 1848 freedom fight, and many died in WWII.

The two villages are separated by the Cserka River. The river was a blessing for the village. A mill was built on it and grain was brought there from all the surrounding towns.

There are two *harangláb* (bell towers) in the village, and a modern



Bell tower in Mikekarácsonyfa / Harangláb Mikekarácsonyfán

church. The *Hétfájdalmas Szűz Mária* (Seven Sorrows of Mary) church was built in 1994. Gróf Károly moved out of the town and donated his old house to the village. The people took the house apart and used the bricks and other material to build the church. The church looks mostly like the bell tower, but the inside frescoes, paintings and statues were done by famous artists.

The town has a park and a pond, and a school which opened in 1895 with one teacher. A library was just recently renovated.

There is something interesting and funny I read about the village. It was in a written document dated from 1554. Men coming home from Turkish captivity left their wives and, with permission from the captain of the fort of Nagykanizsa, they married other women.

I found a town named **Karácsond** in Heves county. Relics found in the Puky-pond area prove that people were living in the area since ancient times. The town first was mentioned as Karachund. The land was the property of the king, and was donated to different aristocratic families in the 13th and 14th centuries. After the Turkish invasion, only 19 houses were lived in, the others were empty or ruined. In the late 1700s, a few Hungarian and five Slovak families lived there. It is mentioned that 9 serfs

from here fought in Kossuth's army.

The North end of the town is built on the South slopes of the Mátra Mountains which is perfect for growing grapes; the South end of the town is on the Alföld which is great for growing wheat and other grains. Mineral water and coal were found underground.

The town's population grew, and in 1871 it became a *nagyközség* (large town). In 2001, 97% of the population were Hungarian, 3% were Gypsies. According to the 2015 census, the population numbered 2,911. The Roman Catholic church was built in 1770. There is a Millennium Park, which was designed by the horticultural university graduates.

But whether or not you live in a town that has *karácsony* in its name, have a very blessed and merry Christmas!

New Colors in the Hungarian Spectrum?

Zsuzsa Simándy

A Magyar blues singer has returned to Budapest, adding unusual colors to the Hungarian spectrum. If you were lucky enough to be there on November 21st, you could have enjoyed Little G Weevil and his blues band at A38 Hajó. If you missed it, take advantage of the next opportunity. He is home again.



Little G Weevil

He calls himself a blues-man, but Hungarian-born Little G Weevil is so much more -- guitarist, singer, songwriter, lyricist and producer. He is internationally known for his authentic style, heavily influenced by Southern Blues and Funk music, especially by Mississippi Delta Blues.

Born in Budapest as Gábor Szúcs, at age 17 he was drawn to John Lee Hootler, which set in motion his fascination with blues music, and later he chose as his mentors Lightnin' Hopkins, B.B. King and Chuck Berry.

Many blues lovers feel he is simply the best musician, very talented, with a golden soulful heart.

Gee is the 2013 solo winner of the Blues Foundation's International Blues Challenge (Memphis). As of today, he is the only European solo performer to win the title in the United States. He was also awarded Best Guitarist in his category.

During his time in the USA (2004-2019) he released six highly acclaimed albums and received a Blues Music Award, Blues Blast Music Award and two Independent Blues Award nominations. His independent record label is Vizztone Label Group, XLNT Records.

The multiple-award winner lived in Atlanta, Georgia until February, 2019, when he moved back to Budapest, where he intends to build his permanent home. He had missed the intimate connection with people speaking his own native tongue.

His song, "A long way to be from my sweet Balaton lake" is from his album, *Moving*.

He has come home.

ZsuZsa Simándy is a psychotherapist, a blues lover, and a writer. Her memoir is called GATHERING ROSES, THORNS AND ALL, and she is currently translating the soulful poems of Reményik Sándor.



Recently, Like G. Weevil, ZsuZsa went home.

The New Year's Eve "Twelve" - Szilveszteri "tizenkettő"

Pilinszky János

Pilinszky János, born in 1921, was drafted into the Hungarian army in 1944, and with his unit was sent to follow the German army as it withdrew to Germany. He was captured, and was in various prisoner of war camps. He saw several concentration camps, an indelible experience reflected in many of his poems. Pilinszky's writings, described as juxtaposing his Roman Catholic faith with intellectual disenchantment, greatly influenced post-World War II Hungarian poetry. This essay is perhaps a good example of his style. He received numerous literary prizes, and died in 1981.

On New Year's Eve we step across the threshold of the New Year and the smile of new beginnings shines over the sadness of passing. The "mood" of New Year's Eve is a complex idea, especially for the believer. Gratitude and hope, accounting and planning, fun and sternness, sorrow and joy meet at the "twelve"

of New Year's Eve.

It is our only holiday that, beyond itself, recalls the whole year for us. We could call it the holiday of Time itself, the consecration of mysterious earthly Time. That is the reason why I often feel we celebrate it the wrong way. We should actually receive it quietly, like someone listening carefully for the start of a snowfall or for the rustle of the stars; or like the farmer who would want to hear the growth of his crop from the still of the night.

Yet, New Year's Eve has become the hour of boundless rejoicing of carnivals, as if a pagan heart were still beating behind this pleasure. No wonder that for many, New Year's Day equals the gray sadness of sobering up.

However, real cheer is a lovely occasion, including earthly pleasure. Therefore, we should not shy away from granting it an "earthly smile".

It is twelve o'clock. During the night, the Earth has just finished its orbiting and is starting to inscribe its new celestial circle. Above our heads, like a rotating crystal ball, is the starry universe. But in this moment our heart belongs only to Him, the Lord of this wonderful movement, passing and arrival. And let us not forget even in the loudest New Year's Eve noise: in infinite quiet and gentleness God is driving his herds of stars from the fields of the old year to those of the new year.

Szilveszterkor lépjük át az új év küszöbét, s az elmúlás szomorúságán átragyog az újrakezdés mosolya. A szilveszteri „hangulat” nagyon is összetett valami, s kivált az a hívő számára. Hála és remény, számadás és tervezgetés, mulatság és komolyság, bánat és öröm találkozója a szilveszteri „tizenkettő”.

Az egyetlen ünnepünk, mely túlmutatva önmagán az egész esztendőt

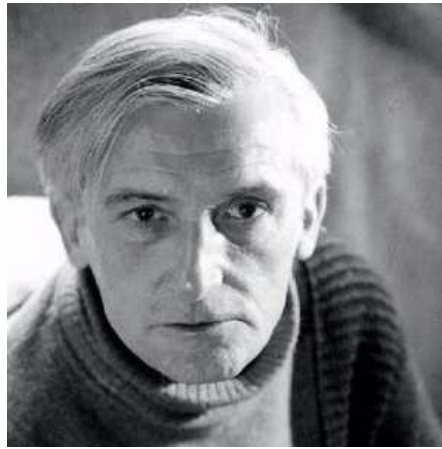
felidézi bennünk. Szilveszterre azt is mondhatnánk, hogy magának az Időnek ünnepe, magának a titokzatos földi Időnek a megszentelése. Épp ezért sokszor az az érzésem, hogy rosszul ünnepeljük. Tulajdonképpen csendben, szinte hallgatózza kellene fogadnunk, mint valaki a hőésés kezdetét lesi, vagy a csillagok neszére figyel, vagy mint a gazda, ki az éjszaka csendjéből a vetés növéset szeretné kihallgatni.

A Szilveszter mégis a féktelen, a karneváli öröm órája lett, s mintha emögött az öröm mögött még ma is valamiféle pogány szív dobogna. Nem csoda aztán, ha újév napja sokak számára a kijózanodás szürke szomorúságával egyenlő.

Pedig gyönyörű alkalom az igaz derű s tegyük hozzá: a földi öröm számára. Mert valóban az: „földönjáró” ünnep, s ezt a „földi mosolyt” nem is szabad megtagadnunk tőle.

Tizenkét óra van. Az éjszakában most fejezte be körforgását a Föld, s most kezd egy újabb égi kör írásába. Fejünk fölött, mint forgó kristálygömb, a csillagos egyetem. De a mi szívünk e pillanatban egyedül Övé, e csodálatos mozgás, múlás és érkezés Uráé. S ezt ne feledjük el a legharsányabb szilveszteri zsvajban se: végzetetlen csendben és szelíden Isten most hajtja át csillagnyájait az őesztendőből az újesztendő mezőire.

Pilinszky János (1921-1981) katolikus költő, akinek nagy befolyása volt a háború utáni magyar költészetre. Első verseit 1938-ban közzölte. 1944-ben behívták katonának, és Németországba került. Mint hadifogoly különböző táborban betegeskedett, és látott több koncentrációs tábort, amik mély benyomásait sok verse tükrözte. Sok irodalmi elismerésben részesült, elnyervén a Baumgarten díjat (1947), a József Attila díjat (1971), és a Kossuth díjat (1980). Posztumusz neki ítéltek a Magyar Örökség díjat is 1997-ben.



Pilinszky János

Recalling the Women's December Demonstration

EPF

Not many people recall the large, silent demonstration by the women of Budapest on December 4th, 1956, a month after Russian tanks began pouring into the capital to crush the Revolution.

Even after November 4th, 1956, when Russian tanks crushed the Hungarian Revolution, a group of young intellectuals continued to run an illegal duplicating machine in the basement of a Budapest hospital. They produced stenciled posters, calling for a silent women's demonstration on the one-month anniversary, asking women and girls to bring a flower to the tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

And disregarding the risk of being shot (as happened a few days later), the women came – in rows of twos and threes, dressed in mourning and wearing kerchiefs, with black flags, some pushing baby carriages. Soviet tanks tried to stop them by shutting off the road and trying to force back the crowd. Undaunted, the silent marchers found a way around them.

They marched, for two and a half hours, laying their flowers and wreaths of remembrance, completely covering the tomb. The soldiers standing guard at its four corners were unabashedly weeping.

The women then marched to the American embassy, and handed over a petition, asking the United States to demand that the UN's airplane be allowed to land in Budapest (previously prevented by the Russians), so they could see for themselves the war-like destruction and the innumerable graves in the public squares.

At that, Russian tanks appeared, scaring the crowd. Several hundred women lay down on the street to stop them. Someone came to the balcony and said something meaningless. A similar demonstration in front of the British embassy also brought on the Russian tanks.

The Kádár regime later tried to identify the participants, and some suffered serious harassment as a result.

Similar women's demonstrations took place in other major cities in those days: In Veszprém and Gyula on December 6th, in Székesfehérvár, Esztergom and Pécs on the 7th, in Miskolc on the 9th, and in Eger on the 10th.

These heroic Hungarian women were courageous enough to openly mourn for their sons, husbands and their country, knowing full well the risk they were taking. They too deserve to be remembered!



FIGYELEM! FIGYELEM! FIGYELEM!

Felhívás minden magyarhoz!

1918/483
 Pénteken -nov. 23-án- lesz egy hónapja annak, hogy népünk hősi szabadságharcra megkezdődött. Szent kötelességünk, hogy ezen a napon megmutassuk a magyarság egységesen a forradalom követelése mellett áll! A jelenlegi körülmények között a megemlékezés egyetlen módja az, hogy

MINDEN ABLAKBA ÉS MÁRTIRJAINK SÍRJÁRA ÉGŐ GYERTYÁT HELYEZÜNK!!

Nem kezdemenyozunk semilyen tüntetést. El akarunk kerülni minden felesleges vérontást. Tudjuk, hogy mindazok, akik forradalmunkkal együttérseknek, csatlakoznak felhívásunkhoz!

Magyar Ifjúság.

nov. 22.

HA ELÖLVASTAD, ADD TOVÁBBI!!



Did you know ...

... **that** the delicious and iconic Hungarian dobos torta finally became an official Hungarikum?

What is Hungarikum? It is a collective term indicating a value worthy of distinction and highlighting, exhibiting typically Hungarian uniqueness and quality.

And what about the dobos torta? We can say that it is the best Hungarian cake. It is the perfect harmony of sponge, cocoa, and caramelized sugar, without any fuss. It was introduced to the public 134 years ago by József Dobos, a confectioner. Have you tried it?

(see the March 2018 issue of Magyar News Online for a list of Hungarikums).

... **that** November 13th is Hungarian Language Day? On that day in 1844, when Hungary was still under Austrian rule, Magyar was declared, by law, to be the official language of the State. The date was made official by Parliament in 2011.

In his welcoming remarks opening the 4th Hungarian Heritage Festival at the Hungarian House in New York, H.E. István Pásztor, Consul General of Hungary, emphasized that our language is the main part of our cultural heritage and also the foundation of our national identity.

In this context, we might want to recall the words of Reményik Sándor:

Vigyázzatok ma jól, mikor beszéltek,
És áhítattal ejtsétek a szót...

E drága nyelvet porrá ne törjétek,
Ne nyúljon hozzá avatatlanul
Senki: ne szaggassátok szirmait
A rózsafának, mely hóban virul.
Úgy beszéljen ma ki-ki magyarul,
Mintha imádkozna,
Mintha aranyat, tömjént, myrrhát
hozna! ...

... **that** Hungary's – but probably also the world's – first woman archaeolo-

gist, Torma Zsófia, died 120 years ago? Born in Csicsókeresztúr (Beszterce-Naszód County), Transylvania into a family of archaeologists in 1832, she was the first to excavate the Neolithic Tordos culture, calling attention to the similarity of the symbols she found on the objects with the Assyrian-Babylonian and Sumerian writings.

At first, she was made fun of, but her finds in Hunyad County created a sensation in archaeological circles. That did not mean that she was recognized by all her colleagues; many, to whom she had generously given away samples of her finds, used them to write learned treatises, but “forgot” to mention her as the source of their information. The Serbian archaeologist who, 30 years later did extensive excavations and publicized the Tordos-Vinca culture, did not so much as mention her name as the one who had drawn his attention to the site and in whose footsteps he followed.

In 1876, she attended the 9th International Conference of Ancient Archaeology in Berlin, the only woman to be invited to attend, and also attended archaeological congresses in Frankfurt/Main.

She worked in Tordos, Hunyad County for 20 years, and published a number of studies based on her findings. She took part in the foundation of the Kolozsvár museum.

She was the first female to be awarded an honorary doctorate at the Faculty of Fine Arts of the Ferencz József Tudomány Egyetem in Kolozsvár in the spring of 1899, a few months before her death.

Among her papers was found a draft of a reply to the letter advising her of this honor. In it, she wrote that she had been the object of so much harassment and humiliation at that same university, and that she would not have any benefit from it now, since she was already dying, that she would really like to refuse the “honor”. As an afterthought, she added that on the other hand, it

might be fitting revenge on her enemies and those who had made fun of her. It is not known whether she ever mailed it ...

...**that** Gera Marina has just been awarded an International Emmy as Best Actress in the Hungarian production „Örök tél” – Eternal Winter? The film had been declared Best Drama at the 33rd International Film Festival in Fort Lauderdale, FL in 2018, and previously had been named Best European Film of the Year.

It's a Small World

Olga Vállay Szokolay

In the process of shopping for a house in Fort Collins, Colorado, the choice narrowed to a residence on a lovely, tree-shaded street. It is just a stone's throw away from City Park and from my daughter's home.

Since both she and her husband work for CSU (Colorado State University) in town, I occasionally heard them mentioning a certain Professor Hegedűs (meaning: *fiddler*) of the Chemistry Department living nearby. When we walked over to see the prospective house, the retired professor was just strolling by. We stopped to greet him and he proudly verified his roots: his father was Hungarian, his mother Slovak. Although he himself was actually born in the United States, his mother being pregnant with him, he was transported from Hungary *in utero*.

Should the deal be finalized, Professor Emeritus Louis Hegedűs and his wife Mary, an ardent gardener, would become my future next-door neighbors.

(There goes the neighborhood...)

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.



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