

BELA BARTOK

Welcome to the enchanting world of Bartok's folk music. These pieces have been transcribed from arrangements for flute and guitar.

Bela Bartok, considered one of the 20th century's most important composers, was born in Hungary in 1881. A prodigy, he was a professor at the Budapest Music Academy by the age of 26. His interest in traditional music led him to make many journeys (with his colleague Zolta Kodaly) through Hungary, Romania and Slovakia collecting songs and dances, the styles of which were synthesised into compositions of his own. He emigrated to the USA in 1940 where he died five years later of leukaemia.

The pieces are deceptively simple, and it would be a mistake to take their natural forms, clear melodies and harmonies, and basic rhythms as an invitation to play inattentively. Quite the contrary. They stand any amount of playing, but only when the composing is heeded, the dynamics observed, and the modulations anticipated.

Some are harder to play than others, but you can always slow a piece down for learning purposes, choose other fingering, or try later. Hopefully you will be fascinated and moved to explore, if you haven't already done so, other areas of Bartok's remarkable musical legacy.

About the arrangements:

As with much guitar music, the copying is not always strict. For instance, at times notes are written for a longer duration than they can be played, which improves readability while staying faithful to the original composition. On occasion rests are omitted to prevent cluttering. Alternative fingering may be preferred.

