

BELA BARTOK

FOUR FOLK SONGS

Welcome to the enchanting world of Bartok's folk music. These pieces have been selected from 32 I transcribed from arrangements for flute and guitar.

Bela Bartok, considered one of the 20<sup>th</sup> 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 uncluttered rhythms as an invitation to play inattentively. Quite the contrary. They stand any amount of playing, but only when the intent is heeded, the dynamics observed, and modulations are anticipated.

Rod Whittle