

Program

Double Suite no. 2

Bulgarian Dances & Barbarian Interludes

Bulgarian Rhythm no. 1 (2+2+3)
Mikrokosmos no. 117

Béla Bartók
(1881–1945)

Six Dances in Bulgarian Rhythm
Mikrokosmos nos. 148–153

Dance no. 1 (4+2+3)

Interlude: La colombe (The Dove)

Olivier Messiaen
(1908–1992)

Dance no. 2 (2+2+3)

Interlude: A Ragtime Nightingale

Joseph Lamb
(1887–1960)

Dance no. 3 (2+3)

Interlude: Bélának a Blues-a (Bela's Blues)

David Feurzeig
(b. 1965)

Dance no. 4 (3+2+3)

Interlude: Impromptu in Two Keys

George Gershwin
(1898–1937)

Dance no. 5 (2+2+2+3)

Interlude: Prelude & Fugue in C-sharp minor, WTC I

J.S. Bach
(1685–1750)

Dance no. 6 (3+3+2)

This second “Double Suite” is more narrative than the Bach-Ragtime Partita.

Each of the *Six Dances in Bulgarian Rhythm*, the magnificent capstone of Bartók’s *Mikrokosmos*, is paired with an extraneous piece in a similar key and of suitably complementary mood. In between each paired set I weave a discussion of Bartók’s music and its relation to the culture, demographics, and politics of the early-20th-century Balkans.

Beginning with a purely musical consideration of the metrical features of Bartók’s music and their relation to folk traditions, I expand to a broader consideration of Bartók’s pioneering ethnological research. By the end of the program, I have connected Bartók’s originally narrowly musical and nationalistic interest in the Hungarian *Volk* to the remarkable pluralism of his maturity. Bartók’s appreciation of diverse cultures compelled him to adopt strongly anti-Nazi politics, which culminated in his proudly defiant open letter to Goebbels—in which he demands that his music be classified forthwith as “degenerate”—and forced departure from his beloved Hungary to asylum in the United States, contemporaneous with the composition of the *Six Dances*.