

Fröst Interlaced

Martin Fröst Family Trio

Martin Fröst clarinet • Göran Fröst viola • Johan Fröst piano

Martin Fröst (b.1970)	Cradle Song (2024)
Anders Hillborg (b.1954)	Påfågelsögonblick (The Peacock Moment) for clarinet, viola and piano (1997)
Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)	Hungarian Dance No. 1 in G minor from <i>21 Hungarian Dances</i> WoO. 1 (1858-80) <i>arranged by Johan Fröst</i>
Witold Lutosławski (1913-1994)	From <i>Dance Preludes</i> (1954) <i>Dance Prelude No. 1 • Dance Prelude No. 2</i>
Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)	Invention No. 4 in D minor BWV775 (c.1721, rev. 1723) <i>arranged by Göran Fröst</i>
Witold Lutosławski	Dance Prelude No. 5 from <i>Dance Preludes</i>
Johann Sebastian Bach	Invention No. 10 in G BWV781 (c.1721, rev. 1723) <i>arranged by Göran Fröst</i>
Johannes Brahms	Hungarian Dance No. 14 in D minor from <i>21 Hungarian Dances</i> WoO. 1 <i>arranged by Johan Fröst</i>
Johann Sebastian Bach	Invention No. 6 in E BWV777 (c.1721, rev. 1723) <i>arranged by Göran Fröst</i>
Johannes Brahms	Hungarian Dance No. 21 in E minor from <i>21 Hungarian Dances</i> WoO. 1 <i>arranged by Johan Fröst</i>
Johann Sebastian Bach	Allemande from <i>French Suite No. 5 in G</i> BWV816 (c.1722, rev. c. 1724)
Béla Bartók (1881-1945)	Stick Dance from <i>6 Romanian Folk Dances</i> BB68 (1915) <i>arranged by Göran Fröst</i>
Johann Sebastian Bach	Sinfonia No. 10 in G BWV796 (c.1721, rev. 1723)
Béla Bartók	Sash Dance from <i>6 Romanian Folk Dances</i> BB68 (1915) <i>arranged by Göran Fröst</i>
Johann Sebastian Bach	From <i>French Suite No. 5 in G</i> BWV816 <i>Courante • Bourrée • Sarabande</i> Bulgarian Gigue (after French Suite No. 5 in G BWV816) <i>arranged by Shai Wosner</i>
Béla Bartók	From <i>6 Romanian Folk Dances</i> BB68 <i>arranged by Göran Fröst</i> <i>In One Spot • Horn Dance • Romanian Polka • Fast Dance</i>



This concert is being broadcast on BBC Radio 3



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As music printing became more common in the early 1500s, suites of dances began to circulate. Composers supplied burgeoning markets for printed music with instrumental dances rooted in folk traditions, transforming country dances and stage jigs into more elaborate forms that still retained characteristic rhythms or harmonies of their original models. The Martin Fröst Family Trio's programme reflects the interdependence of catchy folk dances and complex composition, a theme that runs through the story of Western classical music, a story all too often told in ways that obscure or downgrade its debt to popular culture.

Rhythm is king in **Anders Hillborg's** *Påfågelsögonblick*. The Swedish composer notes that this 'Peacock Moment', created in 1997, 'holds a central place in my worklist'. The piece derives its rhythms, pitch order and dynamics from a prime-number series, a fruitful creative process that has shaped many of Hillborg's subsequent works. The clarinet's leaping intervals create the impression of multiple voices; the music's atmosphere, meanwhile, evokes the earthy energy of one of the Breughel family's peasant kermesse paintings. **Witold Lutosławski's** *Dance Preludes* (1954) grew from the dictates of Poland's postwar Marxist-Leninist regime and its manipulation of the nation's folklore to suit Soviet definitions of a 'people's democracy'. Lutosławski played the political game while retaining his creative independence in the *Dance Preludes*, each of which is based on the rhythms and metrical fluidity of unspecified Polish folk dances. The spiky first and reflective second prelude, while strikingly different in mood, revolve around clear shifts of metre; the heavily accented fifth and final prelude is more complex in its rhythmic gestures and mix of five different time signatures.

Johann Sebastian Bach originally entitled his fifteen two-part *Inventions* as 'praeambula' in the manuscript book of keyboard pieces he made in 1722-3 for his eldest son, Wilhelm Friedemann. He later borrowed their more familiar name from the Italian composer FA Bonporti's *Inventioni da camera*; the 15 three-part *Sinfonias*, the sinuous No. 10 delightful among them, were styled as 'fantasias' in Wilhelm Friedemann's book. Both sets of compositions were intended as teaching pieces, to cultivate what Bach described as 'a cantabile style of playing', and help pupils 'acquire a foretaste of composition'. Bach and his students associated the term 'invention' with the musical idea or subject from which each of these contrapuntal pieces grows. Göran Fröst catches the dancing energy of the two-part *Inventions* in transcriptions that also draw out the striking ways in which Bach develops an entire piece from one simple idea.

Shortly before Bach's birth, German composers adopted a standard pattern of movements for their suites of instrumental dances. While the formal sequence of allemande, courante, sarabande and gigue, usually preceded by a prelude, was not set in stone, it provided Bach with the essential framework of his keyboard suites. The fifth of his French Suites (c.1722-3), although rather light

in contemporary French elements beyond its sparing use of imitative counterpoint, embraces the elegance of the fashionable new *style galant*, which was gaining ground in the early 1720s. The tender opening of its *Allemande* was written for Bach's second wife, Anna Magdalena, and later developed to convey the dance form's dignified, almost ritualistic manner. Bach revels in the running-dance origins of the *Courante*, channelled here into the form of a two-part invention hallmarked by a subject based on a descending scale. The suite's singing *Sarabande*, stately yet never pompous, crowns its fluent three-part texture with exquisite melodic ornaments, while the *Gigue* shows how rigorous fugal counterpoint can be married to a dance tune without stifling its spontaneity. The *Gigue's* three fugal voices appear in descending order in the movement's first half and are recalled in reverse order in its second half. Bach's *Bourrée* amplifies the joyful spirit of this lively duple-time dance form, thanks not least here to the rhythmic contrasts and correspondences between its melody and bass lines.

Magyar music flowed into the cafes and Heuriger taverns of Vienna in abundance after the creation of the dual monarchy of Austria-Hungary in 1867. The itinerant Hungarian bands that came to the Habsburg capital adapted old tunes and invented others, smoothing the rough edges from authentic folk melodies and tailoring them to suit bourgeois tastes. Brahms was enchanted by the *csárdás*, with its contrasting *lassú* ('slow') and *friss* ('fresh' or fast) sections, which he first encountered during his teens as accompanist to the Hungarian violinist Ede or Eduard Reményi. His collection of *21 Hungarian Dances* proved a lucrative and enduring popular success. Most of the set, including the evergreen first and vivacious last, are based on original Magyar melodies; according to his friend Joseph Joachim, however, Brahms invented the grand 'Hungarian' tune of No. 14 and clothed it in sumptuous harmonies.

Béla Bartók was compelled to collect genuine folk music from Hungary and the diverse ethnic and linguistic groups living within and around its borders. For two months in the summer of 1907, he toured his homeland in search of folksongs. He found rich raw materials in Transylvania, then part of the Kingdom of Hungary, especially so in the Csík district, where he heard Áron Balog play three pieces on his shepherd's flute. Balog's tunes belonged to the Székelys, an ethnic Hungarian subgroup, and were preserved largely unaltered in Bartók's *Romanian Folk Dances*, which he set for solo piano in 1915. The sequence of six miniatures opens with the *Bot tánc* ('Stick Dance') from Transylvania and includes the hypnotic *Pe loc* ('Standing still'), the swaggering, seductive *Brâul* ('Sash Dance') from the Banat region of Romania, the foot-stomping *Poarga Românească* ('Romanian Polka') and the wild *Măruntel*, a 'fast dance' comprising melodies gathered from two remote Transylvanian villages. Bartók follows the rules of modal harmony to give each of his folk-tune settings a wholly authentic flavour.

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