

Austro-Hungarian Music Culture in Transylvania between 1800-1850

Performed pieces:

Martin Schneider (1748-1812): Arioso & Sonate

Philipp Caudella (1771-1826): Tema con variazioni

János Lavotta (1764-1820): Az égi háború (The Heavenly War)

Recordings:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J4JoBanrshg>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L2KyXiGYocw>

Erich Türk - harpsichord

Transylvania, the north-western part of today's Romania, belonged to the Austro-Hungarian Empire until 1918 and had its own cultural development at the Eastern border of the Empire. This presentation wishes to show some details about musicians, musical repertoire and instruments which defined the musical culture of Cluj in the first half of the 19th century.

This period had a remarkable musical activity, determined by Viennese musicians who came to serve Transylvanian noblemen, local church musicians educated in Central Europe, migrating folk musicians and highly refined and qualified instrument makers, but also self-taught ones. All of them were working in order to satisfy the growing exigences of a cosmopolitan aristocracy and an emerging bourgeoisie.

Besides the conservatory, founded in 1819 and named "Musikverein", in Cluj there was a music theatre, private music soirees and public concerts. The brisk exchanges with Budapest and Vienna brought the music of Mozart, Beethoven, Cramer, Clementi etc. to the churches, saloons and theatres of Cluj. In the 1830's, two organ builders and three piano makers are documented in town. There is not too much detailed information about their activity, but their simple existence already gives an impression about the importance of music in society in those days. A memorable event was the concert of wonder child Carl Filtsch (1830-1845), performed at Count Bánffy's residence on the main square of Cluj (today's art museum). In his unfortunately much too short lifetime, Filtsch made an international career on the highest level. He performed at the Imperial Court in Vienna and was personally well acquainted with Chopin and Liszt, who both highly appreciated the young pianist, composer and improviser. In Cluj, Franz Liszt played in 1846, as well as Johann Strauß jun. in 1847. A strongly influent personality in the city's musical life of the time was Georg Ruzitska (Vienna 1789- Cluj 1869), music director of the piarist church and rector of the conservatory. His comprehensive oeuvre is preserved in Budapest and contains amongst others, one opera, one symphony, several masses, string quartets and -quintets, various transcriptions of symphonical works for chamber ensembles as well as organ works.

Some brief information about the featured authors:

Martin Schneider (1748-1812) studied in Bratislava, then worked as organist of the Black Church in Brasov, after which he became a priest. He wrote cantatas, a passion, but also theoretic treatises and a chorale book which stayed in use until 1900.

Philipp Caudella (1771-1826) started his career in Vienna as director of music of the Russian ambassador. In Cluj, he became the private teacher of count Farkas Wesselényi. In 1817, he moved to Sibiu, where he became Regens chori of the roman-catholic church and music professor at the Evangelical Gymnasium.

János Lavotta (1764-1820) was violonist, composer and promoter of the so-called *Verbunkos*-dance. He was conductor of the Cluj Music Theatre between 1802-04, after which he frequented the noblemen's country estates as tutor until 1816.



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Erich Türk (*1972) studied organ in Cluj with Ursula Philippi and in Vienna with Michael Radulescu. He also studied harpsichord with Ilton Wjuniski and Gordon Murray. He participated at several master-classes for organ, harpsichord and basso continuo in Portugal, France, Germany, Switzerland and Moscow. Since 1995 he is teaching organ, harpsichord, organology and chamber music at the

"Gh. Dima" Music Academy of Cluj-Napoca. As soloist and as a member of the *Baroque Ensemble "Transylvania"* and other chamber music ensembles he performed in Romania as well as most of the European countries, Israel and the USA. He made radio, TV and CD recordings, and realized a documentary DVD on Transylvanian music. Erich Türk is involved in early music revival and period instrument research and founded the *TransylvANTIQs*-label dedicated to local music culture. At the international "*J.S. Bach*" Organ Contest in Bruges 2000 he received the 2nd prize and the public's prize.