Massenet and Hungary

2017/02/14 - 2017/05/27



On February 14, 2017, a new chamber exhibition entitled “Massenet and Hungary” will be opened in the corridor adjacent to, and in the Reading Room of NSZL Music Collection. The exhibition will present the Hungarian reception and performance history of the French composer, known mainly as an opera composer. On top of that, the less known Hungarian aspects and connections of Massenet’s life and rich oeuvre will also be highlighted.


Imp. Ch. Wittmann
Cliché H. Manuel

[1]

Chamber exhibition marking the 175th anniversary of the birth of Jules Massenet

The chamber exhibition of NSZL's Music Collection will present the Hungarian reception and performance history of the French composer, known mainly as an opera composer. On top of that, the less known Hungarian aspects and connections of Massenet's life and rich oeuvre will also be highlighted.

Owing to his being a friend of Hungary, which has been manifested during the flood of 1879 in Szeged, Massenet used to be highly popular in Hungary. Between 1865 and 1885, he visited Hungary on thee occasions. He even conducted one of the performances of his opera entitled *Hérodiade* himself. He was on personal, friendly terms with Franz Liszt, Jenő Hubay, Kornél Ábrányi, Sr., Géza Zichy, Frigyes Podmaniczky, Sándor Erkel and other Hungarian personalities.
Visiting our exhibition, you can have a look at and listen to interesting documents of these relationships, like e.g. an early Massenet work composed in Hungary; march adaptations of the French composer and Liszt replying to one another, which were composed within the framework of a charity movement meant to provide aid to the flood victims of Szeged; the orchestral scores of *Suite sur le Roi de Lahore* preserving the memory of Massenet's musical cooperation with Hubay, and the handwritings of both of them together; or the correspondence with Frigyes Podmaniczky, intendant of the National Theater of Hungary, on the Budapest premiere of Le roi de Lahore, a grand opera by Massenet.



*[2]*In addition to the unique scores (featuring hand-written remarks) of NSZL's collection of theatrical music, costume and set designs (including set designs for Manon by Gusztáv Oláh), playbills, photos and librettos will document performances of Massenet operas from the era before 1945.
Gramophone recordings originating from private collections and piano reductions preserving ownership notes testify that fans of French music used to play and listen to compositions which had not been performed in Hungary, but which they might have known from Vienna or Paris.

The exhibition will be open between February 14 and May 27, 2017 in the corridor adjacent to, and in the Reading Room of NSZL Music Collection, during the opening hours of the collections.

Exhibition opening ceremony and guided tour of the exhibition: February 14, 2017, 11 a.m.
2017/03/25 - 13:11

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