

Three Hungarian Dances (1869)

No. 1 in G Minor

No. 4 in F minor

No. 20 in E Minor

Johannes Brahms/Verdehr Trio

It was Eduard Reményi, the Hungarian violinist, who introduced Brahms to Hungarian folk songs and dances. These sensual melodies and exciting rhythms can be found in his major works as well as in the two volumes of *Hungarian Dances* published in 1869 for two pianos and in two later volumes for piano duet. The gypsy melodies were all borrowed, but Brahms' fresh and creative treatment of them gave gypsy music an artistic form which raised it to a higher level. In spite of the publication's immediate success, Brahms was severely criticized by some musicians and newspapers for "plagiarism." However, the phrase "arranged for piano" appeared clearly on the title page and he told his publisher Simrock that he was presenting these dances to the world "as genuine gypsy children which I did not beget but merely brought up with bread and milk." This version of the *Hungarian Dances* was made by the Verdehr Trio.

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897) was a major figure during the Romantic period of music. He is known for his four majestic symphonies and his concertos as well as many songs and a wide variety of chamber music works. His compositions united romantic ideas with traditional classical forms distinguishing him from fellow composers of the second half of the nineteenth century who followed different and new paths.