

From the Collection of  
The Honorable Nancy G. Brinker

An Exhibition of Passion,  
Interludes and Progress

# Hungarian Artists



Cover:  
Josef Nemes Lampert  
*Street on the Gellert Hill*  
1916

Oil on canvas,  
65.5cm x 90.5cm

Sandor Bortnyik  
*Lady on the Beach*  
1930

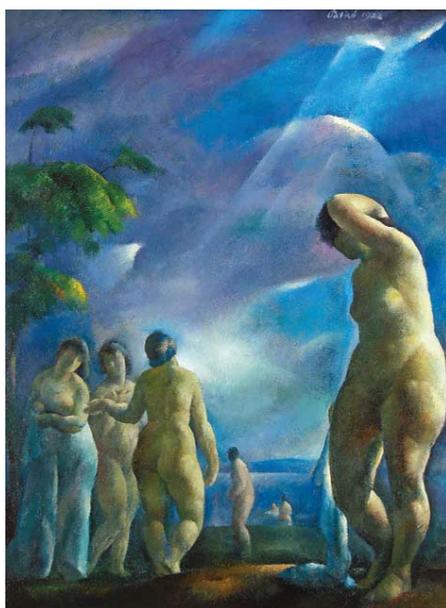
Oil on canvas,  
51cm x 71cm

Károly Patkó  
*Bathers*  
1922

Oil on canvas,  
100cm x 76cm

Molnar Farkas  
*Cubist Landscape*  
1920

Oil on board,  
40cm x 36cm



The Brinker Collection represents a rich survey of the achievements of the Hungarian culture and presents to a world audience our shared aesthetic heritage. The span of styles, the range of references, and the variety of media in the Brinker Collection attest to the expansiveness of Hungarian art, both of the classical avant-garde era and of contemporary times.

In this stimulating assembly of great paintings and small masterpieces, the Brinker Collection affords a new vision of an art and a history that belongs as much to us as it does to Hungary.



Cover:  
Josef Nemes Lampérth  
*Street on the Gellert Hill*  
1916

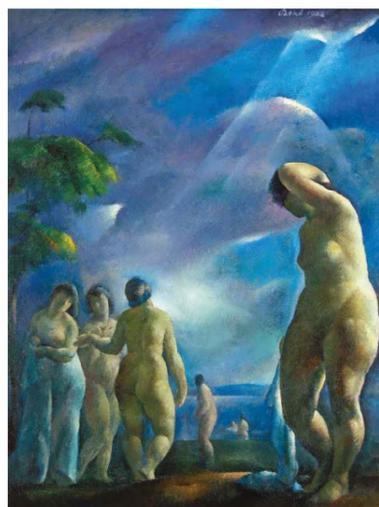
Oil on canvas,  
65.5cm x 90.5cm

Sándor Bortnyik  
*Lady on the Beach*  
1930

Oil on canvas,  
51cm x 71cm

Károly Patkó  
*Bathers*  
1922

Oil on canvas,  
100cm x 76cm



My passion for Hungarian art began at a tumultuous time: in September 2001, when I was fortunate enough to be sworn into office to serve our country as the United States' Ambassador to Hungary – just five days before September 11.

Due to the delay my art collection had failed to arrive from America. In the meantime, I asked my friend, historian and collector István Rozsics if the artists I had befriended through him in Budapest would like to display their art in the American Residence? There began my love affair with Hungarian Art.

The show, including works by László Fehér, István Nádler, Károly Klimó, Imre Bak, Tamás Soós, and Attila Szucs, among others, gave me instant – and constant – comfort. As I saw their paintings day by day, I grew to appreciate the historic and emotional quality of their work, and I became passionately interested in knowing more about Hungarian art. With the help of István and the expert auction house owners he acquainted me with, I began my adventures with the Hungarian art of the early 20th century.

I was struck by the richness and powerful quality of Hungarian painting. Despite the stormy twentieth century history of this country, her artistic tradition has remained consistent and has featured several revivals. Most of the early Hungarian modernists studied and exhibited in France and Germany, some of them even in the United States, with some occasional presence in Italy and Austria, but few of them – with the exception of László Moholy Nagy, for example – had access to international markets and few gained the

recognition they deserved for their contribution, which was more valuable than generally acknowledged.

As I made progress in my study of Hungarian art I grew more and more involved, and could not resist developing my own vision - and, eventually, my own collection.

I concentrated my explorations on modern Hungarian painting, which I found both familiar and surprising, highly energetic but not shying away from revealing melancholy; an intriguing mix between well known idioms and idiosyncratic expression; featuring strong structures and strong color but also a poetic sensibility; and often exhibiting a sense of humor and complexity which are the unmistakable water-marks of Central European art.

My involvement began as an effort to honor Hungarian artists as seen through the eyes of an American. Spanning the period from shortly before the Austro-Hungarian Empire to the present, my collection mirrors this country's tumultuous past, highlighting historic, and in some cases drastic, times. There are paintings by artists killed in the Holocaust. One of my favorites is a portrait completed in 1905 by János Vaszary of Countess Ilona Batthyány, a Hungarian woman born into the aristocracy, who herself celebrated the arts. I am particularly fond of my Aba Novák watercolor of the New York skyline from 1935: the mirror image of my own journey, it shows America as seen through the eyes of a Hungarian artist. Also among my favorite artists are the true early modernists of Hungary, including József Nemes Lampérth, Róbert Berény, Lajos Tihanyi, Béla

László Fehér  
*Portrait of Nancy Brinker*  
2004

Oil on canvas,  
180cm x 100cm



Czóbel, Sándor Bortnyik, Béla Uitz, Farkas Molnár, and Moholy-Nagy. I have a particularly soft spot for the representatives of the "Szentendre group", active since the 1930s and named after the village of their residence, including Lajos Vajda, Endre Bálint, and the latter's disciple Lili Ország.

Each of my pictures has its own story and artistic and expressive value to the viewer. I am eager to share my excitement about these works, and feel very, very fortunate to be able to give some visibility to modern Hungarian art, which deserves so much more study, exposure, and appreciation.

I am indebted to Richard Merkin for sharing and indulging me in this odyssey. His support has enabled me to elevate my collection to include a richness and depth that I could not have imagined. It is my sincere pleasure to share this with each visitor.

Nancy G. Brinker

László Fehér  
*Self Portrait with Staircase*  
2001

Acrylic on Canvas,  
200cm x 140cm



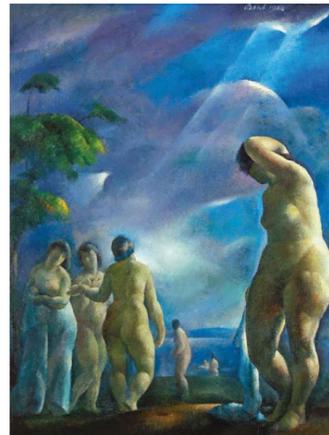
Cover:  
Josef Nemes Lampérth  
*Street on the Gellert Hill*  
1916

Oil on canvas,  
65.5cm x 90.5cm



Sándor Bortnyik  
*Lady on the Beach*  
1930

Oil on canvas,  
51cm x 71cm



Károly Patkó  
*Bathers*  
1922

Oil on canvas,  
100cm x 76cm

My passion for Hungarian art began at a tumultuous time: in September 2001, when I was fortunate enough to be sworn into office to serve our country as the United States' Ambassador to Hungary – just five days before September 11.

Due to the delay my art collection had failed to arrive from America. In the meantime, I asked my friend, historian and collector István Rozsics if the artists I had befriended through him in Budapest would like to display their art in the American Residence? There began my love affair with Hungarian Art.

The show, including works by László Fehér, István Nádlér, Károly Klimó, Imre Bak, Tamás Soós, and Attila Szucs, among others, gave me instant – and constant – comfort. As I saw their paintings day by day, I grew to appreciate the historic and emotional quality of their work, and I became passionately interested in knowing more about Hungarian art. With the help of István and the expert auction house owners he acquainted me with, I began my adventures with the Hungarian art of the early 20th century.

I was struck by the richness and powerful quality of Hungarian painting. Despite the stormy twentieth century history of this country, her artistic tradition has remained consistent and has featured several revivals. Most of the early Hungarian modernists studied and exhibited in France and Germany, some of them even in the United States, with some occasional presence in Italy and Austria, but few of them – with the exception of László Moholy Nagy, for example – had access to international markets and few gained the

recognition they deserved for their contribution, which was more valuable than generally acknowledged.

As I made progress in my study of Hungarian art I grew more and more involved, and could not resist developing my own vision – and, eventually, my own collection.

I concentrated my explorations on modern Hungarian painting, which I found both familiar and surprising, highly energetic but not shying away from revealing melancholy; an intriguing mix between well known idioms and idiosyncratic expression; featuring strong structures and strong color but also a poetic sensibility; and often exhibiting a sense of humor and complexity which are the unmistakable water-marks of Central European art.

My involvement began as an effort to honor Hungarian artists as seen through the eyes of an American. Spanning the period from shortly before the Austro-Hungarian Empire to the present, my collection mirrors this country's tumultuous past, highlighting historic, and in some cases drastic, times. There are paintings by artists killed in the Holocaust. One of my favorites is a portrait completed in 1905 by János Vaszary of Countess Ilona Batthyány, a Hungarian woman born into the aristocracy, who herself celebrated the arts. I am particularly fond of my Aba Novák watercolor of the New York skyline from 1935: the mirror image of my own journey, it shows America as seen through the eyes of a Hungarian artist. Also among my favorite artists are the true early modernists of Hungary, including József Nemes Lampérth, Róbert Berényi, Lajos Tihanyi, Béla

László Fehér  
*Portrait of Nancy Brinker*  
2004

Oil on canvas,  
180cm x 100cm



Czóbel, Sándor Bortnyik, Béla Uitz, Farkas Molnár, and Moholy-Nagy. I have a particularly soft spot for the representatives of the "Szentendre group", active since the 1930s and named after the village of their residence, including Lajos Vajda, Endre Bálint, and the latter's disciple Lili Ország.

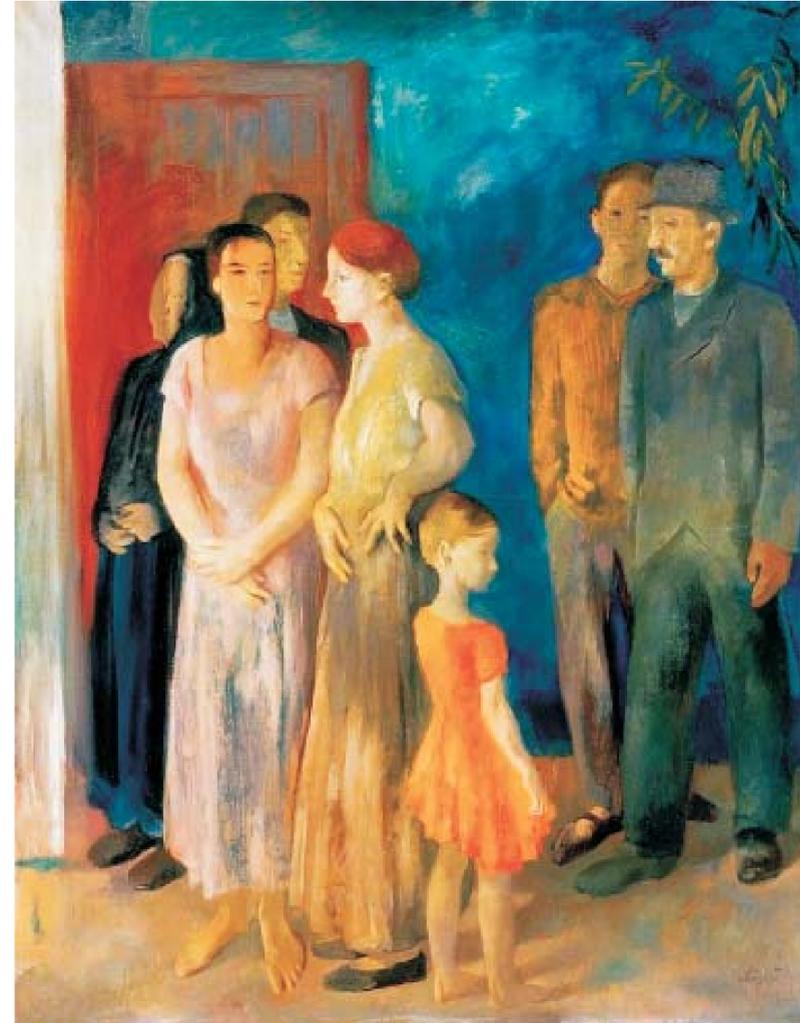
Each of my pictures has its own story and artistic and expressive value to the viewer. I am eager to share my excitement about these works, and feel very, very fortunate to be able to give some visibility to modern Hungarian art, which deserves so much more study, exposure, and appreciation.

I am indebted to Richard Merkin for sharing and indulging me in this odyssey. His support has enabled me to elevate my collection to include a richness and depth that I could not have imagined. It is my sincere pleasure to share this with each visitor.

Nancy G. Brinker

István Szonyi  
*Villagers (Conversation)*  
XXXX

Medium,  
XXcm x XXcm



János Vaszarys  
*Portrait of Countess Ilona Batthyány*  
1905

Oil on canvas,  
79cm x 94cm



László Fehér  
*Child with Vase*  
XXXX

Xxxxxx,  
XXcm x XXcm



László Fehér, 1953  
*Brigade Excursion*  
(*Genre Paintings II*)  
1979

Oil on fiberboard,  
160cm x 220cm



Hungarian artists of the 20th century developed the styles and defined the content of modernity from Budapest to Berlin, Kecskemét to Chicago. Legions of Hungarian painters, designers, sculptors, and architects brought innovative – and often revolutionary – aesthetics they had first articulated in their native land.

The Brinker Collection extends and complements the acknowledged masters of Hungarian modernism – Róbert Berény, Béla Uitz, Sándor Bortnyik – while it introduces us to original artists of more modest reputation. The Collection demonstrates the dynamic qualities and variability of modern art itself, while reflecting the creative curiosity, open-minded nature, and discriminating taste of Ambassador Brinker.

With this collection, Nancy Brinker has embarked on a process of self-discovery and selfless cultural advocacy. The artwork embodies the collector's uncurbed excitement about the vital culture of modern Hungary and its future, just as it reflects an understanding of that nation's complex and often contradictory past. Indeed, it is this very history – one of accomplishment, openness, innovation, and years of constraint and tribulation – that makes Hungary's art compelling for both a native and a world audience.

*Steven Mansbach*  
*Professor of the History of*  
*Twentieth-Century Art*  
*University of Maryland at*  
*College Park*

Collection Curator  
and Historian:  
Istvan Rozsics

Curatorial Advisors:  
Eva Forgacs  
Steven Mansbach  
William Heidrich  
Lazslo Baan

Exhibition Manager:  
Michael Ennis

Graphic Design:  
Beveridge Seay, Inc.

Photography:  
Brandon Webster  
Kelly Marin

László Fehér  
Self Portrait with Staircase  
2001

Acrylic on Canvas,  
200cm x 140cm



Molnar Farkas  
Cubist Landscape  
1920

Oil on board,  
40cm x 36cm



The Brinker Collection represents a rich survey of the achievements of the Hungarian culture and presents to a world audience our shared aesthetic heritage. The span of styles, the range of references, and the variety of media in the Brinker Collection attest to the expansiveness of Hungarian art, both of the classical avant-garde era and of contemporary times.

In this stimulating assembly of great paintings and small masterpieces, the Brinker Collection affords a new vision of an art and a history that belongs as much to us as it does to Hungary.

László Fehér, 1953  
Brigade Excursion  
(Genre Paintings II)  
1979

Oil on fiberboard,  
160cm x 220cm



Hungarian artists of the 20th century developed the styles and defined the content of modernity from Budapest to Berlin, Kecskemét to Chicago. Legions of Hungarian painters, designers, sculptors, and architects brought innovative – and often revolutionary – aesthetics they had first articulated in their native land.

The Brinker Collection extends and complements the acknowledged masters of Hungarian modernism – Róbert Berényi, Béla Uitz, Sándor Bortnyik – while it introduces us to original artists of more modest reputation. The Collection demonstrates the dynamic qualities and variability of modern art itself, while reflecting the creative curiosity, open-minded nature, and discriminating taste of Ambassador Brinker.

With this collection, Nancy Brinker has embarked on a process of self-discovery and selfless cultural advocacy. The artwork embodies the collector's uncurbed excitement about the vital culture of modern Hungary and its future, just as it reflects an understanding of that nation's complex and often contradictory past. Indeed, it is this very history – one of accomplishment, openness, innovation, and years of constraint and tribulation – that makes Hungary's art compelling for both a native and a world audience.

*Steven Mansbach  
Professor of the History of  
Twentieth-Century Art  
University of Maryland at  
College Park*

Collection Curator  
and Historian:  
Istvan Rozsics

Curatorial Advisors:  
Eva Forgacs  
Steven Mansbach  
William Heidrich  
Lazslo Baan

Exhibition Manager:  
Michael Ennis

Graphic Design:  
Beveridge Seay, Inc.

Photography:  
Brandon Webster  
Kelly Marin

From the Collection of  
The Honorable Nancy G. Brinker

An Exhibition of Passion,  
Interludes and Progress

# Hungarian Artists

