



BIOGRAPHY

Bea Palya is a well-known singer, songwriter, performer and writer. Hungarian, Gypsy and Bulgarian folk music were crucial to her early artistic formation. Later on, she was mostly influenced by Sephardic and Indian music. Bea was only 16 years old when she founded her first band, Zurgó, and she prefers to perform with her own bands ever since. Nonetheless, she has collaborated with a number of world-class musicians as well. As a rule, she writes her own lyrics, which reveal a movingly personal world. Blending traditional and modern themes, her albums can be regarded as a musical manifesto of her inner journey.

Her baby girl, Lili was born in October 2012. Signaling the advent of a new stage in her artistic work, motherhood inspired a subtle change in her music. Currently, she is working on her next album, entitled *Tovább Nó*. She is a remarkably versatile artist whose suggestive style, beautiful voice and straightforward topics easily captivate the attention of the public.

Bea was born in Makó on 11 November 1976. As part of her family heritage, she was introduced to Hungarian folk music and dance at an early age. Soon after her birth, her entire family moved to Bag, a small village. At the age of eight, she took up dancing and singing in the locally based Muharay Elemér Folk Ensemble. She started collecting and researching folk music with great enthusiasm at an early age, which in turn greatly influenced her later work as a musician. *„Old ladies entered my life. Through the crackling sound of cassette tapes, they were telling me to sing. I had never met them, I only heard their voice, and still felt as if their very essence somehow filled the room. I felt that they were singing to me through space and time to share their knowledge about life. They thought me how to sing.”*

A few years later, she moved to Budapest to attend ELTE Apáczai Csere János Practice School. Having graduated, she went on to study ethnology at Eötvös Loránd University.

After her early appearances in different bands and artistic groups, Bea has grown to be an outstandingly prolific singer and songwriter who has published a new album almost every single year since 2003. In the mean time, she has continuously toured the country with live acts.

Her international career started in 2000 when, as a member of the band Folkestra, she was invited to the Chambéry World Music Festival in France. Later on, she paired up with pianist

and organist László Fassang for a musical tour in Japan. After obtaining her diploma in ethnology, she was granted a scholarship by the French Institute and moved to Paris for a year and a half. Not only did she get acquainted with classical Arabic music while living there, but she also gave several successful concerts. She also toured Belgium with Daraduna, a band playing Balkan folk, within the framework of the *Karavan* musical project, only to return later as a performer to the renowned Bruges Festival of World Music. In Athens, Greece, she took part in the opening ceremony of the Cultural Olympiad and then joined up with other members of her then band, the Palya Bea Quintet to tour the Netherlands. She performed several times in the United States as well. Singing to the music by András Dész and Balázs Szokolay, she gave highly successful concerts in New York's Carnegie Hall and Washington's Kennedy Center in 2009.

Between 2010 and 2014, she operated her own court and festival location at the Valley of Arts Festival in Kapolcs, which is a ten-day festival organized every year and dedicated to music, dance, concerts, theater, musical improvisation, as well as learning and teaching of arts.

Her success is partly due to her ever-growing interest in self-improvement by yoga and the interpretation of dreams. All this, together with months of meditation spent in a small Mexican village and continuous traveling between different parts of the world, amounted to the development of an ever-expanding and ever more inquisitive subjective reality which was tied into her artistic career through movement, theater, musical improvisation, coaching, trainings and writing.

Recorded to disc and as a series of videos in 2013 and then published in 2014, *Nő* could not have been created without this inner journey towards self-fulfillment. This highly successful album propelled her career to new heights in Hungary, marked by sold-out concerts, a crowded festival agenda, a row of interviews and scores of fan mail. Thrilled by this wave of success, Bea used her newly found energy to work on her newest album, *Tovább Nő*, which is scheduled to hit the shelves in the spring of 2016.

But the upcoming year has many more surprises for the fans. After the more quiet first years of motherhood, Bea is again ready to conquer the international public. As one of the first steps, we are pleased to announce that Bea Palya and her band are among the top performers at the WOMEX (World Music Expo) opening gala, *Gypsy Heartbeats* in October 2015.

Members of her band:

- Bea Palya – voice, sansula, tapan
- Ernő Bodoczki – double bass
- Tamás Czirják – drums, percussion
- János Gerzson – oud, buzuki
- Balázs Dongó Szokolay – wind instruments
- István Tóth Jr. – guitar

Discography:

SOLO ALBUMS:

- Nő – (ElevenIdea Ltd./Palya Bea Production Ltd.), 2014
- Altatok – Dalok, versek Álomország kapuján innen és túl – Kolibri Publishing, 2012
- Ezeregy szefárd éjszaka (live recording) – Sony Music, 2012
- Ribizliálom (compilation album) – Sony Music, 2011
- Én leszek a játékszered – Sony Music, 2010
- Egyszáléneke – Sony Music, 2009
- Adieu les complexes – Naive/Sony, 2008
- Szeretettől jöttél erre a világra – Gryllus Publishing, 2007
- Bea Palya - Sándor Weöres: Psyché – Hangzó Helikon series, Gryllus Publishing, 2005
- Álom-álom, kitalálom (a musical tale) – Gryllus Publishing, 2004
- Ágról-ágra. Tradition in motion – Orpheia, 2003

ALBUMS RECORDED WITH HER OWN BANDS:

- Kárpátia (Folkműhely): Vásár – Etnofon Publishing, 2004
- Folkestra: Mamikám - Orpheia, 2001
- Kárpátia (Folkműhely): Zene Moldvából - Etnofon Publishing, 2000
- Zurgó: Zurgó - Etnofon Publishing, 1997

AS A CONTRIBUTOR:

- Eszembe jutottál, a tribute to Tamás Cseh – Etnofon Publishing, 2010
- Ferenc Sebő - Attila József - Hangzó Helikon series, Gryllus Publishing, 2005
- Ferenc Kiss: Szerelem hava – Etnofon Publishing, 2005
- Balázs Elemér Group: Magyar Népdalok (Hungarian Folk Songs) – X-Produkción, 2005
- Ferenc Sebő - László Nagy, Hangzó Helikon series, Gryllus Publishing, 2004
- Ferenc Kiss: Nagyvárosi Bújdások - Etnofon Publishing, 2003
- Amikor én még kissrác voltam (a tribute to the Illés Band), Etnofon Musical Association and Bea Palya: Szőke Anni balladája
- Sebő Band: Rejtelmek – Gryllus Publishing, 2001
- Szabolcs Szőke: Sindbad's Songs - Fonó, 2000

Awards and Recognitions:

- Artisjus Award (2010)
- Kodály Zoltán Award for Public Education offered by the Pro Renovanda Cultura Hungariae Foundation (2010)
- Prima Award in Hungarian Folk Art and Public Education category (2009)
- Budapestért Award (2009)
- Márciusi Ifjak Award (2009)
- Fonogram Award (2009)
- „The Ambassador of Hungarian Culture 2008”
- The Ambassador of Equal Opportunities (2007)
- Aphelandra Award (2006)
- Artisjus Award (2002)

Interesting Facts about Bea Palya:

- *Adieu les complexes* is a triple platinum album in Hungary and Bea Palya was listed among the Top 20 performers on the World Music Charts Europe List, the highest form of international professional recognition.
- Her 2009 solo album, *Egyszálének*, received double platinum certification within two months after publication.
- In 2005, Bea contributed with an original song, *Tchiki-tchiki*, to Tony Gatlif's movie, *Transylvania*. She also appeared in the movie as the singer.
- In connection with the autobiographical book *Ribiliálom*, a series of videos was created with the title *Kibeszél*, in which Bea's friends (Gabriella Hámori, András Kepes, Ágnes Geréb, Péter Kálloy-Molnár, Dorka Gryllus, Nóra Szily, Zsolt Erőss among others) discuss the experience of reading the book and its personal influence on them.
- While pregnant, she gave more than 40 concerts at different locations in the country. Her last concert before giving birth was held in her hometown, Makó, while in the eighth month of pregnancy.
- Tickets for the release concert for her 2014 album, *Nő*, were sold out so quickly that it was repeated one month later, with great success. The A38 ship was chosen as the venue for the concerts.
- Not only is Bea the founder and lead singer of Zurgó, but she is their dance instructor as well. She frequently teaches dancing to enthusiasts in traditional Hungarian dance houses.
- Bea and Balázs Dongó Szokolay make music together since 2002.
- Since the beginning, composer Samu Gryllus had great influence on her art. Later they worked together on several albums. Among many others, *Psyché* and *Én leszek a játékszered* are the products of this cooperation.
- In 2008, as part of the *Álomturné* tour, she gave concerts at Roma settlements, institutions for disable people and foster homes. She promotes creative exercises to facilitate the involvement of these institutions with society.