

Ágnes Kőry:

From Terézváros (Theresienstadt) to Terezin (Theresienstadt).

The life and work of Ferencz Weisz.

Ferencz Weisz was born and spent his youth in the Budapest district of Terézváros which translates to Theresienstadt in German. The final stop before Auschwitz for Weisz and many others murdered in Auschwitz was Terezin - Czech name for Theresienstadt - which is in North Bohemia and lies about 36km south-east of Brno.

Ferencz Weisz was an outstanding pianist and a prolific composer who spent the first half of his life in Hungary, the second half in Holland. Owing to the circumstances of the German occupation of Holland, most of Weisz's music may well have been lost.

Weisz was born on 2nd August 1893. Surviving documentation in a relevant Jewish archive allowed us to identify the Budapest house where he was born and lived until he moved to Holland in 1921. The yearbooks of Nemzeti Zenede (National Conservatoire of Music) provide an insight into Weisz's studies from age 13 (during the 1906-1907 academic year) to age 20 when he graduated on conclusion of the 1913-1914 academic year. Five years later, in 1919, Weisz was given a teaching post in his alma mater. Our last data about Weisz's work in Hungary is his concert appearance with students of the Nemzeti Zenede at the Music Academy in June 1920.

In Holland Weisz lived and worked as Franz Weisz. Scarce but convincing documentation shows that he was a prolific composer and successful concert pianist. He also had teaching appointments. Tragically, Weisz's life and work was cut short by deportation first to Westerbork, then to the Terezin concentration camp (the latter of which served as a waiting room for Auschwitz). Weisz was murdered in Auschwitz on 30th September 1944.