

Tünde Hrivnák: Fairy Stitches

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Tünde Hrivnák - fashion designer

DEAR READER,

"Fairy Stitches" is an art book that chronicles a creative journey spanning twenty-five years — a journey I have undertaken as a fashion designer alongside folk artists, embroiderers, lace makers, and master weavers, a journey that continues to this very day.

We all share the same mission: to preserve the authentic Hungarian motifs and the pure tradition of 100% hand-made embroidery, lace and weaving. To keep alive the knowledge that has been passed down through generations and which is still being created today with the same love, humility and craftsmanship.

This book tells the story of these encounters, the collaborative work, the long conversations, the birth of colors and shapes and all the wonder that the universal language of folk art has given us. I also explore how tradition transforms into contemporary, wearable art.

I would like to share this story with the next generation as well. I am confident that it will serve as a guide in preserving and nurturing Hungarian values and traditions. This journey requires a great deal of time, patience and manual labor but in return it rewards us with special experiences, opportunities and deep human connections—all across the world.

Please accept this album with love; it was created from the heart and every stitch tells a story.

Tünde Hrivnák

FOREWORD

Tünde Hrivnák and I have known each other for a long time—we are bound by a shared love of and commitment to tradition. For decades I have watched as the treasures of Hungarian folk art are given

new life through Tünde's designs. To me, By Me pieces are not just garments but messages: they speak to the idea that our roots do not bind us - rather they hold us and elevate us.

I often wear her clothes myself—whether for special occasions or just everyday life. In every single piece you can feel the creator's faith, the handiwork of the embroiderers and the quiet, steadfast mission that defines Tünde.

Through my profession, I am also dedicated to preserving tradition so it is a particular pleasure for me to express my appreciation in a few words—and to support Tünde's work on this journey of creating value.

Tünde grew up in the quiet streets of Tótkomlós where tradition is still woven into everyday life like a living tapestry. She grew up in a house where the hum of the sewing machine and the delicate rhythm of hand embroidery were not just a craft but also a legacy. Her mother and grandmother, as seamstresses, not only made clothes but wove stories into the fabric. Creating together with them became not just a memory but a way of life. A special bond that accompanies them throughout their lives, in which generations help one another—in the eternal cycle of knowledge, love and creation.

Tünde Hrivnák's creations blend the most beautiful motifs of Hungarian folk art with contemporary elegance. Her garments—the By Me collections—are unique, inimitable and deeply rooted in Hungarian culture. Each piece is handmade featuring original embroidery, lace, and woven fabrics created in collaboration with the most authentic folk art associations. Alongside the Tótkomlós pattern repertoire the collection features the floral abundance of Matyó and Kalocsa, the delicacy of Halas and Hövej lace, the dignity of the cross-stitch patterns from Bereg and Nagydobrony (Transcarpathia) and the ancient rhythms of the Kalotaszeg and Székely Árapatak (Transylvania) embroideries.

Her work represents not only aesthetic value but also a cultural mission: the promotion of Hungarian folk art and its innovative expression. Her garments have been featured on international stages—in China, Japan, the United States, Italy, Spain, and Malaysia. At these shows Hungarian embroidery and lace not only captivated the audience but also built bridges between cultures. Her collections are not merely garments but identities, emotions and stories that resonate with people all over the world.

Tünde is not merely a fashion designer—she is a trailblazing artist and an irreplaceable guardian of tradition who has created a new style. Her work has been honored with prestigious awards: the Judit Józsa Hungarian Folk Costume Award, the Pro Urbe Award from her hometown, the Hungarian Silver Cross of Merit, the Kalocsa Folk Art Award and the Pécsiné Ács Sarolta Award. These honors are not merely professional accolades but proof that what she represents is a value we have a duty to preserve and pass on.

This book tells the story of a woman who not only designs clothes but also gives form to culture, identity and heritage. It is the story of a creator who has proven that Hungarian folk art is not just a thing of the past but can also be a part of the future—if there are people who pass it on with heart and soul.

Gabriella Igyártó

Awardee of the Hungarian Heritage Award, Director of the Festival of Crafts

“Working with Tündi as a model and makeup artist is an exceptional professional and personal experience. We are connected by countless shared trips, international fashion shows and intense work, during which I was able to witness firsthand the dedication and creative vision that characterize her work. It was inspiring to be part of the world she has built with such consistency and passion.”

Mónika Matus, model

BY ME HARMONY

I was born into the world of clothing; my mother and grandmother were seamstresses and they instilled in me a love for dressmaking. I was the first grandchild in the family, which in itself was a gift from God. I was born into a family where different generations lived together and cared for one another. When I was born, my great-grandparents were still alive and we had a close family bond. What I remember most about them is that they wore traditional folk costumes, spoke Slovak, sang Hungarian and Slovak folk songs, danced and loved me very much. This is where my love for folk art.

My grandmother was a hardworking, meticulous, caring, strict woman, yet she radiated love with everything she did. She always knew what was proper to do and what wasn't, how to dress for different occasions and how to carry oneself in those clothes. She taught me how to wash and iron a garment to perfection. She taught me which colors and patterns go together and which don't. That's why the pieces in my wardrobe always match. She taught me everything she knew. Except for one thing: she didn't teach me to write with my right hand—so I remained left-handed for life. She could never forgive me for this one tiny “mistake” but she accepted and acknowledged that I use my left hand perfectly and can do everything with it. My mom is an angel sent down to earth. She cared for me with her boundless kindness, attentiveness, inexhaustible patience, and professional expertise. She even figured out how to teach a left-handed child to hold a needle and scissors in her right hand. When I was one year old and could already walk, she made my clothes according to the latest fashions: pantsuits, flared jeans that hugged my bottom. As I grew, she gave me more and more of everything. At first just pieces of fabric and chalk so I could draw on the fabric. A measuring tape, a ruler she used to draft the patterns. The moment came when I could use a needle and scissors too. I was 12 when I sewed my first circle skirt on a sewing

machine; from that moment there was no stopping for me—I cut and sewed the fabrics, often even things I shouldn't have. “Oh, you've cut up that fabric too!”—I heard that phrase from my mom many times. This was my favorite activity as a child; I learned to sew without even realizing it.

My mom and I would talk about every piece of clothing with my grandmother and ask each other's opinions. Folk motifs, hand embroidery, weaving and spending time together were all part of it, accompanied by Hungarian and Slovak folk songs and dances. We celebrated the holidays in clothes hand-embroidered with folk motifs, which always made me feel very special. By the time I was 13, I wanted to be a fashion designer and decorate clothes with folk motifs and hand embroidery. I completed my vocational studies in Szeged as a clothing industry technician.

Four days before my twentieth birthday, following a car accident, I received a calling from God and Jesus Christ. After my baptism, with complete faith in my heart and soul, I set out to make my dream a reality. I moved to Budapest, where I studied fashion design at the Budapest Fashion School. While attending school I worked at a large clothing manufacturer as a designer and patternmaker. After finishing school, I felt the time was right and in 2000 I founded the By Me brand. From the very beginning I knew I wanted to use decorative elements and motifs related to folk art. At first I designed the clothes using the cut lines and decorations of folk costumes, incorporating pleats, small folds and stitching. I chose the embroidery motifs from the Tótkomlós tradition, as that was what I knew and grew up with. This is how the By Me Harmony collection was born.

Behind every successful person there stands someone. Behind me stands a family. My father gave me three pieces of wise advice when I launched the By Me brand: “Don't spend more money than you earn that day. Don't borrow money from anyone but us. Remember, if you take on a job, get it done by the deadline—no matter if it's a holiday or the weekend.”

A few thoughts from my mother that stay with me every day: “Make the clothes with love because clothes have a soul. You can do it; I'm sure of it. Pay attention to every little detail, both inside and out because the beauty of a garment lies in the details.”

My siblings and I share this motto and motivational phrase: “Before you lose your temper bow down before God. Let's never fight but love one another”—this is the advice our grandfather gave us.

This collection focuses on the traditional patterns of my hometown. The motifs from Tótkomlós feature a blend of geometric and botanical elements including stylized flowers, tulips, roses, carnations, leafy tendrils, and tiny repeating patterns. The embroidery techniques used to create the designs include flat stitching, cross-stitch, eyelet embroidery, and delicate, meticulous hand-stitching, which are characteristic of the decoration found on Slovak women's traditional attire. I was assisted in this by Aunt Anci Anderkóné, who taught me how to mark the fabric and transfer the pattern and Aunt Erzsike Kuruczsné, who embroidered my clothing collection decorated with the Tótkomlós pattern. Both were true, enthusiastic creators who loved folk art and hand embroidery.

The clean lines of the embroidered motifs radiate dignity and serenity. The color palette of the garments and embroidery is understated and classic—black and white, with a red-and-blue combination on a white background—expressing timelessness and eternal value. They convey the message that our roots should remain constant in our lives. The garments reflect a respect for local traditions which I have

carried within me since childhood. The designs are elegant, refined and represent a classic style. Every piece is handmade based on original patterns.

This collection is a return to our roots, presented in a contemporary form. Here clothing is not merely an outfit but a statement. It is an intimate tribute to our homeland. Tradition lives, breathes, and can be worn here. I believe that first impressions are very important in our relationships and thus our clothing plays a decisive role. An essential element of our aura is being in harmony and at peace with ourselves and the world, knowing where we came from and where we are headed. This was my motivation in creating the By Me Harmony collection.

Clothing decorated with Tótkomlós and Békés embroidery

Location: Eszterházy Castle in Galanta - Slovakia

Clothing decorated with hand embroidery from Békés. The pattern was designed by Ani Illésné.

The embroidery was created by the Rozmaring embroidery circle in Békéscsaba.

Clothing decorated with Tótkomlós hand embroidery

Clothing decorated with hand embroidery from Békés

“By Me: The years I spent with you have enriched me with memories that I will gladly share with my grandchildren. It’s impossible to describe just one—it would fill an entire book.

It was an indescribable experience to represent true values in many parts of the world.”

Something important would be missing from my life if I hadn't been able to experience all of this and if I hadn't been able to share it with you. No matter where life takes us, I will always hold the team (Tündi, Patri, Liller, Monesz) close to my heart.

Thank you, girls—and thank you, By Me, for letting me be a part of this!”

Krisztina Vajkai, model

BY ME SPICY

The delicate lines and vibrant colors of Kalocsa embroidery dominate the By Me Spicy collection. The garments feature a profusion of Kalocsa flowers radiating joy and playfulness. At the heart of the motifs is the rose with its pointed petals and leaves. The embroidery features a loose, clustered structure, featuring flowers from the flower garden—tulips, forget-me-nots, cornflowers, carnations, violets, bellflowers, daisies, and lilacs—along with plant forms evoking nature. A machine-hand embroidery technique known as riselin stitching was developed in Kalocsa. This is an openwork lace surface, naturally consisting of flowers and various mesh-like patterns. In the first collection solid white, black-and-white and red-burgundy color combinations as well as the well-known colorful Kalocsa embroidery appeared on the garments. Over the years we have successfully utilized embroidery in a wide variety of ways both in terms of form and color. The direction is determined by current fashion and clothing culture. What remains constant is the original pattern designs and hand embroidery or lace created for the garments. The dresses are classic in style. The silhouettes are elegant, the colors bold. This collection is a reinterpretation of Kalocsa culture. A modern style that is flourishing. I recommend it to women who love to dress uniquely and extravagantly.

In 2010, Ferenc Török - the mayor of Kalocsa approached me with the goal of creating a haute couture-style collection worthy of Kalocsa's folk art. He assured me that I would be able to work with the most well-known and respected folk artists and embroiderers. It was important to both of us that I get to know the landmarks of Kalocsa: the Archbishop's Cathedral and Palace, the paprika factory, and the banks of the Danube. These locations ultimately served as the photo shoot locations for the first collection. It was an honor for me that the mayor drew and designed the patterns for the first garments, which were then embroidered by the embroiderers of Kalocsa.

We owe our first major breakthrough to Formula 1 drivers Lewis Hamilton and Jenson Button, who raced in Kalocsa-patterned jumpsuits in July 2011 thereby drawing the world's attention to this unique motif. It was around this time that the mayor introduced me to Mrs. András Bolvári, known as Aunt Ica, who was a Master of Folk Art and a folk artist dedicated to preserving traditions. I remember the day I first met Aunt Ica; as I walked through the door, she was already smiling. It was a smile that radiated serenity, trust, and the kind of love that can only come from someone who has spent her entire life creating beauty with her own two hands.

From that moment on, each of our encounters began with that same smile and a hug that held the promise of friendship.

The first sentence that has forever stuck with me was: “We’ll figure it out. It’ll be ready by the time it’s needed.” Then she’d reach for her pencil and start sketching the design. I never had to explain anything; there was no need for long discussions, plans or explanations. She simply understood what I wanted.

Besides her talent, her greatest virtue was her openness toward the next generation. Often she didn’t even know exactly where the requested pattern would appear on the garment however he instinctively sensed what lines and curves the cut required. With her the flowers always curved upward, just as they grow upward in nature. Every one of her drawings radiated positive energy as if hope and a love of life were hidden behind every single line.

When she saw the finished dress, adorned with her own patterns and the handiwork of the embroiderers, she would always say in wonder: “I couldn’t even imagine what this would look like, but it turned out to be a beautiful dress.” Even today I can see her face, the smile, the awe, the pride.

Aunt Ica was there at almost every one of my shows. She became a crowd favorite. When she stepped out onto the runway in her original somber Kalocsa costume, a storm of applause erupted with her very first step. The guests knew her, loved her, and acknowledged that she was the one behind the clothes, along with the team of the finest embroiderers she had handpicked.

She was strict when it came to hand embroidery but this strictness stemmed from her commitment to quality. She often told the new embroiderers: “You still need to practice; you can’t sew for Tünde yet.”

One of our biggest projects was the design and production of the uniforms for the five-star Corinthia (formerly Royal) Hotel in Budapest. Even then Aunt Ica said, “I give you my word: all the embroidery will be finished by the deadline.” That was our contract: the power of a promise. It was through working with her that I truly understood this phrase: “A promise kept” in practice.

A friendship that stretches beyond work

Our collaboration was based on mutual respect and creative freedom. I never told her how to draw a design and she accepted my plans with complete trust. She always had a treat for me whenever we met. If I arrived in the morning it was French toast and tea; if it was Sunday it was Sunday lunch with meat soup. When the flowers bloomed she brought me a bouquet from her garden. This selfless love was present in every one of her drawings. She told me a lot about old customs and traditions. Over the years, she became not only a colleague but a true friend. A wise woman who often helped me overcome difficulties. All we had to do was call each other and half the problems were already solved. The embroiderers also always tried to come when I was there. We had good conversations, laughed and prayed for those who needed it. We cried together, laughed together, and rejoiced together in our successes because we were blessed with so much over the course of 10 years.

The Gift of the Word “ENOUGH”

During one of our conversations she said; “You know, my dear you can make a good living from manual labor but you’ll never get rich. You have to know what is enough in your life.”

That sentence has stayed with me forever and has become my philosophy of life. The meaning of the word “enough,” which brings peace. The realization that whoever knows what is enough is richer than anyone else.

Even today I hear her voice saying: “Everything is fine the way you do it. You wouldn't know how to do it any other way anyway. This is who you are. Don't worry about what others say.”

Drawing came as naturally to her as breathing does to others. It was a gift from God. To me, Aunt Ica was more than just a creative partner. She was the living link between the past and the present.

The knowledge she passed on, the patterns she drew, the colors she chose—all of these live on in the garments and her spirit is present in every single stitch. For me Kalocsa folk art represents mutual respect, openness, sincerity and the joy of creation - and I learned all of this through Aunt Ica. I cherish every moment of these wonderful 10 years with a grateful heart.

The pieces in the “Dazzling Kalocsa” collection hold a special place in my heart. These are not merely garments but living reminders of the collaborative creative process—filled with love, respect and gratitude—in which so many wonderful people took part. The delicate lines of the pattern drawings for the collection's garments are drawn by Aunt Marcsa Pandúr under whose hand the Kalocsa motifs come to life again and again. I met dear Aunt Marcsa in 2013, when we were preparing for our first trip to the United States for the Smithsonian Folklife Festival in Washington. Aunt Ica Bolvári introduced us to each other: “My dear Marcsa is my godmother,” she said with a smile. From the very beginning, Aunt Marcsa created several pattern drawings for my dresses when Aunt Ica had too much work. The two of them weren't just friends; they also trusted each other with their work. Their friendship was based on trust, respect, and mutual support. We often met at festivals and traditional events where we talked, danced and sang together; that's how I came to know and become part of the living folk art of Kalocsa today.

Whenever I think of Aunt Marcsa, the first thing that comes to mind is her smile. It's a smile that reveals a pure, sincere, cheerful and kind soul. She shares her knowledge with such love and in such a natural way as if it were the most natural thing in the world. In 2021 we created the pattern designs for the *Dazzling Kalocsa* collection together. The garments are adorned with ancient hand-embroidered patterns; today Aunt Marcsa is the only person who knows how to draw these designs. The collection's primary goal is to preserve heritage and pass on knowledge. The colorful motifs and shared memories create a cheerful, carefree atmosphere. She imparts knowledge I could never have learned from anyone else. She speaks of the nuances of colors with such passion that you can almost see the threads glowing before your eyes. I will always remember the moment when we laid out at least six different shades of yellow thread side by side, and none of them was quite right. In the end I entrusted the task of finding the perfect shade to embroiderer Zsuzsa Szarvasné. This little story also shows that Aunt Marcsa never compromises: for her authentic, high-quality hand embroidery is the only way to go.

In the course of our collaboration, I also learned a lot from her about the Pota dialect. Her unique way of speaking touched me so deeply that I captured it in several of my drawings as a keepsake. She didn't see the finished collection until the day of the exhibition. When she walked up to me she looked at me and

said; “It transpired to be a thing of great beauty.” I glanced at Zsuzsa for a moment and she smiled at me: “Yes, it turned out beautiful.”

That brief exchange still rings in my ears today. It contained all the love, all the shared work, laughter, and every memory we cherish together. For me, knowing Aunt Marcsa and being able to create together is a gift that will last a lifetime.

The hand-embroidered stitches are a testament to the patience and expertise of Mrs. Zsuzsa Szarvas and Mrs. Margit Dusnoki. The collection was presented in collaboration with the Kalocsa Traditional Arts Association in the form of an innovative and authentic stage production at the 36th Festival of Crafts in Buda Castle. Zsuzsa has been creating the hand-embroidery for the By Me Spicy collection since 2015. She is one of those traditional embroiderers who was able to learn a great deal from the older generation: Aunt Ica Bolvári, Aunt Marcsane Pandúr, Aunt Margit Dusnoki and Aunt Julcsa Nagy.

“The hand-embroidery she creates is beautiful and features the most authentic colors—exactly as she was taught. Her precision, integrity, determination, and dedication to Kalocsa folk art guarantee that every wearer of her garments will be adorned with high-quality, original handiwork. My relationship with Tündi is based on Aunt Ica’s principles. Aunt Ica called me during her final days on earth and handed over all the pattern drawings for the By Me dresses. It was a difficult yet touching moment. She knew that the creations she had made could live on only if they were carried forward by someone in whom Tündi could completely trust. Beyond the patterns, I, too, await each occasion with love and respect. Besides the patterns, I also picked up from Aunt Ica the habit of often waiting for her with her favorite dill-and-cottage-cheese flatbread. During our collaborative work our sincere, thought-provoking conversations are an indispensable part of the experience. Once a year, we eat fish soup on the banks of the Danube in Kalocsa continuing our shared traditions. As for our collaborative work, we apply the pattern to each garment together and then the embroidery begins—which is also crafted by the hands of Kalocsa embroiderers. This is how we guarantee authenticity and enhance the value of the garments. This is how we carry on what we learned and received from Aunt Ica, Aunt Marcsa, Aunt Julcsa and Aunt Margit.” - Zsuzsa Szarvas - folk artist and hand embroiderer

The By Me Spicy “Enchanting Kalocsa” collection showcases early ornate Kalocsa hand embroidery in an exclusive design. The original colorful embroidery is authentically crafted on high-quality cotton fabric. The embroidery combines wheat blue, green, pink, red, burgundy, yellow and purple hues to create harmony. The embroidery is created using thread stitching, filled stitching and machine-made riselin embroidery. The garments feature classic silhouettes. The cut reflects the tailoring techniques of traditional folk costumes presented in a simplified and reimagined form. The pieces in the collection

emphasize femininity. The colors of the embroidery are echoed in the fabric colors further complementing and emphasizing the harmony.

The years we have spent together, our tireless work and our deep dedication to folk art have borne fruit for which we are truly grateful. Our collaboration built on trust, shared values and a love of tradition have led the By Me Spicy collection to a point where today even the younger generation proudly wears our clothing—in Hungary and in many parts of the world.

From folk art festivals in Hungarian cities to rural events and universities, from diplomatic events to professional conferences you've had the chance to encounter us in many places.

2013 was a special milestone: that was when we were invited to the United States to participate in the Smithsonian Folklife Festival, where Hungary was the guest of honor. For two weeks we were able to showcase garments decorated with original Kalocsa patterns to the American public and Hungarians living there. Before and after the presentations visitors could try their hand at embroidery and painting—thus not only seeing but also experiencing the magic of Hungarian folk art.

It was at this event that we met István Fedor and his wife Erika Fedor, the directors of the Hungarian House in Washington. They immediately recognized that for their children, who were born in America, these reimaged garments could serve as a gateway to Hungarian culture. We are grateful to them, for it is thanks to them that we have reached countless Hungarians living in the United States and Americans who have a love for Hungarian traditions.

Over the past ten years we have had the opportunity to showcase the most recognizable Hungarian motifs in numerous cities: at the Hungarian Embassy in Washington, D.C., the Hungarian Ball in Washington D.C., the Hardwest Ball at the Hungarian Houses in New York, Cleveland, and New Brunswick, at the Sarasota Hungarian Festival, in Chicago, Boston, and Wallingford.

Special thanks go to the main organizers of the Hungarian Festival in Sarasota, Florida - Erika Klatyik and Zsolt Székely. Their dedication and consistent work are exemplary: year after year they have introduced their children to and instilled in them a love for clothing adorned with traditional Hungarian patterns.

The girls are now adults and they themselves present the latest By Me collections which embody the values of various Hungarian regions. For them one of the most important events of the year has become wearing and promoting Hungarian patterns—and for that we are deeply grateful.

Over the years, the collection has been showcased in numerous countries: in Beijing China, organized by the Hungarian Liszt Institute; at the Hungarian House in Toronto; in Austria, at the Hungarian Embassy in Vienna, as well as in Graz and Mallnitz; in Slovakia - at the International Fashion Day in Bratislava; in Serbia - at the Hungarian Cultural Days in Belgrade; in Germany - at events organized by the Liszt Institute in Stuttgart; and in Ukraine - in Ternopil and Uzhhorod.

In Malaysia's capital, Kuala Lumpur we also presented the By Me collection at two universities—One Academy and Limkokwing University. Through an interactive discussion students learned about Kalocsa hand embroidery and saw firsthand how these special patterns are created.

In Washington D.C., the capital of the United States, Marymount University has hosted several exhibitions of collections decorated with Kalocsa patterns. Each event was accompanied by an interactive workshop where students learned the basic stitches and then created their own clothing designs featuring Kalocsa motifs as homework assignments.

We are deeply grateful for this journey: to those who supported us, those who believed in us and those who have passed on their love of Hungarian folk art—both at home and around the world.

“I spoke with my friend Olympic champion Attila Czene and his wife, Petra Bánhidi the world champion in Argentine tango about my ideas: to preserve the traditional Kalocsa motifs by retaining their forms and color schemes—as a way of honoring tradition—but also presenting this world of motifs in the Hungarian and through it the international fashion world with a modern, reimagined form and color palette.

I asked her to help me find a young fashion designer committed to tradition but seeking creative, innovative looks with whom we could bring this vision to life. It was then and from him that I first heard the name Tünde Hrivnák with whom he soon arranged a meeting. From the very first moment of our first meeting with Tünde, we found common ground; it was a pleasure to hear the enthusiastic commitment she nurtured toward Hungarian folk art. Our goal was also shared: to preserve, reinterpret and introduce Hungarian folk art—and within it, Kalocsa motifs—into the world of fashion where every target audience can find pieces they love. It was then in 2011 that the Kalocsa pattern experienced a renaissance through the garments designed by Tünde and embroidered by the women of Kalocsa. The country and celebrities rediscovered it; it became chic to appear at receptions and balls in dresses adorned with Kalocsa motifs and the pattern also appeared on everyday clothing.

It provided a major boost when we capitalized on the opportunity offered by Formula 1 from a city marketing perspective, which played a key role in the creation of the Kalocsa Brand—loved and recognized by all—and helped restore Kalocsa’s former glory, with the clothing designs envisioned by Tünde playing a prominent role in this endeavor. We started something between 2011 and 2014 that Tünde has carried on her shoulders ever since despite all the difficulties, jealousy and intrigues. Even today she provides work, recognition and a sense of self-worth to the women of Kalocsa who embroider and apply riseline flowers to her designs.

To this day Tünde continues to fight against the fake, angular, computer-generated “Kalocsa motifs” that flooded the internet, riding the wave of that era, yet still lurk in search engines—motifs that are a mockery of the colors and forms of the originals.

She works exclusively with authentic Kalocsa folk artists who understand, know, and practice this art form. She persists even when misguided, ill-founded or ill-considered decisions have caused this upward trend to stall and then slowly fade away.

And she persists today as well, with a steady stream of new ideas, drawing on the treasures of ever-new fields in her work; and I hope she will continue for a long time to come, revealing time and again—through her visionary creations—the beautiful, timeless, colorful blossoms of Kalocsa’s Hungarikum to us and to the world.

The spiritual values and traditions of the city of Kalocsa, as old as our nationhood itself, have become one with our Hungarian identity.

“The By Me collection helps preserve our heritage by bringing tradition and art within tangible reach. Through it, we can proudly showcase our heritage—the motifs of Kalocsa—to the world.”

Ferenc Török - Mayor of Kalocsa

Fashion designer Tünde Hrivnák and Ferenc Török, Mayor of Kalocsa

The first fashion show of dresses decorated with Kalocsa hand embroidery. 2010–2014.

Fashion show of Kalocsa hand-embroidered garments at the New York Café in Budapest

Next page:

A garment decorated with Kalocsa hand embroidery in the Archbishop’s Garden in Kalocsa.

Embroidery design: Ferenc Török, embroidery: Mrs. András Bolvári (Aunt Ica)

Model: Luca Glavativity

Petra Czene-Bánhidi

Argentine tango world champion

Lilla Polyák and Zsolt Homonnay - actors

Tünde Hrivnák fashion designer, at the fashion show for the first BY ME Spicy clothing collection at the fashion show in Buda Castle, at the Halász Bastion Restaurant

*Presentation of original Kalocsa hand-embroidered uniforms at the Budapest Corinthia Royal Hotel******

Embroidery pattern design: Mrs. András Bolvári (Aunt Ica)

BY ME Spicy dresses decorated with Kalocsa hand- and machine riselin embroidery.

Location: Szentendre Open-Air Museum

Clothing decorated with Kalocsa hand- and machine embroidery

The photos were taken for BY ME's first appearance in the U.S. at the Smithsonian Folk Life Festival in Washington.

Location: Szentendre Open-Air Museum, Embroidery pattern design: Aunt Ica Bolvári

Clothing decorated with Kalocsa hand- and machine riselin embroidery on the Szabadság Bridge in Budapest

The photo series was created for Paris Fashion Week.

Embroidery pattern design: Ica Bolvári

Clothing decorated with Kalocsa hand- and machine-embroidered riselin at Buda Castle. The photo was taken for Paris Fashion Week.

Clothes decorated with Kalocsa hand- and machine-embroidered riselin at Buda Castle.

The photos were taken for Paris Fashion Week.

Fashion designer Tünde Hrivnák in Kalocsa

Ica Bolvári - Master of Folk Art, Marcsa Pandúr - Master of Folk Art,

Aunt Margit Dusnokiné - folk artist and embroiderer.

Kalocsa dresses decorated with hand and machine embroidery on Kossuth Square.

The photos were taken for a BY ME event in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Pattern design: Ica Bolvári

Early Kalocsa clothing collection decorated with hand embroidery at the Royal Palace in Gödöllő

Clothing decorated with Kalocsa hand- and machine-embroidered riselin at Vajdahunyad Castle in Budapest at the Agricultural Museum. The photos were taken for the first American BY ME event series.

BY ME Spicy: A fashion show featuring clothes decorated with Kalocsa embroidery in Bratislava on International Fashion Day

51–55:

Early ornate Kalocsa dresses decorated with hand and machine embroidery at the Szentendre Open-Air Museum.

Pattern design: Master of Folk Art- Aunt Marcsa Pandurné

Hand embroidery: Mrs. Zsuzsa Szarvas. Riselin machine stitching: Mrs. Julcsa Nagy

Fashion designer Tünde Hrivnák and the Kalocsa Tradition Preservation Association

Top left: Zsuzsa Szarvas - folk artist and hand embroiderer

Top right: Margit Dusnokiné - folk artist and hand embroiderer

Bottom photo: Aunt Julcsa Nagy -folk artist, machine riselin embroiderer and

Aunt Marcsa Pandúr, Master of Folk Art

58-59: A “Dazzling Kalocsa” stage production featuring a showcase of BY ME Spicy’s early ornate Kalocsa-embroidered garments, presented in collaboration with the Kalocsa Tradition Preservation Association at the Festival of Crafts in Buda Castle, Budapest

“Dazzling Kalocsa” stage production, BY ME Spicy collection and the Kalocsa Heritage Preservation Association at the Festival of Crafts.

BY ME MATYÓ

In the first few days of 2012, I received a phone call from Zsuzsa Berecz, the president of the Matyó Folk Art Association. Her voice was warm and conveyed a genuine interest. She told me that they had seen a television interview with me in which I spoke about clothes decorated with the Kalocsa pattern. Based on that conversation they immediately felt a desire for Matyó embroidery to also have a worthy place in a collection that carries on the tradition with respect and authenticity.

My first trip took me to Mezőkövesd (to Hadas)—the heart of Matyó culture. Even the moment I arrived felt special, as if I had stepped into another world. Upon entering the house I was greeted by two smiling warm women: Zsuzsa - the president, and Bernadett Pap - the artistic director at the time. Their presence radiated openness and a kind of human warmth that immediately made the encounter feel like home. They showed me around the house where original handicrafts and hand-painted furniture told stories of the Matyó people’s lives. Even then, I knew it wasn’t by chance that I was here. The Matyó way of life captivated me and I didn’t need to think twice: I felt that I wanted to create something lasting together with them.

Betti designed all the pattern sketches for the By Me Matyó dresses and the embroidery was done by the association’s embroiderers. When we began discussing the first garments I mentioned that black and white were my go-to colors. Betti looked at me with a firm yet loving gaze and said: “The Matyó rose can only be red.”

A long, respectful conversation followed during which we both listened to each other’s arguments. Finally Betti agreed to try a piece with a black pattern. When it was finished she simply said: “It turned out very beautiful.” That moment was one of the most beautiful examples of mutual trust and understanding. Of course the red rose and the original color scheme also appeared in the collection—after all respect for tradition was important to all of us.

We presented the finished collection with pride and joy and the audience’s love confirmed the value of our joint effort. This brief story clearly illustrates that success is built on compromise, listening to others’ ideas and mutual respect. Over the past fourteen years countless collaborative creations have been born. We’ve learned what matters to each other and our “given word” has become our strongest contract. If we said an embroidery would be finished it was finished—regardless of the deadline. Every piece of embroidery on a By Me garment is the handiwork of the association’s artisans so every piece holds true value.

Our collaboration was marked by the utmost trust and understanding. Through our travels, festivals, and exhibitions together we became friends. Step by step we discovered the hidden treasures of each other's souls.

Since 2013 the By Me collections have been regularly invited to the Festival of Crafts at the Buda Castle, where year after year we have the opportunity to meet the most dedicated practitioners of Hungarian folk art. It is an honor for me to have gotten to know so many artisans and folk artists through the Matyó community. They welcomed me into a close-knit, intimate world—they even included me in the “Grand Jury,” which involves tasting pálinkas from different regions.

This story is not just about the creation of a collection but about people who treated one another with respect, friendship and trust and in doing so created something lasting.

Over the years, we not only worked together but also grew together. In the meantime, Betti was awarded the title of Master of Folk Art, which we celebrated together with sincere joy. Today she has become the president of the association and Zsuzsa supports her work as honorary president—with the same wisdom, love and humanity that have accompanied our shared journey since our first meeting.

“Matyó embroidery has been listed on the National Register of Intangible Cultural Heritage since 2010 and in 2012 UNESCO recognized it as part of the intangible cultural heritage of humanity.”

We met Tünde Hrivnák in 2011 and our friendship has remained strong ever since. Back then I saw her dress decorated with Kalocsa embroidery on a TV show, which gave me the idea to reach out to her. Zsuzsa Bereczné then president of the Matyó Folk Art Association, contacted her. We didn't have to persuade Tünde; it quickly became clear how committed she was to harmonizing traditional Hungarian embroidery culture with elegant, high-quality fashion. As in any human relationship we naturally had our differences of opinion but we tackle every task with the necessary tolerance, building on our unconditional respect and appreciation for one another. A professional working relationship, many joint exhibitions, travels, countless experiences and laughter—that is the sum of the past eleven-odd years. And, of course, successes—beautiful embroidered dresses that showcase the very best of both of our talents.

I am very lucky, because I have learned so much from Tündi:

- An unwavering faith in God, in good people and in a good cause
- The Matyó rose is beautiful even when embroidered in black
- Mind reading (sometimes there's just a tiny piece of fabric tucked in the envelope, with no instructions)
- Cheerfulness, a zest for life and boundless energy

Sometimes we don't speak for weeks but we can always pick up where we left off, understanding each other's thoughts, feeling each other's emotions.

Julianna Bernadett Pap

embroiderer, Master of Folk Art

designer of the By Me Matyó collection

President of the Matyó Folk Art Association

The first BY ME Matyó collection at the House of Folk Arts in Mezőkövesd

*The first BY ME Matyó clothing collection decorated with embroidery at the Budapest Continental Hotel*****

Embroidery pattern design: Bernadett Pap, Master of Folk Art

Fashion designer Tünde Hrivnák at the end of the BY ME Matyó collection fashion show

BY ME Matyó collection at the New York Palace in Budapest

The BY ME Matyó collection at St. Stephen's Basilica in Budapest

Photos of the BY ME Matyó collection taken during BY ME appearances in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

BY ME Matyó Collection

Embroidery design: Bernadett Pap - Master of Folk Art. Hand embroidery: Matyó Folk Art Association

73-76: Photo-shooting Matyó garments decorated with hand embroidery in Montreux (Switzerland)

Embroidery pattern design: Bernadett Pap - Master of Folk Art. Hand embroidery: Matyó Folk Art Association

BY ME Matyó fashion show at the Festival of Crafts in Buda Castle, Budapest

78-82: These photos of the BY ME Matyó collection were taken on the Szabadság Bridge in Budapest for Paris Fashion Week

Embroidery pattern design: Bernadett Pap - Master of Folk Art. Hand embroidery: Matyó Folk Art Association

84-86: BY ME Matyó garments decorated with hand embroidery at Buda Castle, Budapest

Embroidery design: Bernadett Pap - Master of Folk Art. Hand embroidery: Matyó Folk Art Association

BY ME Matyó collection presentation in Bratislava on International Fashion Day

“I’ve been working with Tündi since I was 16; my mom even accompanied me to my first dress fitting—which I got into through Anna. Since then we’ve participated in numerous fashion shows and photo shoots together gaining a wealth of valuable experience and unforgettable memories. I’m grateful for the trips we’ve taken together which live on as lasting memories; for the fantastic people I’ve met through these projects; but most of all because over the years we’ve forged a true community, a big family. It’s a special feeling to be surrounded by friends every time, and to know that there is always love and mutual support alongside our work. Working with Tündi is an exceptional experience not only professionally but also on a personal level and for that I will be forever grateful.”

Luca Csorba, model

BY ME MIRACLE

September 2016 went down in the story of my life as a busy yet unforgettable month. It was then that the gates to a new era opened before me. One of the show venues was the Hungarian Embassy in Vienna where we were able to present the Kalocsa and Matyó patterned collection to representatives of the diplomatic community. Both collections were a resounding success. Several Hungarian treasures were also showcased at this event, including the legendary Halas lace.

At the end of the presentation, Kálmán Pajor - the foundation's president approached me. He kindly invited me to view the lace exhibition. The moment the world of Halasi lace unfolded before me something touched me deeply. Behind the delicate threads lay a special, timeless secret. During our conversation Kálmán invited me to Kiskunhalas to the Lace Museum and then asked me, "Would you consider designing a collection using Halasi lace?" Without hesitation, I said yes. I felt honored by the invitation though I didn't know at the time that it would lead me on one of the most beautiful creative journeys of my life.

After much travel and work I arrived in Kiskunhalas in early January 2017 filled with the fresh energy of the new year where I was welcomed by the museum director. As I stepped into the museum I was greeted by the wonders of lace. The lace makers were enveloped in silence and tranquility and with a kind smile they placed a butterfly embroidered with Halas lace into my hand. The feather-light creation nestled in my palm touched my heart. At that moment, I knew: the collection would be named "Miracle." Then they showed me the long and meticulous processes before the lace is finished. That's when I truly understood why Halasi lace is called "the hymn of patience." Our first shared idea with the leaders of the lace house was to take the lace out of the display case and give it a new life: to make it wearable, create a fashion style around it and present it to the world in a luxurious design.

Lace is always white—pure, timeless, elegant. It was only natural that the first pieces would be born out of the timeless elegance of black-and-white and dark blue-and-white. We unveiled our first collection at the gala celebrating the 115th anniversary of the Halas lace, and it was a resounding success among both young and old alike.

I believe that success only has meaning if there is someone to share it with. In 2021 the Halasi lace adorning the garments in the collection was designed and sewn by the skilled lace-makers of Kiskunhalas who were given complete creative freedom. The masters at the Halas Lace Museum are the only ones in the world who know and preserve this unique technique. This creative period was particularly dear to me because through our collaboration we truly got to know one another and ultimately a 15-piece collection was born.

To name but a few of those who contributed to the creation of the collection: Zsuzsanna Kardos – the museum's artistic director, Annamária Lőszter-Simon, Anett Takács, Éva Farkas, Nikoletta Haszné Baksa, Gyöngyi Pajorné Bert, Erika Végsőné, Erika Röck, Júlianna Keresztúri, Marianna Antóniné Harkai and Melinda Monostori.

Over the years we have achieved countless joint successes in Hungary at renowned festivals, the Festival of Crafts, temporary exhibitions in Hungarian castles and prestigious events in provincial towns. By Me Miracle's international successes: Austria, Serbia, Croatia (in Lepoglava), Spain, Italy, Portugal, and Japan.

It was a tremendous honor in Tokyo that one of the most distinguished female members of the Imperial Family viewed "the queen of lace, the lace of queens" with great interest at the Hungarian Embassy in Tokyo. The international audience has embraced the unique world of Halas lace with admiration and deep appreciation.

Our most important goal has been achieved: through fashion young people have come to know and love Halasi lace and a clientele has emerged that proudly wears pieces from the By Me Miracle collection at business and diplomatic events.

“We first met Tünde in January 2017 at the Lace House in Kiskunhalas. We were selecting lace for her first collection. We hit it off right away. I really liked how she spoke about Halas lace with humility and appreciation; even then, it was clear to me that she understood and felt the essence of lace. She selected the lace she intended to use with a clear vision in mind.”

The presentation of the first By Me Miracle clothing collection adorned with Halas lace took place on May 5, 2017 at the opening ceremony of the 18th International Lace Exhibition under the title “The Miracle of the Future – Value, Tradition, Originality.” I hadn’t seen the finished dresses beforehand, neither in photos nor in person yet knowing Tünde’s previous work, I awaited the presentation with complete confidence and calm.

I believe I speak not only for myself but for everyone present when I say that the spectacle exceeded all our expectations. The lace blended perfectly with the dresses and the fashion show together with the models and the music was executed at an international standard. The members of the Brussels lace workshop who were guests of honor at the opening ceremony, the Belgian ambassador and our guests from Budapest, sister cities and the local community all spoke highly of the show. The brochures ran out in no time and members of the press all wanted to interview Tünde.

This was their first joint success followed by countless others. When designing her subsequent clothing collections Tünde always came up with something new. She attached the lace to a black fabric which she could then place on colorful garments. She asked the lace makers to design new lace patterns. Using a special printing technique she decorated the dresses with original, enlarged lace patterns. She designed a uniform line of winter and summer attire for us which greatly elevated and continues to elevate the quality of our appearance. The ties decorated with Halas lace remain popular items among our visitors to this day.

Thanks to these clothing collections and fashion shows—that is, thanks to Tünde—we were able to bring Halas lace out of the museum display case, breathe new life into it and transform it into wearable fashion for today. Thanks to the fashion shows our exhibition openings have become dynamic programs that attract a wide audience. We owe several significant appearances to Tünde’s organizational work and connections: the 115th-anniversary exhibition at Vajdahunyad Castle and presentations organized in Portugal and Japan.

Our relationship and collaboration with Tünde have greatly contributed to the revival and future preservation of Halas lace. I am confident that we will continue to work together with similar success for many years to come!”

Éva Szécsiné Rédei - Director of the Lace House

“In September 2016, Hungarian cultural treasures were showcased in Vienna at the historic building of the Hungarian Embassy, where Halas lace was also invited. Lace maker Gyöngyi Pajorné Berta and I, as Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Halas Lace Public Foundation attended the event.

As part of the gala program, I had the pleasure of watching a highly successful fashion show featuring a stunning array of dresses adorned with Hungarian folk art motifs. The designer, Tünde Hrivnák, was introduced. I immediately looked for an opportunity to congratulate her and ask her to visit our Halas lace exhibition stand and see the lace-making demonstration!

Tünde was amazed by the Halas lace and I asked her to definitely visit us in Kiskunhalas at our Lace House in the near future in order to get to know our world-famous creations up close. Due to her busy schedule I certainly had to keep inviting her again and again but when we finally met in Halas she was immediately enchanted by the world’s finest textile: hand-sewn Halas lace. She practically fell in love with the delicate lace and by the spring of 2017 she had already unveiled a beautiful fashion line adorned with Halas lace! Our collaboration has remained strong ever since.

With her refined sense of style Tünde Hrivnák can satisfy even the most discerning tastes. Throughout our years of collaboration every one of her shows has proven that she is capable of creating highly successful masterpieces, ranging from simple afternoon dresses to exclusive evening gowns.

With her talent, exceptionally creative thinking, initiative and excellent organizational and diplomatic skills Tünde Hrivnák has practically become an ambassador for Halas lace!

I am delighted to have been the initiator of our fruitful relationship, which has lasted for eight years!”

Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Halasi Lace Public Foundation - Kálmán Pajor

“To my great delight, when designing the 2022 fashion collection, Tünde gave the lace makers the opportunity to design their own lace. As the artistic director this was important to me because I could see the creativity of the lace makers I had taught unfold and develop. Most of them had never designed lace before; they used to sew the finished patterns they were given. I myself designed the peacock feather dress embellishment for Tünde at that time. The dress decorated with this lace not only appeared at fashion shows but was also worn by a lady at the Anna Ball which filled me with great pride. Tünde gave the lace a practical purpose allowing it to find a new life in fashion. Tünde and I traveled together to Lisbon, Portugal. Although I’ve traveled to many places around the world, she was the most knowledgeable. She enthusiastically helped whenever we were unsure of something - we could rely on her with complete confidence. The introductions went very well too. This trip together has remained a beautiful memory for me.”

Zsuzsanna Kardos - Artistic Director

“I began designing the lace for the 2022 fashion collection with great excitement. I had only designed medallion lace once before, so this new design—thanks to Tünde—presented a serious challenge. I looked at older lace patterns and had to draw something completely new from them. I really liked a forget-me-not pattern and adapted it based on my own ideas into the template provided by Tünde. Fortunately she also found this pattern suitable and as you can clearly see placed it on the upper pockets of the new dresses. Our most memorable trip together with Tünde and our debut were in Lisbon, Portugal. We participated in programs organized by the embassy where Tünde held a fashion show and we presented lace-making to interested visitors at the Halasi lace booth.”

Anett Takács - lace maker

“I first met Tünde at the embassy in Vienna. That’s when the working relationship between her and the foundation began. To me, Tünde and the models had a very exclusive aura about them. It was then that she said the phrase that has stayed with me for life: ‘There is no such thing as a bad figure, only bad clothes.’ Since then, I have participated in several international events with Tünde. Our most recent—and indeed the most outstanding joint trip was to Tokyo, Japan. Through Tünde, we were able to meet members of the Transcarpathian association. We participated together in programs organized by the embassy and after the performances we explored Tokyo’s sights together. Tünde’s cheerfulness and zest for life rubbed off on every member of our team. Together, we marveled at the local customs and the different culture. I thank Tünde for this once-in-a-lifetime experience and I’m confident we’ll share many more like it together!”

Éva Farkas - lace maker

“I was delighted to participate in designing the lace for the 2022 fashion collection. It was a challenging yet exciting task as we were given ready-made patterns but Tünde gave us free rein regarding the design. I chose a cuff and collar trim. I spent days designing and sketching and the final result was a tulip pattern. It was a source of pride to see the lace I designed and crafted on the new dresses. I am grateful to Tünde for all of this!”

Niki Hászné Baksa - lace maker

“In 2022 Tünde asked the lace makers to design lace for the new collection, I considered this task a major challenge. I was in constant contact with Tünde throughout the design process. She liked my initial designs and was always there to help when I got stuck on something.

I designed lace for two dresses. For one, on the front and back; for the other, on the sleeves.

I named my lace “Two Tulip Vine Dress Ornaments.” The most uplifting feeling was when I saw the lace I had designed and sewn come to life on the dresses at the fashion show. I’ve been to several international events with Tünde; most recently we were in the city of Camarinas, Spain, for an international lace exhibition where the two of us represented Halas lace. Tünde helped organize the exhibition, assisted with communication and together we built international connections. At this exhibition Tünde also presented the Halas lace clothing collection in a successful fashion show. It was an honor for me to spend this time together.”

Annamária Lőszter-Simon - lace maker

Tünde Hrivnák fashion designer and the Halasi lace makers at the Kiskunhalas Lace Museum

96–98: First BY ME clothing collection decorated with Halasi lace on Andrassy Avenue, Budapest

99-104: The Queen of Lace, the Queen’s Lace: A collection adorned with Halasi lace at the Ybl Villa in Budapest

109-110: BY ME Miracle “Peacock” collection adorned with Halasi lace at the Graefl Castle in Kétútköz

Fashion designer Tünde Hrivnák at the BY ME Miracle “Peacock” collection fashion show

Dresses decorated with original Halasi lace featuring printed motifs

115-118: Photos from the “Fashion Changes, Lace Is Eternal” clothing collection decorated with Halasi lace

Prepared for fashion shows in Tokyo at the Halászbástya in Buda Castle

“Tünde and I have known each other for nearly 10 years. During my international modeling career, it wasn’t typical for me to wear clothes decorated with handcrafted folk motifs but I always feel special in pieces from the By Me brand and it’s a particular joy for me that Tünde always allows—and even asks—the models to smile and live in the moment during the fashion show. It has become a tradition before fashion shows for Tünde and me to form a circle of love where Tünde always tells us how grateful she is to us and to God that the show has come to be and she hopes it will be a great success and that the audience will love it too. This tradition is very important to me as well and gives me a lot of strength before we step onto the stage. Thanks to Tünde, I’ve been able to visit many cities in Hungary and abroad that I’d never been to before getting to know new cultures and people and through this we’ve also been able to share the treasures of Hungarian folk art with others. It feels good to see that all the love Tünde gives us is returned from the audience as well. For me, one of the most cherished and memorable fashion shows was when we visited Tünde’s dear grandmother at the nursing home in Tótkomlós and presented the most successful pieces from recent years to the residents there with Tünde’s grandmother even helping out. It is an honor to still be working with her to this day.”

Franciska Gáll, model

Fashion designer Tünde Hrivnák at the Fisherman’s Bastion in Buda Castle

REFORMATION 500 BY ME

For a long time now, I have been nurturing the idea of one day creating a collection that I would dedicate wholeheartedly to God and Jesus Christ. In gratitude for everything I have received: I was able to become what I wanted to be as a child—a fashion designer. I am deeply grateful that You never let me stray from the straight path even when it involves solving difficult challenges. I give thanks for my family, my friends, my creative partners, my colleagues, my guests and my collaborators—who believe in me, support me and encourage me to keep going. We are deeply grateful for the countless opportunities you send our way every day. These help us continue our shared mission to preserve hand embroidery and hand-sewn lace.

In 2017 we celebrated the 500th anniversary of the Reformation—a historic moment that held special significance for me.

Early in the year I spoke with my sister. I told her that I felt I was in great need of God’s protective shield. Since we have a very close and honest relationship she understood exactly why I was saying this. Not a moment had passed before she voiced the very thought that had been on my mind: “The time has come. Design the Reformation collection.” I am grateful to her for this encouragement, because tackling this

topic truly required great courage. I knew I was stepping into sacred territory, where every line, every color and every thought carries weight.

I would like to express my gratitude to my sister - Andrea Perl, who has stood by my side for twenty-five years now as a creative partner, a source of creative support and above all, a loving sister.

The brand identity, communication and voice of By Me and its collections were born from your sensitive perspective, your refined ideas and your thoughtful attention to detail. Every piece of your work reflects love with which you attend to the details and the professional humility you bring to every single project. Through your hands, the timeless beauty of folk art has become the brand's defining motif in logos, visual identities and exhibitions alike. The people featured in this book are old acquaintances to you as well, for we are bound to them by many years of shared work, shared experiences and shared creations. I am grateful for every moment we created together and for the trust we have always placed in one another unconditionally.

The 500th anniversary of the Reformation and the life and teachings of Martin Luther have deeply moved me. Especially the idea that "salvation is not our own doing; we are not made righteous by our deeds but it is God's gift of grace that makes us righteous." This sentence has become the guiding light of my daily life. Thus was born my personal motto: "A new day, a new grace."

While designing the collection, I spent a great deal of time studying the lives of Luther and his wife - Katalin Bora. I was inspired by their faith, their strength, their simplicity and the dignity with which they lived their daily lives. It is a special joy for me that one piece of the collection—a beautiful black English wool coat—turned out so well I can almost see with my eyes that if Katalin Bora were alive today she would surely love to wear it. For me, this collection is not merely a collection of clothes. It is a thanksgiving, a creed and a quiet, deep prayer that I sent to the Creator God. In every stitch there is trust, in every color there is hope, in every form there is grace. When creating the garments, it was very important to me to speak to the younger generation, to infuse a divine thought, a divine spirit, into every single piece. During the design process, I was guided by ideas that transcend the fabric and the cut: faith, tradition, timeless values. I attached special significance to the colors. The color gold symbolizes God's glory,

white symbolizes living faith and red symbolizes the sacrifice of Jesus. I have woven these symbolic layers into the classic, original values that form the foundation of the collection. The clean lines emphasize permanence while the hand embroidery carries on the respect for ancient strength and the tradition of craftsmanship—all while remaining in harmony with the latest trends.

When I design a collection the colors, shapes and motifs convey a unified message. I want to convey clear, straightforward ideas. I want anyone who looks at one of my dresses to immediately recognize: this is a creation by Tünde Hrivnák. I often use black and white because, to me, these are symbols of eternal elegance and timelessness.

As for the embroidery, the heart rose serves as the main motif in the Matyó pattern, while the red rose motif plays a central role in the Kalocsa pattern. The colors of the embroidery also consist of black, white, red and gold and their combinations. The base materials for the garments are high-quality wool fabrics, French cotton velvet, pure silks, and santungs. The combinations of these materials, with their glossy-matte and smooth-rustic surfaces make the garments exciting and unique.

My design philosophy is rooted in love, knowledge and respect. Above all, it is God's love that I feel I weave into every collection. My colleagues and clients know that I am a person of faith; I pray every day, asking God to grant me inspiration and clear thoughts for my work. I love God, and I love the people I work with. I believe that only through love can one create something lasting. If I didn't love the people I design for or those with whom I create, I wouldn't be able to offer anything truly valuable.

I firmly believe in the need for classic, feminine lines and consistency. In this collection, too, I sought balance even when I occasionally opted for bolder necklines. I believe that one of the keys to the success of our work is the excellent team I work with. From the embroiderers to the models, everyone knows exactly what we stand for. I work with a consistent team who know each other well and whose work aligns with our shared values.

One of the key messages of the collection for me is that "there is no such thing as a bad figure, only poorly tailored clothing." The number one rule of fashion is that we should feel good in what we wear. Coco Chanel's idea—that there is no woman more lacking in style than one who feels insecure in her clothes—still holds true today. I am convinced that a well-chosen outfit helps us show who we are and what we stand for. Every woman needs at least one piece of clothing in which she can be herself without compromise. When she slips it on she doesn't have to think about how she looks; she knows the outfit is tailored to her and highlights her best features. A good outfit gives you confidence—and for me, that is one of fashion's most important missions.

Once the collection was complete and launched, my relationship with my guests and collaborating partners truly reached a higher "spiritual level." It turned out that many of them are people of faith and are happy that through the clothes, we can talk about faith, scriptures, testimonies and thus about insights and affirmations, share thoughts and thereby help each other in our lives. I recommend this collection to young people and adults who want to express their faith through their clothing and thereby reach out to others.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my hometown Tótkomlós for awarding me the Pro Urbe Prize this year.

The Reformation 500 collection, decorated with Kalocsa hand and machine embroidery at the Lutheran Church in Buda Castle

"It is with a grateful heart that I write these lines in your 25th-anniversary book. I have been working with you as a model for years and this period has become a defining part of my life, not only professionally but also personally.

I have had the opportunity to participate in numerous fashion shows and photo shoots with you exploring Hungary's beautiful landscapes and you have also taken me to several locations abroad. Every single occasion was a special experience for me because creating with you is always more than just work—it's

about creating value, thinking together and presenting a worthy representation of the living, contemporary form of Hungarian folk art. When I wear your creations on the runway I always feel like I'm telling a story—about our past, our values and women's strength. That's why I've happily chosen to work with you because, in addition to your talent it is your loving attention and kindness that truly make you unique. I have particularly fond memories of those moments when we were preparing together before a show or photo shoot, when I could see how tradition comes to life in your clothes and how the past and present are connected.”

Bianka Pesti, model

BY ME TREASURE

The By Me Treasure Collection – A contemporary reinterpretation of the Hungarian motifs of Transcarpathia offering a luxury-category interpretation of three defining areas of Transcarpathian Hungarian craft heritage—Bereg hand-woven textiles, Nagydobrony cross-stitch embroidery and the Bereg cross-stitch motif tradition—translated into contemporary fashion. The collection aims to present the traditional repertoire of motifs adapted to contemporary aesthetic expectations while bridging the gap between past and future, craft tradition and modern design. The garments are not merely items of clothing but works of art that carry cultural values and reinforce identity. The By Me Treasure collection is designed for women who appreciate the modern interpretation of geometric patterns and traditional motifs. It is intended for those who boldly embrace their identity and value the reflection of their cultural heritage in their attire.

The pieces in the collection embody both the world of contemporary luxury fashion and the timeless beauty of Hungarian craft traditions from Transcarpathia.

Bereg Handwoven Fabric – Geometry, Contrast, and Timeless Elegance

Pieces adorned with Bereg hand-woven fabrics form the structural foundation of the collection. The dominance of the black-and-white color scheme symbolizes constancy and the stability of tradition, while the authentic Bereg shades of red and blue bring rhythm and visual dynamism to the compositions. The characteristic, angular motifs of the woven fabrics—hearts, flowers, V-shaped elements—serve not only a decorative function but are also reflected in the cut lines, thus creating a unified, harmonious unity between the textile and the form.

The contrasting colors and shapes create an extravagant yet sophisticated look.

The pieces in the collection—elegant dresses, suits and evening ensembles—can be easily combined with one another and when worn for special occasions powerfully convey the values of Hungarian cultural identity.

Nagydobrony Cross-Stitch – The energy of colors and the femininity of floral motifs

The garments made with cross-stitch embroidery from Nagydobrony are the most vibrant and energetic pieces in the collection. The red and pink hues of the famous “Dobronyi Rose” take center stage surrounded by richly colored floral motifs and green leaves. The original color combinations of the embroidery preserve the authenticity of the tradition, while modern cuts place them in a new context.

The colors of the fabrics often harmonize with the tones of the embroidery, creating a cohesive, vibrant effect throughout the entire ensemble. The classic lines gracefully showcase the rich floral bouquets which serve as visual expressions of femininity, joy of life and cultural pride.

Bereg Cross-Stitch – Clean Lines and a Heavenly Rhythm

The collection adorned with Bereg cross-stitch embroidery embodies a harmony with nature and a wealth of delicate details. The rhythmically repeating pattern of tiny flowers and leaves evokes the atmosphere of the Garden of Eden. The parallel and symmetrical arrangement of the embroidery creates a balanced, calm visual structure on the garments. The silhouettes are loose-fitting yet accentuated at the waist and streamlined, ensuring both comfort and elegance.

The vertical slits on the sleeves and sides lend the garments a sense of lightness and airy movement. The color palette—dark burgundy, pink, deep green and beige—evokes the hues of nature and appears harmoniously in both the embroidery and the fabrics. The pieces in the collection can be styled in many ways making them versatile additions to the modern woman’s wardrobe.

The Story of BY ME Treasure

In early January 2017 we were invited to the Szerencs Civic Ball, where we had the opportunity to showcase our collection featuring Kalocsa and Matyó patterns. At the end of the presentation, just as we were about to leave, a kind lady hurried after me and asked for my phone number. I had no idea that this marked the very first moment of a long-lasting relationship built on trust, respect and a shared sense of purpose.

The phone rang early in the summer. A kind woman’s voice asked if I could see her and her friend that very afternoon. She explained that they were leaving from Transcarpathia and didn’t know how long it would take them to cross the border. It was only natural for me to wait for them. When they walked into the salon, their eyes sparkled with joy and curiosity. Our conversation quickly became relaxed; I had a lot of questions about Transcarpathia since I had never been there before.

That was when I learned that the distinguished guest at the Szerencs ball was Eleonóra Molnár - president of the Transcarpathian Folk High School Association and her companion was Lívía Balogh the association's vice president. First they chose a dress with a Matyó pattern because the motifs reminded them of their own "Bereg rose." Even then I sensed that the rose was the soul of the pattern collection here as well. At our next meeting while we were trying on clothes Eleonóra mentioned that they would like to invite us to Transcarpathia because they wanted to show us their own folk art treasures. That's how our first trip to Uzhorod began in December 2017. We held our first fashion show for the local Hungarian community at a beautiful hotel. The By Me Spicy and Matyó collection was presented by Hungarian models and the show was enhanced by a young men's folk dance group, who took the stage with an innovative adaptation featuring original folk dance elements. The audience's enthusiasm went beyond mere appreciation: you could feel the strength and pride of the Hungarian people.

After the show, Eleonóra invited me back to Transcarpathia to explore the region's most famous embroidery styles and motifs. Although I hesitated for a moment, thinking about the distance and the border, by the time I got home I already knew: the theme of my next collection would be Transcarpathian folk art.

My first trip to collect materials and meet the folk artists living there touched me deeply. Being Hungarian there means a daily struggle yet everyone referred to their own motifs and traditions as treasures. That's how the name of the collection came to me: "Treasure."

Eleonóra and Lívía showed me Szürte, Csap, Beregszász and Munkács, including the famous castle and the large Turul statue. I based my first collection on the motifs of Bereg woven fabrics with the help of Marianna Prófusz, one of the region's most renowned folk artists. The woven textiles in the By Me Treasure collection are handcrafted in Beregszász in an original, authentic setting. One of the collection's main motifs is the Rákóczi pattern, which pays homage to historical Hungary. Every decorative element of By Me Treasure garments is still made in Beregszász to this day.

We shot our first photo series with Viktória Tarpai - an actress at the Beregszász Theater who has continued to wear pieces from the collection at numerous events ever since. Upon seeing the clothes and the theme, István Fedor - president of the Hungarian House in Washington, D.C., along with the main organizers of the Sarasota Hungarian Festival, Erika Klatyik and Zsolt Székely invited the collection and the artistic photo series showcasing the landmarks of Transcarpathia on a tour of the United States: to the cities of New York, Cleveland, New Brunswick and Sarasota. It was touching to see the joy of the Hungarians living there as we brought the treasures of Transcarpathia to them, allowing them to learn about its culture from an authentic source.

The premiere of the By Me Treasure collection took place in Transcarpathia at the Hungarian House in Csap. Both young and old locals welcomed it with great interest and were delighted to see their treasured heirlooms embark on new journeys strengthening their identity and their future.

The collection's journey led to the stage production titled "Időfonál" (Thread of Time) which was realized based on an idea by Eleonóra Molnár and directed by Attila Vidnyánszky. The premiere took

place at the Gyula Illyés National Theater in Beregszász and was performed by actors from Beregszász. The performance was welcome with a standing ovation and prolonged applause.

Since then, we have participated in numerous prestigious events both in Hungary and abroad. In 2020 we began collaborating again: the next collection was based on the motif repertoire of cross-stitch embroidery from Nagydobrony. Ágnes Ór Hidi - a traditional embroiderer, helped ensure the authenticity of the patterns. The central element of the collection became the Bereg rose and the embroidery was authentically crafted in Nagydobrony.

The association's president, Eleonóra Molnár had a new idea: let's create a stage production, because that way we can better showcase the culture and history of Transcarpathia. This is how the musical-prose performance titled "Dobronyi Rose to Zsazsa" came to be, which also pays tribute to Sári Fedák, the famous Hungarian actress from Beregszász. The production was written and directed by Nelli Szűcs, a Jászai Mari Award-winning actress. The production featured Viktória Tarpai and young folk musicians. The premiere took place at the Hungarian House in Nagydobrony where young people and the older generation living in Transcarpathia participated together singing and clapping along to "Zsazsa's" favorite Hungarian folk songs.

The Hungarian premiere was held to a sold-out house at the National Theater, where the audience also sang along with the actors. The By Me Treasure collection has thus preserved the rich motifs of two regions of Transcarpathia and passed them on to the next generation.

In early 2023 the 16-member Transcarpathian Embroidery Circle was also initiated by Eleonóra. I was completely captivated by the magical world of Bereg cross-stitch embroidery. The enthusiasm and dedication of the embroiderers along with the loving atmosphere within the circle became a source of inspiration. The motifs and ideas of the third region immediately came to life and the designs for the collection were quickly created.

All the embroidery on the garments is done in Transcarpathia. We shot a photo series of the garments at the National Theater. The premiere fashion shows in Budapest and at the Liszt Institute in London were a resounding success and well-known London influencers shared and wrote glowing reviews.

In 2024, we traveled to Tokyo following an invitation from Dr. Emese Kovács - cultural attaché, where we had the opportunity to present the collection and the photo series at three events. At the 5th Hungarian Festival organized by the Liszt Cultural Institute thousands of Japanese visitors celebrated Hungarian culture. The respect and affection shown by the Japanese audience were exemplary. At the Hungarian Cultural Day held at the Embassy in Tokyo, a distinguished female member of the imperial family was also present with whom we discussed the importance of cultural diplomacy. Japanese models wore the garments during the shows representing the collection with deep humility and pride despite their young age. The interview on Fuji TV brought the visual world of Hungarian culture—with its ancient motifs—to millions of people.

The third event took place at the Liszt Cultural Institute, where participants had the opportunity to learn Hungarian hand embroidery. The program was interactive and featured Hungarian folk songs.

In 2025, we set out once again this time to Lisbon, Portugal, at the invitation of Ambassador Dr. Emília Fábrián on the occasion of the National Holiday on October 23. His Royal Highness Prince Dom Duarte

Pio de Bragança, the Crown Prince of Portugal, was present at the event and his words of appreciation reaffirmed our faith and dedication. At the festive event organized by the Embassy in Lisbon the diplomats in attendance were given a taste of the essence and beauty of Transcarpathian culture.

This nine-year collaboration has unlocked both cultural value and market opportunities for high-quality, original hand-embroidered products. In this way it has helped ensure that hand embroidery remains a living tradition—both now and in the future.

I first discovered Tünde Hrivnák's work at a civil ball in Szerencs. At first, I just wanted to have a dress made by her for myself but then we started dreaming big and tried to convince Tünde to design a collection decorated with Transcarpathian patterns—which were still relatively unknown at the time—in addition to her traditional Hungarian designs. Since 2012 our Folk High School has been working to promote Transcarpathian values to as wide an audience as possible. A real breakthrough in this work was the By Me Treasure fashion collection completed in 2018, which was adorned with Bereg woven fabric created by Marianna Prófusz, a young master of folk art. We also succeeded in sparking the interest of Hungarians living in the Carpathian Basin and the diaspora, so the collaboration continued, and the collection was soon expanded to include garments decorated with cross-stitch patterns from Nagydobrony and Bereg which had since been designated as Hungarikums.

The success of our collaboration with Tünde also contributed to the establishment of the Transcarpathian Hungarian Embroidery Workshop. Our embroiderers' hard work has led to outstanding professional achievements in Hungarian embroidery competitions, earning them the title of "Folk Artist in Applied Arts."

Similarly to the Kalocsa and Matyó Folk Art Associations, the authenticity of the Transcarpathian collection is now also guaranteed by a professional organization.

The fruits of our collaborative work over the past seven years include three collections, two stage productions, a professional organization and five overseas guest performances in addition to numerous domestic invitations. To support these efforts, Tünde's sister and Perl Creative have created an artistic photo series, five publications, two exhibitions and three online games for children.

"The results we have achieved are the product of mutual trust, respect for one another and our commitment to traditional Hungarian embroidery culture."

President of the Transcarpathian Folk High School Association - Eleonóra Molnár

Clothing decorated with Bereg woven fabric from Transcarpathia

Fashion designer Tünde Hrivnák with Eleonóra Molnár - president of the Transcarpathian Folk High School Association,

and Livia Balogh - Vice President of the Transcarpathian Folk High School Association

Presentation of the Transcarpathian Bereg woven fabric collection at the Festival of Crafts. Hand-woven fabric: Marianna Prófusz

Clothing decorated with Bereg woven fabrics

Viktória Tarpai - Jászai Mari Award-winning actress from Transcarpathia, member of the Déryné Theater

140-141: Clothes decorated with cross-stitch embroidery from Nagydobrony at the Graefl Castle in Kétútköz

Hand embroidery: Ágnes Ór Hidi - traditionalist, hand embroiderer

Clothing decorated with cross-stitch embroidery from Nagydobrony.

Bottom left: Viktória Tarpai - Jászai Mari Award-winning actress, and

Nelli Szűcs, Jászai Mari Award-winning actress, distinguished and outstanding artist, member of the National Theater

143-144: A collection of dresses decorated with Bereg cross-stitch hand embroidery at the National Theater.

Hand embroidery: Carpathian Embroidery Circle, Veronika Vass, Marianna Kovács, Szabina Pirbula

First Lady of the Hungarian Embassy in Portugal Emília Fábián, His Royal Highness Prince Dóm Duarte Prince Pio de Baeganca, and fashion designer Tünde Hrivnák in Lisbon, Portugal

147-149: Exhibition of garments decorated with Bereg cross-stitch embroidery at the Festival of Crafts in Buda Castle

Hand embroidery: Carpathian Embroidery Circle: Veronika Vass, Marianna Kovács, Szabina Pirbula

Fashion designer Tünde Hrivnák and director of the Festival of Crafts at Buda Castle Gabriella Igyártó at the end of the presentation of the BYME Treasure fashion collection decorated with Bereg cross-stitch hand embroidery

“I met Tünde 14 years ago during a joint project in which I participated as a model when she was asked to lend a dress with a Kalocsa motif.

This is where our journey together began, a journey that lasted many, many years filled with fashion shows, travels and shared experiences. Thanks to her, I met people who are still a part of my life today. A close-knit team formed and together we traveled the world supporting one another and through Tünde’s work we were able to promote the vibrant world of Hungarian folk art.

It was a joy to see how deeply she cared about the lives of the women she worked with! How important it is for her that folk motifs reach as many people as possible, so that the world can discover and wear Hungarian patterns even overseas! In addition to professional ties, I can say that family-like bonds have developed through her work.

She also supported me in successfully completing my professional studies and as a practical mentor helped me earn my dressmaker certification.

“I’m grateful that I could be a part of this world and that I could contribute a little bit over the many years to the world she built. It was great to see how much the brand has changed and evolved over the years.”

Lili Mosonyi, model

BY ME RELATION

In early 2019 an unexpected phone call set in motion the process that ultimately led to the creation of the Relation collection. I was contacted by the mayor of Hövej Mrs. István Horváth.

She had seen my work at the Halas Lace Festival, and in that moment she realized: Hövej lace also needed a collection that would carry on the tradition in a worthy manner and shed new light on the heritage of the past.

Her invitation to Hövej promised more than just a professional meeting. Located in Sopron County, in the heart of Rábaköz, at first glance the town looked like a carefully guarded jewelry box: the timeless silence of the Roman Catholic church, the delicate details of the lace museum and the famous Hövej lace all opened the gates to a special world before me.

As I approached the picturesque landscape surrounding the village something got started in me. Thoughts, feelings, memories and expectations intertwined just as the delicate threads of lace are woven together. I knew even then that this collection would consist not only of clothes but of stories, encounters

and genuine human connections. The lace-makers of Hövej welcomed me with love and deep respect. They told me the story of lace, showed me the technique passed down through generations in which every stitch bears the imprint of a human destiny. Walking among the handicrafts in the permanent exhibition, I was immediately enveloped in a romantic atmosphere. It was as if the quiet whisper of the past had called me to create.

During our conversations we all had a feeling that our meeting was no coincidence. Naturally, the idea of working together came about almost spontaneously.

To me Hövej lace is more than just a masterpiece of craftsmanship. Its soul lies in the purity of human relationships, the humility and respect that span generations and the power of unity. The patterns crafted from fine, pure white cotton threads are like relationships: fragile yet strong, soft yet supportive. The masterful skill of the women of Hövej has preserved this tradition since 1860.

The spider-web embroidery of Rábaköz, now known worldwide as Höveji lace, is distinguished by its unique technique: spider-web stitching. Each of the spider-web-like patterns stitched into the centers of the holes is different; each has its own name and each tells a tiny story.

The patterns consist of leaves, rosettes and flowers as if all the beauty of a spring meadow had been captured in a single piece.

These experiences, these encounters, this knowledge and this love shaped the name of the collection in my mind: Relation.

The name refers both to the human connections that ensure the survival of Höveji lace and to the delicate, invisible web that is also reflected in the lace-making technique.

Respect for tradition, a love of art, the value of human connections and the romantic first impression all live on in this collection. Folk artist and lace maker Mrs. Miklós Horváth Anna Ivánkovics also created and designed patterns for the garments in the collection.

The BY ME – Relation Collection

The pieces in the Relation collection are imbued with a delicate romantic atmosphere, refined elegance and the timeless power of femininity. The eternal whiteness of Höveji lace provides the collection's base color, complemented by black, pale gray and vibrant fuchsia. The contrast between dark and light shades speaks the classic language of elegance while the vibrancy of fuchsia touches both the heart and the soul.

The lace appears in various forms: on the sleeves of blazers, at the hems of skirts and dresses, on collars, at the bust, and on the back. The asymmetry of the cut is a deliberate play on shapes that highlights the uniqueness of the designs and lends a modern rhythm to the garments. The piping running along the lace trims provides a delicate frame creating harmony. The lace adorning these dresses was created specifically for the By Me Relation collection both in terms of shape and pattern design.

Since creating lace that fits the cut lines perfectly is time-consuming, the dresses typically take three months to complete.

This collection is designed for women for whom romance is not just a style but a way of life. For those who want to celebrate their femininity on special occasions and who appreciate the fusion of tradition and modern elegance. The dresses are purchased by both young and older women regardless of age, in Hungary and abroad alike. Pieces from the By Me Relation collection have been showcased at several renowned festivals and conferences.

Young university students have also shown exceptional interest. The collection was presented with great success in Austria at the Hungarian Embassy in Vienna and in Mallnitz, as well as in the United States at the Hungarian Festival in Sarasota. It has been a resounding success every time, which encourages us to continue.

“The Relation Hövej lace collection, unveiled on June 15, 2019, was the result of a long and dedicated collaborative effort. The story began in December 2016, when we founded the Höveji Lace Makers’ Circle, the leadership of which was entrusted to me. Our goal was to preserve the century-and-a-half-old Höveji lace tradition, pass it on to young people, and make it known to as wide an audience as possible. It was then that we encountered fashion designer Tünde Hrivnák’s stunning creations adorned with folk motifs. At one of our gatherings I suggested to Mayor Bori Horváthné that it would be wonderful if Hövej lace could also appear on Tünde’s dresses. The idea fell on open ears, and we soon got in touch with Tünde who gladly accepted the invitation. Our first meeting took place on November 23, 2018 in Hövej, at the Lace Museum. There we introduced her to our village’s unique tradition of handcrafting. After the visit Tünde wrote: “Dreamlike wonders are created here. It inspires and motivates.” Shortly thereafter she designed the five dresses, which she sent to me first—it was a great honor. We worked on the lace designs with Annuska Horváth and after Tünde’s approval we eagerly began sewing. Our mothers—Ágnes Ivankovics and Ilus Vörös—also helped with the work to ensure everything would be ready in time for the 2019 show. In the meantime I had the chance to meet Tünde at her home on several occasions, where I got to know her dedication and extraordinary work ethic even better.

Working together was a joyful and inspiring experience. I am grateful to have been part of the process that led to the creation of the clothing collection designed by Tünde and embellished with Höveji lace.”

Ildikó Bendesné Vörös - Hövej lace maker

Top left: Mrs. Miklós Horváth Anna Ivánkovics - Hövej lace maker,

Top right: Istvánné Horváth - Mayor of Hövej 2018–2022.

156–159: BY ME Relation collection decorated with Hövej lace at the Várkert Bazaar, Budapest

Lace pattern design, lace-making: Mrs Bendes Ildikó Vörös, Mrs. Miklós Horváth Anna Ivánkovics

“I first had the pleasure of meeting Tündi and discovering the By Me brand in Mallnitz. The way Tündi welcomed me with such openness and warmth really made me feel great. Those few fantastic days I spent there will remain a lasting memory.

After that I had many more opportunities to showcase this wonderful brand at various events, during which I also had the chance to meet and talk with the seamstresses. The world of handmade pieces has always been of great value to me; I know how much patience, work, faith and love go into each piece, as I, too, learned to embroider decorative pillows from my grandmother. It was through her that I first became acquainted with the Kalocsa and Matyó motifs.

Thanks to Tündi, a childhood dream of mine came true. I was able to stand on the runway as a model which was a tremendous experience in itself but what made it truly special for me was that through the By Me brand I could also take part in passing on Hungarian traditions. I was filled with pride to be able to wear such beautiful clothes. Tündi’s work is not only unique but also represents true value.”

Kinga Búzás model

BY ME TRUST

The story began in 2009 when I met my first client from Transylvania - Dr. Melinda Melles, who lives in Gheorgheni. Back then, traditional marketing methods still worked: a simple flyer led her to me. She saw the clothes I had designed on the flyer and something about them spoke to her. She called me and our very first conversation went on for a long time.

She asked me about the clothes and I asked her about Szeklerland which until then I could only imagine.

I was just getting ready for the launch of a new collection, so I invited her to come see the clothes in person. She arrived with her mother and it soon became clear that we had several things in common: she was born into the world of pharmacy and I was born into the world of fashion. After the show her first By Me dress was completed and then she invited me to Transylvania, a place that had been a mysterious, distant world to me until then. Melinda and her husband, Előd Melles welcomed me with such love and respect that it already held the promise of a long friendship. They showed me all the beauty of the area and told me about the lives of the Hungarians living there. Every story touched me deeply. The unparalleled beauty of the Szekler forests and the ancient power of the landscape were exactly as I had imagined. In the church at Csíksomlyó we prayed together before the statue of the Virgin Mary. At that moment, I knew I’d be back here someday.

Over the years, we've truly become good friends. The idea of designing with Szekler motifs came up several times, but for a long time I didn't feel confident enough. I knew that the rich world of motifs in Szeklerland demanded deep respect and that I still had a lot to learn before I could tackle it.

The other influential person who eventually took my other hand was Gabriella Igyártó. She is one of the most important supporters of folk art known to every artisan. She has spent her life supporting Hungarian folk artists both at domestic and international festivals including the world-renowned and acclaimed Festival of Crafts.

I am grateful to her, as are the folk artists who create alongside me, because she always considers it important to showcase and support contemporary folk art. Supporting the folk art of her hometown, Sepsiszentgyörgy, has become almost a personal mission for her.

Melinda and Gabriella's combined encouragement finally gave me the strength to set out on the path that led to By Me's next collection—a collection adorned with traditional Szekler hand embroidery. Upon arriving in Sepsiszentgyörgy my first stop was the Szekler National Museum, the oldest museum in Szeklerland. It was here where I gained a comprehensive understanding of the traditional Szekler costumes and motifs. At the museum, folk artists Aranka Vinkler and Irén Simon presented the region's characteristic patterns. They spoke at length about the cross-stitch embroidery of Árapatak, a craft in which they themselves are masters.

That very day, we went through countless samples, and I decided: this collection of motifs would form the basis of the first ten-piece collection—which eventually expanded to fifteen pieces. The Árapatak cross-stitch pattern emerged in the 19th century; it is created using a woven cross-stitch technique on evenly woven, raw or white fabric with traditional pearl thread. Its authentic colors are red and blue and the density of the patterns gives each piece a unique character.

On the way home we headed toward Gyergyószentmiklós and we stopped at the church in Csíksomlyó to give thanks and pray for the new collection. When I stepped inside, I caught sight of the altar cloth: it was adorned with beautiful red cross-stitch embroidery from Árapatak. I felt that the Virgin Mary was sending us a message that we were on the right path and that this should indeed be the first theme drawn from the rich treasure trove of patterns in Szeklerland. That moment gave us the final calling and courage to create the By Me Trust collection which is adorned with Árapatak cross-stitch embroidery. This is a path marked by trust, friendship and a deep respect for tradition. That is why the collection is named "Trust."

The garments in the collection are built upon the authentic base colors of traditional Szekler garments: white, blue and red. These colors appear on the chest area of the garments, on the sleeves as special inserts, along the waistline, on the front and lapels of the blazers and in wedge-shaped forms on the shoulders. These geometric arrangements harmonize with the characteristically angular motifs of Székely embroidery patterns. The patterns were created exclusively for the By Me Trust collection, precisely integrated into the patterns and adapted to the structure of the garments. Every single embroidery was created in an authentic setting in Sepsiszentgyörgy. The unique stripes appearing on the

garments were inspired by the original folk costume. The pieces in the collection feature classic lines but with unique cut lines and modern details. The By Me Trust collection is designed for women who wish to embody the spirit of ancient Hungarian strength. Those who, through their attire, step into the atmosphere of a mystical, timeless world—a world where trust is not merely a word but a value earned over many years.

The collection made its debut in Szeklerland at the Gyilkos-tó Hotel during a charity event organized by the Rotary Club of Gyergyószentmiklós (in Romanian:Gheorgheni) of which Mellinda Melles is an active member and organizer. The Szekler audience welcomed the By Me Trust collection with appreciation and delight.

“I first saw Tünde Hrivnák’s name on a small flyer in Budapest. I had no idea that I wasn’t just looking for a fashion designer but for someone with whom I would form a lasting friendship over the years. We didn’t just design clothes with Tünde Hrivnák; we created timeless pieces that hold memories, moments and emotions for me.

She always told me that designing and sewing my ideas was a challenge for her. These feelings most strongly convey a sense of belonging, especially when she visited Gheorgheni at our invitation and her fall collection was already inspired by Transylvania.

And for our 2025 Rotary Charity Ball the By Me Trust brought us Székely Árapataki’s cross-stitch creations. To me her hands create not just clothes but stories. Every single piece embodies the faith, passion and creative power that not only dress us but also give us poise. These creations are timeless pieces for me, ones that are connected to real-life situations, decisions and milestones.”

Melinda Melles

We first unveiled this collection at the renowned Festival of Crafts in the Buda Castle. The collection, born of collaboration and trust, won the public’s approval and recognition. This day remains memorable to me for another reason as well, as I had the honor of receiving a state award - the Hungarian Silver Cross of Merit. I would like to take this opportunity to thank those who nominated me and deemed me worthy of this award.

The collection was received with great joy and respect by both American audiences and the Hungarian community in the United States. The collection was presented by the younger generation born there, many of whom are originally from Szeklerland. They proudly showcased the precious treasures of their homeland and wear this collection of garments adorned with unique and original patterns on special occasions.

“Tünde is already a member of the Sarasota Hungarian Festival family; we couldn’t imagine the event without her since our children have grown up alongside her. In recent years local Hungarian girls have presented the festival’s collections which has boosted the children’s confidence and interest. With the hand-embroidered dresses designed by Tünde Hrivnák, Hungarian folk art, as well as the richness of traditional folk crafts such as embroidery and weaving, were also showcased at the festival.”

Zsolt Székely

Costumes decorated with Szekler Árapatak cross-stitch embroidery in Szeklerland at Lake Gyilkos

Clothing decorated with cross-stitch embroidery from Kalotaszeg and Árapatak

Dr. Melinda Melles - pharmacist and member of the Gyergyószentmiklós Rotary Club with fashion designer Tünde Hrivnák

at the Rotary Club’s charity ball by Lake Gyilkos

“When we first met in our early twenties (I will not reveal the specific year...) neither of us knew how much of a defining turning point the opening of that particular shopping center would be in our lives.

Moreover I certainly never would have imagined that Tünde would one day ask me to contribute to her book—it’s a great honor. Back then, I was organizing fashion shows and a company asked me to put together a show featuring up-and-coming Hungarian fashion designers.

It was there where I met Tünde who was brimming with energy, plans, creativity and dreams. Even during our first conversation I sensed that she possessed not only talent but also a special strength and purity. We started brainstorming together so naturally, as if it were something we had always done.

After our first collaboration, it was almost obvious that we would continue. When she asked me to help with the launch of her own salon and to participate as a model, I gladly said yes. Not only because I believed in her but because I was inspired by her enthusiasm, her creative energy and the kind of determination with which she approached every single garment. I watched as her designs came to life under her hands with never-ending momentum. It’s heartwarming to wear her clothes, knowing how much work, long nights, faith and craftsmanship went into each and every piece.

I am grateful to be a part of your journey. Amen.”

Patrícia Szórád

BY ME HUNTING COLLECTIONS

In 2012 I was working in the heart of Budapest's 7th district when Mayor Zsolt Vattamány approached me with an honorable request: to design a special collection for the upcoming Elizabeth Ball, inspired by Queen Elizabeth, known as Sisi. The idea was both an honor and a challenge. I knew I didn't want to create simple reproductions; I wanted to create a world that was alive, appealing to modern women yet authentic in its historical roots.

As a first step, I rewatched the film about Sisi—not for the story, since I knew it well—but to relive the atmosphere that surrounded her. I didn't have to wait long: right at the beginning of the film, the direction became clear to me. Sisi loved the forest, the wildlife and the silence of nature. She often walked among the trees and accompanied her father on his hunts. That's when it became clear to me: I wanted to create a collection that shows what kind of clothes Sisi would wear on a walk in the woods if she were alive today. I knew she had a special connection to the Hungarians and Hungarian motifs. This love, her passion for nature and the subtle elegance of the feminine spirit have come together to shape the world of the By Me Spicy Hunting Collection within me—a collection of men's and women's clothing that evokes both the atmosphere of history and the demands of the modern age.

The By Me Spicy Hunting Collection is an exciting fusion of tradition and innovation. The garments are adorned with Kalocsa embroidery—one of the most beloved treasures of Hungarian culture—known for its rich patterns.

The refined elegance that characterized Sisi is beautifully reflected in these outfits: they are pieces that the queen herself would have loved to wear.

The colors of the By Me Spicy Hunting Collection—black, white, gray, dark blue as well as red, dark blue and beige—evoke the classic hunting atmosphere while lending the wearer a modern, distinctive look. The checkered patterns, hand embroidery, bows, Swarovski crystals and pearl embellishments all evoke regal elegance, just as similar decorations were recurring elements in Sisi's dresses. The collection is based on high-quality English wool fabrics which are rendered both innovative and traditional through unique fabric combinations—wool, silk-santung and French velvet. The original

hand-embroidered Kalocsa patterns and the riselin lace embellishments represent a value that transcends fashion: they embody identity, heritage and craftsmanship.

Where the modern woman meets timeless elegance

These outfits bring historical beauty into the everyday life of the modern woman. The waist-accentuating silhouette, the floral motifs delicately adorning the legs and the clean lines all serve to make the wearer feel unique, elegant and true to herself.

The Men's Hunting Collection

By Me's men's hunting attire complements the women's pieces perfectly. Shades of red, navy blue, tobacco, gray, white, light gray, dark gray and off-white create a classic yet fresh harmony. The lapels of the three-piece suits, made from English wool fabric, are adorned with original hand-embroidery from Kalocsa—a detail that is a worthy expression of Hungarian hunting traditions.

I recommend these outfits for festive occasions to hunters who wish to express their identity, traditions and respect for nature through their appearance.

“My goal continues to be the preservation of the values of artisanal craftsmanship and passing them on to future generations”—I still believe this today, just as I did when the collection was first created. The By Me Hunting Collection is not merely a collection of garments: it is a tribute to Hungarian tradition, the beauty of nature and the timeless elegance of Queen Elizabeth.

The Birth of WONDEER – A Unique Collaboration in the Service of Hungarian Hunting Culture

News of the By Me hunting collection spread slowly but surely among female hunters. State Secretary for Public Administration Andrea Gulyás was the first to take notice of the garments. In 2013 upon seeing my collection presented at a Hungarikum gala she felt a calling that went beyond fashion: she recognized that preserving Hungarian hand embroidery was not merely an aesthetic endeavor but a cultural mission as well. It was then that Andrea approached me with a request to design a hunting outfit for her that could serve as a worthy alternative to the German dirndl. She wanted to wear an outfit in which she could appear as a Hungarian hunter both at home and abroad and in which she could authentically represent Hungarian hunting traditions. In the years that followed, more and more people sought out hunting attire decorated with Hungarian motifs—the community's demand increasingly shaped the future.

During a conversation, an idea occurred to me: what if, instead of just making clothes we created a new, independent brand that embodies the identity of Hungarian hunters?

Andrea, along with several dedicated female hunters—led by Beatrix Bán - president of the Dianas—immediately grasped the magnitude of the opportunity. Our first meeting with Bea began with a stern gaze as is typical of female hunters. However after a few minutes, the Hungarian motifs on the clothing

spoke for themselves. It became clear to her as well: the time had come for Hungarian hunters to wear Hungarian hunting attire.

Long conversations ensued about tradition, folk art and identity. Beatrix's background in folk music, Andrea's dedication and the strength of the community of female hunters all pointed in the same direction. This is how a shared vision was born from which a new brand later emerged.

The long-held dream of Hungarian hunters is coming true

Our goal was clear: to create excellence based on time-honored Hungarian values and to design garments that embody both tradition and modern elegance. In collaboration with renowned Hungarian artists, distinguished hunters, the finest raw materials and the most skilled master craftsmen, the Hungarian luxury hunting collection - Wondeer, was born. The collection draws inspiration from a passion for hunting and a commitment to Hungarian craftsmanship. Every stitch reflects a pursuit of perfection and every detail embodies a respect for tradition. The collection combines the wonder of Hungarian tradition with the magic of innovation—without compromise.

Many of my clients have approached me with the request for an elegant, hunting-style garment featuring Hungarian ornamentation. I knew that simply designing a garment wouldn't be enough: I had to understand the lives, customs and mindset of hunters. Thanks to this, Wondeer is backed not only by my 25 years of professional experience but also by a deep understanding of hunting culture. The Wondeer collection's refined yet bold style perfectly complements the hunter's personality. We recommend it to women and men for whom a love of nature and hunting is a way of life. People who believe it is important for their clothing to reflect their identity, culture and national consciousness. The message of the pieces adorned with motifs from Kalocsa is clear: let us preserve and carry forward authentic Hungarian values—at home and around the world.

The Wondeer Journey – Successes and Milestones

We first presented the Wondeer Luxury collection at the Diana Ball in collaboration with the Hunters' Cultural Association. Alongside the models the Diana huntresses wore the dresses.

In 2018, the audience of the FeHoVa exhibition also had the opportunity to see the collection's handmade, one-of-a-kind pieces. The color palette of black, brown, green and beige immediately won over the hunting community. The collection was a resounding success garnering numerous media appearances and invitations. At FeHoVa, we were invited to the exclusive ball of Safari Club International.

The Diana Huntresses represented Hungary in Finland at the 4th CIC Artemis Working Group Conference on Women and Sustainable Hunting wearing outfits by Wondeer, where the organizers praised the Hungarian delegation's unique appearance.

In September 2018 at the National Hunting Day in Putnok pieces from the collection were showcased alongside the logo for the 2021 World Hunting Exhibition. In 2019, we were commissioned to design the official uniform for the “One with Nature World Hunting and Nature Exhibition”.

A brand that bridges the past and the future

Wondeer is more than just a fashion line. It is the dream of a community, the tradition of a country, and the power of women coming together.

“I met Tünde Hrivnak in 2017 in relation with the Wondeer & Nimroad collection which at the time was still just an idea. From our very first meeting it became clear to me that Tünde is much more than a fashion designer: she cherishes tradition and preserves values and she sees not only with her eyes but also with her heart. After a conversation lasting barely half an hour, she envisioned a dress for me that I could never have found myself, even if I had searched for one that better suited my personality and style. Due to my background as a folk musician, traditional Hungarian folk motifs have always been close to my heart yet I found it difficult to imagine them in everyday wear. Tünde incorporates the motifs with subtle elegance— in a way that is unique yet never ostentatious. She won me over immediately. Over the past nearly ten years Tünde has designed countless one-of-a-kind pieces for me and I adore every single one of them! I always wear them with joy and pride because I know that Tünde’s heart is in them along with her encouraging supportive and loving embrace; because they give me strength and self-confidence; and because they simultaneously emphasize my Hungarian identity and my identity as a hunter. I am grateful for our connection. I feel it is of decisive importance that a collection specifically for Hungarian hunters could be created, since our country’s centuries-old hunting traditions have German roots which is why Bavarian styles and motifs have dominated elegant hunting attire for decades. The Wondeer & Nimroad collection has finally given us the opportunity to wear Hungarian values on our attire as Hungarian hunters.”

Beatrix Bán

“By Me is not just a brand but a bridge between the past and the present. Its message is that we can bring the wonderful heritage of our folk art to life. Of course, this requires the person who dreamed it all up and brought it to life. Tünde Hrivnák’s faith, extraordinary talent and passion have made her the guardian of this heritage. Becoming a guardian is an invaluable mission, as preserving our traditions strengthens our community identity, connects our past with the present and helps us understand who we truly are. That is why it is important to honor and support those who nurture these values. Through her work and dedication, Tünde has helped ensure that these beautiful Matyó and Kalocsa motifs live on not only in museums but also in our everyday lives. The past 25 years are not just the past, but also a promise for the future. I am proud to know her and to be able to wear her unique creations.”

The Birth of the Nimroad Collection

The Nimroad men's hunting brand was launched in 2021, as if fate had destined it to complement Wondeer's women's clothing. Together, the two brands form a harmonious unity in which feminine grace and masculine determination are two sides of the same tradition: the timeless power of Hungarian hunting culture.

The elegant garments feature a refined yet assertive hunting style. They are made from 100% high-quality wool fabric, following the trends of modern fashion while preserving the ancient character of hunting. The garments feature original Kalotaszeg hand embroidery. The colors of nature—

various shades of green and brown—form the foundation of the collection, while orange, burgundy, and blue tones are for those who wish to wear tradition with a new twist.

The long-awaited attire for Hungarian hunters has finally been created marking a new chapter in the history of Hungarian craftsmanship.

The World Exhibition – The First Game-Changing Milestone

Nimroad's first big moment was the 2021 One with Nature World Hunting Exhibition.

Representing Hungarian values, the organizers presented themselves to the world as Hungarian hunters.

At the 22nd European Deer Calling Championship held during the World Exhibition the Hungarian team won the gold medal. I was particularly honored that the team members chose Nimroad's original Hungarian hand-embroidered uniforms for this historic moment.

A destiny-like encounter – the fulfillment of the mission

In early 2022 I met Ádám Balázs and his wife - Brigitta Balázs-Boros. They are deeply committed to promoting the values of traditional Hungarian hunting. During the fitting sessions it quickly became clear that we share a similar set of values. Shortly thereafter they joined my mission to support the preservation of hand embroidery. In the fall of 2022 they opened the first Hungarian Hunting Attire Salon where customers can purchase uniquely designed garments adorned with authentic Hungarian hand embroidery in an exclusive setting. However it has become more than just a store: it has evolved into one of the intellectual hubs of Hungarian hunting culture, hosting professional events, workshops and demonstrations.

At the Hungarian Hunting Wear Salon, the Wondeer and Nimroad brands unveil new collections every year. Nimroad is not merely a men's hunting brand. It is a value created from the past, born in the present pointing toward the future.

A mission that connects Hungarian craftsmanship, hunting traditions and the people who believe that true values are not lost—they are simply reborn in a new form.

“Thank you Tünde for allowing me to be part of this special journey through which we support Hungarian hunting culture together. Thank you for where the garment has taken us and where we continue to dream.”

Ádám Balázs

“Speaking of Tündi, the first things that come to mind are her positive attitude toward people, her kindness and her humility and dedication to her work. The way she envisions the dresses is truly exemplary; persistently refining them down to the tiniest details and tailoring them to each individual making everyone feel a little bit special—which, let's face it, is a great value in today's world. I'm glad to know her and to work with her because it has enriched me and the path we're walking together creates value.”

Brigitta Balázs-Boros

I am proud to have designed the uniforms for the Hungarian Hunting Chamber's Horn Ensemble, in which they became European champions for the third time. The authentic Hungarian hand embroidery on their uniforms gave them a dignified appearance.

Clothing decorated with Kalocsa hand- and machine-embroidered riselin

190-191: Presentation of the WONDEER women's hunting attire collection decorated with Kalocsa hand embroidery at the 2021

"One with Nature" World Hunting Exhibition

State Secretary for Public Administration - Andrea Gulyás

Ministry of Agriculture

Beatrix Bán - President of the Diana Huntress Club

Hunting Cultural Association

WONDEER woman's hunting wear collection at the Royal Palace of Gödöllő

Women's and men's hunting attire decorated with Kalocsa hand embroidery at the Royal Palace of Gödöllő

WONDEER dress decorated with Kalotaszeg cross-stitch hand embroidery

198-199: Presentation of the WONDEER women's hunting attire collection at the Hungarian Embassy in Vienna, Austria

Bernadett Pap - Master of Folk Art in Matyó folk costume

Andràsné Bolvári - Master of Folk Art in Kalocsa folk costume

Tünde Hrivnàk - fashion designer

Top: WONDEER women's hunting attire, NIMROAD men's hunting attire

Below: Ádám Balázs and Brigitta Balázs-Boros - owners of the Hungarian Hunting Wear Salon

WONDEER women's hunting attire and NIMROAD men's hunting attire at the Hársas hunting lodge

Clothing decorated with Kalotaszeg cross-stitch hand embroidery

Adrienn Diana Lipp - huntress, Edit Kun-painter

Zoltán Boros - painter, and Beatrix Diana Bán - huntress

Glory always belongs to God.

“For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things.

To Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.”

Romans 11:36

