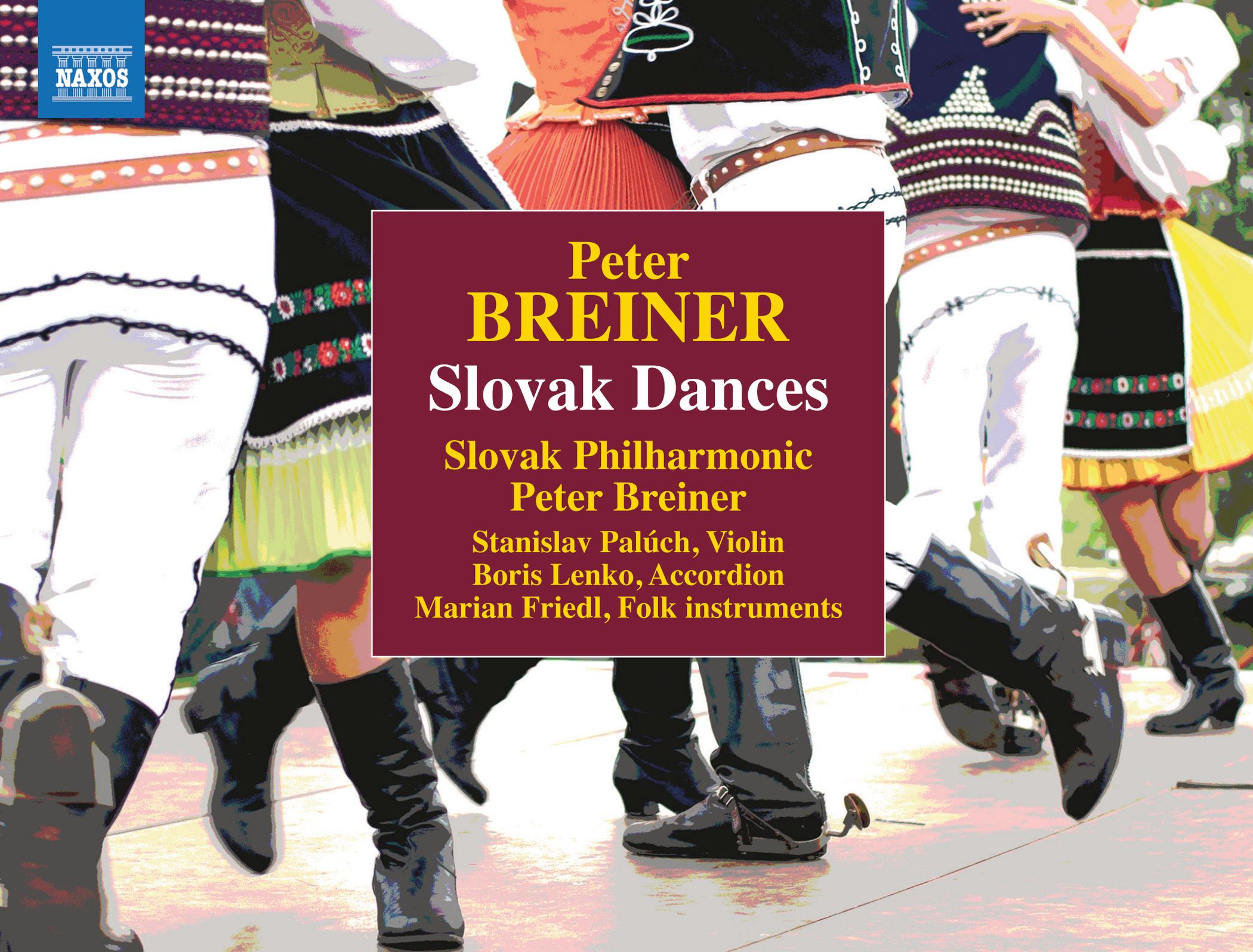


The NAXOS logo is located in the top left corner, featuring the word "NAXOS" in white capital letters above a stylized illustration of a classical building with columns.

NAXOS

The background of the entire image shows the lower legs and feet of several dancers in traditional Slovak folk costumes. They are wearing black, shiny, knee-high boots. The dancers are in motion, with their feet positioned as if they are dancing on a wooden floor. The costumes are colorful, with white, black, red, and yellow elements, and some have intricate patterns and embroidery.

**Peter
BREINER**
Slovak Dances

Slovak Philharmonic
Peter Breiner
Stanislav Palúch, Violin
Boris Lenko, Accordion
Marian Friedl, Folk instruments

Peter Breiner (b. 1957)
Slovak Dances, Naughty and Sad

Slovenské tance, pochabé i smutné ('Slovak Dances, Naughty and Sad') (2015)

CD1	49:35
1 No. 1. Ej, zalužicko poľo ('The field of Zalužice')	5:35
2 No. 2. Oddavac me budu ('They will get me married')	8:16
3 No. 3. Dzifče počarovne ('You enchanting girl, you ...')	4:49
4 No. 4. Humeňanski koscelok ('The little church of Humenné')	7:55
5 No. 5. Jaj, mamičko, svrbí ma ('Oh, mother dear, it itches')	4:14
6 No. 6. Kvitne drobná d'atelinka ('Tiny clovers blooming')	6:20
7 No. 7. Uspávanky ('Lullabies')	6:15
8 No. 8. A muj ocec veľka balamuta ('My father is but one big headache')	6:00
CD2	49:31
1 No. 9. Pišťalôčka moja – Ititi, ititi ('My little whistle – ititi, ititi')	7:36
2 No. 10. Na Kráľovej holi ('On the king's mountain')	8:24
3 No. 11. Šafena ja bula ('I must have been crazy')	6:28
4 No. 12. Na košickej turňi ('On the watchtower of Košice')	6:53
5 No. 13. Vravela mi moja mati nesedávať potme ('My mother told me not to sit in the dark')	5:37
6 No. 14. Šňila še mi v Americe novina ('I had this dream in America')	5:59
7 No. 15. Staré dievky, čo robíte ('What are you doing, old spinsters')	4:35
8 No. 16. Kapura, kapura ('You little gate with bars')	3:47

Stanislav Palúch, Violin CD1 3 4 6 7 CD2 1 3 5-8

Boris Lenko, Accordion CD1 1 3 5-8 CD2 1 3 5-8

Marian Friedl, Whistles CD1 1 3-7 CD2 1 5-8, **Bells** CD2 1,

Fujara CD1 2 6 7 CD2 6, **Jew's Harp** CD2 3

Albert Hrubovčák, Trombone solo CD2 2 • **Robert Vizváry, Double Bass solo** CD2 6

Slovak Philharmonic

Peter Breiner

The history of European music can be seen as an oscillation between the periods focused on the formation of a universal language and periods in which the individual variation of this language becomes the ideal. A constant aspect of European music is also an oscillation between the written, composed music, and extemporised music, joined with oral tradition. The individualisation of the 19th-century Romantic universal language was instrumental in the origination of its national variants. Great European cultures started to search for substantiations of their variations in archaic mythical times, soon followed by smaller cultures of Europe.

During the 19th century Slovakia was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The Slovak language, codified by Ľudovít Štúr as the national language, became the political and cultural means of the endeavours in self-determination on a new cultural-political basis. After the first collections of national poetry (Pavol Jozef Šafárik, Ján Kollár) the collections of national songs appeared, followed by the arrangements of this national tradition designated for domestic music-making. The usage of local folklore in composed music started to be understood as a way towards the origination of national music, to individualised variation of the universal language. Shortly after the constitution of a new political unit, the Czechoslovak Republic, orchestras were established able to realise the ideal of national music on the highest artistic level. Slovak folklore found its way into the chamber and symphonic music of groundbreaking composers such as Ján Levoslav Bella.

The uniqueness of Slovak folk songs also attracted other composers: in his works Béla Bartók (1881–1945) used no less than 84 records of Slovak folk songs. For the generation of Slovak music modernism – Alexander Moyzes (1906–1984), Eugen Suchoň (1908–1993), Ján Cikker (1911–1989), Dezider Kardoš (1914–1991) – inspiration taken from folk song became their manifested compositional

starting point and their work could bravely challenge the music with similar aspirations written, for example, by Zoltán Kodály, Karol Szymanowski, Aaron Copland and Witold Lutoslawski.

Peter Breiner was the last pupil of Alexander Moyzes. His boundless musicality has always led him to create fusions of the apparently most contradictory music grounds into a final whole. He thus became a pioneer of crossing or hybridisation of musical languages, a new synthesis of academic and oral traditions, of composed and unwritten music. His *Slovak Dances* are autobiographical in essence, marking the stops of his life journey (Humenné – Košice – Bratislava – Toronto – New York). Naughtiness and grief – through these words he characterised the emotionality of his native folklore tradition and both these extremes define also the emotional nature of his 16 pieces joined into one whole in the old model of Johannes Brahms and Antonín Dvořák. In fact, they are not dances but 16 paraphrases, or symphonic fantasias on 16 Slovak folk songs that 'bewitched' him and thus became an inspiration for his symphonic images. Breiner wrote his pieces far from his home, which enabled him not only to avoid the associations joined with traditional mandatory domestic adoration of the Slovak folklore, but also allowed him to be inspired by the endeavours of the world music movement. In an effort to embed his 'Slovak character' – similarly to Peter Gabriel and Sting – he invited the top instrumentalists of the domestic ethno-tradition to participate in the realisation of his vision: the violinist Stanislav Palúch, multi-instrumentalist Marian Friedl and accordionist Boris Lenko. This synthesis resulted in an exuberating kaleidoscopic music monument rooted in Slovak, especially in Eastern Slovak music folklore.

Vladimír Godár

Peter Breiner: Slovak Dances as my Life Road Map

About 15 years ago I received an order to arrange Brahms' *Hungarian Dances* for the London Symphony Orchestra. I found it quite interesting because I essentially continued what Brahms and Dvořák had started – orchestrating piano compositions. This project had various other, almost familial, connotations. Antonín Dvořák – who was my compositional great-grandfather – was the first to orchestrate *Hungarian Dances* and myself – as his great-grandchild – the last to date. I finished everything that Brahms and Dvořák hadn't.

It occurred to me, while working, that almost all our neighbours and even non-adjacent nations in Europe and beyond have, like the Hungarians by Brahms, some form of classical orchestral collection based on folklore material. The Czechs have *Slavonic Dances* by Dvořák, the Germans have *German Dances* by Mozart, the Spanish have *Spanish Dances* by Granados (which I have scored for them), the Cubans have theirs by Copland, the Romanians by Bartók, the French by Hindemith, Englishmen, Irishmen and Scots by Arnold, the Bavarians by Elgar, Africans and the American Indians by Villa-Lobos, we could go on for a long time ... So I told myself I would

make the Slovak collection myself.

I additionally remembered another connotation – my first paid commission, which – while still a student at the Košice Conservatory – I received from Košice Philharmonic's conductor Bystrík Režucha in 1974. For the 'spa' orchestra that was formed during the summer holidays in Bardejov Spa, he asked for a small orchestral reduction of the symphonic suite *Tance z Pohronia* by my future composition professor Alexander Moyzes.

When all of these dots were connected, I began to remember the folk songs I had encountered throughout my life. I met and also asked Stano Palúch – who, in addition to the classics, tango, jazz, and who knows what else, is a great folk musician – to fetch me some more songs. In my free time, little by little, since it was not a commission, I started to transform them into symphonic pieces until there were 16 of them, just like the *Slavonic Dances* by my great-grandpa.

One could say I have quite a personal relationship with the songs I used, or I associate them with interesting life experiences. They could even serve as a map of my life journey – from Humenné to Košice through to America.

Peter Breiner

Conductor, pianist, composer, arranger and writer Peter Breiner (b. 1957) is one of the world's most played musicians (over 200 albums and more than 2 million records sold).

Peter Breiner is a graduate of the Košice Conservatory (piano, composition, conducting, percussion) and the Academy of Performing Arts in Bratislava, where he was among one of the last students of Alexander Moyzes. Between 1992 to 2007 he lived in Toronto, Canada, then moved to New York where among other things he became the curator and producer of the popular series of chamber concerts known as *Sounds of Serendipity*.

Breiner has conducted – often while playing the piano – renowned orchestras such as the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in London, Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra, New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre National de Lille, Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, Moscow Symphony Orchestra, Ukrainian State Symphony Orchestra, Hungarian State Symphony Orchestra, Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra and many others in Slovakia, Europe, Asia and North America. His commercially most successful projects are Baroque arrangements of well-known tunes – *Beatles Go Baroque* (Vol. 1: 8.990050, Vol. 2: 8574078), *Elvis Goes Baroque* (8.990054) and *Christmas Goes Baroque I* (8.550301) and *II* (8.550670).

Breiner's arrangements of national anthems have been used at the Olympic Games, and he has recorded the complete national anthems of the world for Naxos, spanning ten volumes. Recent releases include an album of orchestral adaptations of works by Mussorgsky (*Pictures at an Exhibition, Songs and Dances of Death, The Nursery*, 8.573016) and Tchaikovsky (suites from the operas *Voyevoda* and *The Queen of Spades*, 8.573015), which were recorded with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra under Breiner's baton. His albums of Janáček opera arrangements (Naxos) won worldwide acclaim and excellent ratings in prestigious music magazines and the world press – *Gramophone* magazine and the *Chicago Tribune* ranked the album among the top ten discs of 2009.

Breiner's compositions and arrangements are performed day-to-day at concerts around the world and broadcast by hundreds of radio stations. Breiner has scored many films, including Slovak, Canadian and American productions such as *Anne of Green Gables, The Pianist's Daughter*, and *The Magic Flute*, arranged music for leading ballet ensembles such as the American Ballet Theatre, The Royal Ballet and Houston Ballet, among others and has also appeared frequently in popular American television programmes.

www.peterbreiner.com



Stanislav Palúch

Stanislav Palúch studied violin at the Conservatory of Music in Žilina and the Academy of Performing Arts in Bratislava. His repertoire spans genres including swing, fusion, world and folk music, and he regularly plays with his ensemble the PaCoRa Trio. He has performed across Europe and the US, and has appeared on Czech and Slovak radio and television programmes and ORF in Austria. As a studio player he has recorded more than 40 albums. He also devotes himself to authorial, arrangement and production activities, and has composed music for the Slovak Folk Art Society and two short films.

Photo © Private



Boris Lenko

Boris Lenko is a graduate of the Conservatory of Music in Žilina and the Academy of Performing Arts in Bratislava, where he has served as a professor of music since 2014. A prizewinner of many international competitions, his varied repertoire encompasses classical, crossover and jazz. In Slovakia, Lenko is a pioneer of the works of Astor Piazzolla, and in 2001 established the chamber ensemble ALEA with a focus on interpreting the composer's music. Lenko's fascination with the Argentinian tango has led to co-operation with Peter Breiner in the exceptionally successful project *Triango*.

Photo © Pavel Kastl



Marian Friedl

Marian Friedl graduated from the Jaroslav Ježek Higher Specialised School in jazz double bass, and in ethno-organology from the Faculty of Arts at Charles University in Prague. A member of various ensembles, Friedl has recorded more than 20 albums, and appears on Martin Chodúr's release *Manifest* (2011) and *NOCZ and Iva Bittová* with the Iva Bittová Noc Quartet (2014). In 2016 he released an album with Canadian multi-instrumentalist Edward Powell, featuring Powell's self-developed 'ragmakamtar'. In 2017 Friedl released the Anděl Award-winning *Lambs and Wolves* (Indies Scope).

Photo © Vlastimil Bjaček

Slovak Philharmonic

The Slovak Philharmonic was established in 1949 by eminent conductors Václav Talich and Ludovít Rajter. Other chief conductors who have played an instrumental role in the Orchestra's musical evolution include Tibor Frešo, Ladislav Slovák, Libor Pešek, Vladimír Verbitsky, Bystrík Režucha, Aldo Ceccato, Ondrej Lenárd, Jiří Bělohlávek, Vladimír Válek, Peter Feranec, Emmanuel Villaume, James Judd, Leoš Svárovsky, Rastislav Štúr and Petr Altrichter. In addition, the Orchestra has performed under the batons of some of the world's greatest conductors including Claudio Abbado, Sergiu Celibidache, Christoph von Dohnányi, Mariss Jansons, Neeme Järvi, Riccardo Muti, Kirill Kondrashin, Krzysztof Penderecki and Aram Khachaturian. The Orchestra has made numerous recordings and has toured extensively throughout the world. James Judd has served as principal conductor since 2017. <http://www.filharmonia.sk>



Photo © Peter Brenkus



Peter Breiner

Photo © Gulnara Samojlova

Peter Breiner is one of the world's most performed composer/arrangers, with a boundless musicality that has led him to create fusions of music from a variety of genres. Drawing on traditions established by Brahms and Dvořák and showcasing leading folk music soloists, his *Slovak Dances* are an exuberant and kaleidoscopic monument rooted in Slovak musical folklore. It comprises 16 symphonic fantasias on songs that evoke varying emotions with an autobiographical element that follows Breiner's life from his origins in Humenné and Košice to New York.

Peter BREINER

(b. 1957)

Slovak Dances, Naughty and Sad (2015)

CD1	49:35	CD2	49:31
1 The field of Zalužice	5:35	1 My little whistle – ititi, ititi	7:36
2 They will get me married	8:16	2 On the king's mountain *	8:24
3 You enchanting girl, you ...	4:49	3 I must have been crazy	6:28
4 The little church of Humenné	7:55	4 On the watchtower of Košice	6:53
5 Oh, mother dear, it itches	4:14	5 My mother told me not to sit in the dark	5:37
6 Tiny clovers blooming	6:20	6 I had this dream in America **	5:59
7 Lullabies	6:15	7 What are you doing, old spinsters	4:35
8 My father is but one big headache	6:00	8 You little gate with bars	3:47

A detailed track list can be found inside the booklet

Stanislav Palúch, Violin • Boris Lenko, Accordion
Marian Friedl, Whistles, Bells, Fajara, Jew's Harp
Albert Hrubovčák, Trombone solo * • Robert Vizváry, Double Bass solo **

Slovak Philharmonic
Peter Breiner

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