

ERKEL FERENC

Conservatory

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Sándor Gyula Csík

Cimbalom



PLACE OF BIRTH
BUDAPEST

DATE OF BIRTH
1977

BIOGRAPHY - DISCOGRAPHY

Education

- Born in June 1977 in Budapest into a family of cimbalom musicians, Gyula Sándor Csík began playing the cimbalom at the age of 5, taught by his father.
- A year later, he enrolled at the Tóth Aladár Music School under the guidance of Ágnes Szakály.
- At the age of 14, he was admitted to the Bartók Béla Secondary School of Music with the highest marks, where he studied classical music.
- Beyond mastering the classical foundations, he also committed to preserving and continuing the tradition of Hungarian 'café gypsy music,' a national cultural heritage.

Career Highlights

- He toured the world with leading orchestras, showcasing one of the finest treasures of Hungarian culture. He spent nearly a decade performing in the orchestra of violinist Ferenc Sánta Jr., a recipient of the Liszt, Kossuth, and Prima Primmissima Awards. They collaborated on numerous television, radio, and CD recordings.
- In 2015, he was invited to be the solo cimbalom player of the Gipsy Philharmonic Orchestra.
- He has been a regular soloist of the festival series 'Cigányvarázs' (Gypsy Magic) since its inception and performed at Margit Bangó's 70th anniversary concert at the Arena. He frequently collaborates with world-renowned violinist Roby Lakatos. In addition, he is often requested to perform classical works, both solo and with chamber and symphony orchestras.

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Major Collaborations

- He has performed on stage with exceptional artists such as:
 - Pianist János Balázs (Kossuth Prize)
 - Cellist István Várdai (Liszt and Prima Awards)
 - Violinist Kristóf Baráti (Liszt and Kossuth Awards)
 - Violinist Barnabás Kelemen (Kossuth and Liszt Awards)
 - Violinist Katalin Kokas (Liszt Award)
 - Soprano Erika Miklósa (Kossuth and Liszt Awards)
 - Conductor Gergely Kesselyák (Liszt Award)
 - Violist Máté Szűcs (Geneva Conservatory)
 - Joshua Bell, Mischa Maisky, and Martha Argerich.
- He is a key member of Lajos Sárközi's ensemble and a regular figure in Hungary's classical music scene. He is a frequent performer at major Hungarian classical music festivals such as the Cziffra Festival, KaposFest, and the Festival Academy.



Notable Performances

- In recent years, he has performed at:
 - MVM Zenergia Concert
 - Bartók Festival in Miskolc
 - Héttorony Festival
 - New Year's Concert at the Presidential Palace
 - Ministry of Agriculture New Year's Concert
- In 2019, he performed at the MVM Zenergia Concert with Erika Miklósa, János Balázs, Ferenc Snétberger, and Andrea Vígh.
- He regularly performs with:
 - Danubia Orchestra,
 - Budafok Dohnányi Ernő Symphony Orchestra
 - Liszt Ferenc Chamber Orchestra.

With the latter, he gave a successful concert in Bad Kissingen, Germany (European Heart of Music series) and at the Grand Hall of the Liszt Academy, where he accompanied cellist István Várdai. In a special honor, the closing piece was a composition of his, performed by the chamber orchestra.

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Recordings

In 2013, he recorded two albums with world-famous conductor and composer **Jordi Savall** (Spain), titled '**Balkan Spirit**'. He continues to tour with Savall's early music ensemble 'Hespèrion XXI'. He seamlessly blends classical training with inherited Roma musical traditions, creating a unique playing technique.

Competitions

In 2019, he participated in the national classical music competition 'Virtuózok Kamara', led by violinist **Lajos Sárközy Jr.** (Prima, Cziffra Talent, and Liszt Prize). Their ensemble became national finalists.



Recent Concerts & International Performances

- 2022 – Performed at the Concertgebouw Hall in Amsterdam with Barnabás Kelemen and the Netherlands Chamber Orchestra.
- Later in the year, he toured Germany with the Kelemen Quartet.
- He continues to introduce classical music to audiences in Hungary and abroad through the uniquely Hungarian instrument – the cimbalom.
- 2023 – Awarded the Hungarian Silver Cross of Merit (Civil Division) by the Hungarian state on March 15.
- Recent international tours and venues:
 - - Israel: Operetta tour with Imre Kálmán's Countess Maritza
 - - Cremona, Italy: Teatro Ponchielli di Cremona
 - - Lyon & Paris: Church concerts
 - - Salzburg, Austria: Mozarteum / Salzburg Festival (shared program with Mischa Maisky and Martha Argerich)
 - - Barcelona: L'Auditori – Gladiator Live Soundtrack
 - - Tokyo, Japan: Suntory Hall concert tour
 - - Taranto, Italy: Orchestra ICO della Magna Graecia with conductor Luigi Piovano
 - - Amsterdam: Royal Concertgebouw with Netherlands Chamber Orchestra
 - - Kronberg Festival – Victoria Hall (Geneva) – with Liszt Ferenc Chamber Orchestra

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