

## ZSOLT HAMAR – BIOGRAPHY



Zsolt Hamar started to play the piano at the age of six and later studied composition at the Béla Bartók Conservatoire. He followed university studies at the Franz Liszt Academy of Music, Budapest, where he learned composition with Emil Petrovics and conducting with Ervin Lukács and Tamás Gál. He graduated in 1995. He won 2nd prize at the International Conducting Competition of Hungarian Television, 2nd prize of the Conductors' Competition in Cadaques, 1st prize at the International Conductors' Competition of the Portuguese Radio in 1997 and 1st prize at the International Antonio Pedrotti Conductors' Competition in Trento. Having conducted most of Hungary's symphonic orchestras, in 1997 he was invited by music director Zoltán Kocsis to become first permanent conductor of the Hungarian National Philharmonic. In 1998 Hamar assisted Lorin Maazel for Verdi's *Don Carlos* at Salzburger Festspiele. From 2000 until 2009 he was music director of the Pannon Philharmonic Orchestra at Pécs and permanent guest conductor of the Orchestra di Padova e del Veneto. Between 2005 and 2011 he worked in the Opera House of Zurich, leading more productions there than any other guest conductor. Between 2012 and 2016 Hamar was General Musical Director of the Hessisches Staatstheater in Wiesbaden, Germany. In March 2017, as successor of Zoltán Kocsis, he was appointed music director of the Hungarian National Philharmonic.

Zsolt Hamar is a regular guest at various distinguished concert halls in Europe, Japan and the USA. He works with important orchestras such as Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester, Philharmonisches Orchester Dortmund, Vlaams Radio Orkest, Lisboa Radio Orchestra, Slovenian Philharmonic, Warsaw Radio Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra del Teatro Lirico di Cagliari, Japan Philharmonic Orchestra, Wiener Kammerorchester, Wiener Akademie, Budapest Festival Orchestra, Russian National Orchestra, Orchestra del Maggio Musicale, Mozarteum Orchestra (Salzburg), Lucerne Symphony Orchestra, Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra, Bruckner Orchestra (Linz).

Since 2001 Zsolt Hamar has been appearing regularly in the Hungarian State Opera House and is a welcome guest in opera houses outside of his native Hungary. He conducted *Traviata* in Lisbon, *Don Giovanni* in Treviso, *D'Albert's Tiefland* and *Verdi's I Masnadieri* in Frankfurt. At Zubin Mehta's invitation he conducted in 2012 Bartók's stage works at Maggio Musicale in Florence. He has recorded works of Liszt with the Hungarian National Philharmonic Orchestra, Mahler's *Symphony No.1.* with the Pannon Philharmonic Orchestra. Zsolt Hamar was honoured with the Liszt Award of the Hungarian Republic in 2003 and with the Knight's Cross of the Order of the Hungarian Republic in 2006.