

ISTVÁN VÁRDAI – BIOGRAPHY

István Várdai, the 32 year old Hungarian cellist was honoured with several important international prizes: in 2008 he won the 63th Geneva International Music Competition. He took the third prize of the International Tchaikovsky Music Competition, Moscow, in 2007. In 2006 he was awarded with the special prize of the Emanuel Feuermann Cello Competition at the Kronberg Academy and received first prize at the 13th International Brahms Competition in Austria. He was winner of the David Popper International Music Competition three times (2000, 2003, 2004). In 2012 he received the Prix Montblanc awarded to the world's most promising young musician. In 2014 he won the prestigious ARD Cello Competition in Munich.

Since his debut concert in 1997 in The Hague, he has performed in New York, Washington, Vancouver, London, Paris, Prague, Vienna, Frankfurt, Munich, Geneva, Dublin, Moscow, St. Petersburg, Florence, Tokyo, Beijing with great success. In 2010 he made his debut, among others, in Carnegie Hall and the Wiener Konzerthaus. Along his starting career, he played with world-famous musicians and orchestras: András Schiff, Yuri Bashmet, Zoltán Kocsis, Gidon Kremer, Tabea Zimmermann, Jean-Efflam Bavouzet, Till Fellner, Shai Wosner, St. Petersburg Symphony Orchestra, Mariinsky Theatre Orchestra, Suisse Romande Orchestra, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Geneva Chamber Orchestra, American Symphony Orchestra. He has been invited to Santander Festival, the Gergiev Festival in St. Petersburg, the Casals Festival (Spain), Festival of Radio France (Montpellier), Bellerive Festival (Switzerland), Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival, Verbier Festival, Flanders Festival, Jerusalem Chamber Music Festival, West Cork Chamber Music Festival, Schwetzingen Festival and the Budapest Spring Festival.

From 2004 István studied in the Class of Special Talents at the Liszt Academy in Budapest, from 2005 at the Music Academy of Vienna. Between 2010 and 2013 he continued his studies at Kronberg Academy in Germany. From 2013 he is on the staff of the famous Academy, from 2017 he is also Professor at the Music Academy in Mannheim.

His first CD containing pieces of Janáček, Prokofiev and the Elgar cello concerto was released in 2009 by Ysaye Records. In 2010 he recorded the cello concerto of Johann Baptist Vanhal. On his CD released by the Hänssler label in 2013 he plays works by Mendelssohn, Martinu, Paganini, Beethoven and Popper. His CD with both versions of Tchaikovsky's Rococo Variations was released in 2014, followed by a CD with famous encores (Singing Cello – Hungaroton). His recent CDs for the Brilliant Classics label feature Bach's solo suites and Kodály's complete music for cello.

Mr. Várdai is, together with violinist Kristóf Baráti, artistic director of the Kaposfest International Chamber Music Festival in Hungary. He plays a Montagnana cello from 1720 and the legendary „Ex Du Pre-Harrell” Stradivarius from 1673.