



IVÁN FISCHER

Conductor, composer, opera director, thinker and educator, anchored in the tradition of the great musical polymaths, Iván Fischer is considered one of the most visionary musicians of our time.

His focus is always the music, and to this end he has developed several new concert formats and reformed the structure and working method of the symphony orchestra. In the mid-1980s he founded the Budapest Festival Orchestra, where he has since introduced and established numerous innovations. He envisions a pool of musicians serving the community in various combinations and musical styles.

His work as Music Director of the Budapest Festival Orchestra has developed into one of the greatest musical success stories of the last 30 years. With international tours and a series of recordings for Philips Classics and Channel Classics, he has earned a reputation as one of the world's most celebrated orchestral conductors, for whom tradition and innovation go hand in hand.

He has founded a number of festivals, including the Budapest Mahlerfest, the Bridging Europe festival and the Vicenza Opera Festival. The World Economic Forum presented him with the Crystal Award for his achievements in fostering international cultural relations.

He was principal conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra in Washington, the Opéra National de Lyon and the Konzerthausorchester Berlin, the latter appointing him Conductor Laureate. The Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra named him Honorary Guest Conductor following many decades of working together. He is a frequent guest conductor of the Berlin Philharmonic, the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra and New York Philharmonic Orchestra. In July 2024, Iván Fischer was named Music Director of the European Union Youth Orchestra.

Iván Fischer studied the piano, violin and cello in Budapest, before joining the legendary conducting class of Hans Swarowsky in Vienna. Having spent two years as assistant to Nikolaus Harnoncourt, he then launched his international career as winner of the Rupert Foundation conducting competition in London.

After various guest appearances at international opera houses, he founded the Ivan Fischer Opera Company. His staging always sets as its goal an organic unity between music and theatre. IFOC productions, which often spatially connect the instrumentalists and singers, have been received with great acclaim in recent years in Hamburg, New York, Edinburgh, Abu Dhabi, Berlin, Geneva and Budapest.

Iván Fischer has been active as a composer since 2004, writing mostly vocal music with instrumental ensembles. His opera *The Red Heifer* made headlines across the world; the children's opera *The Gruffalo* enjoyed numerous revivals in Berlin; his most frequently performed work, "Eine Deutsch-Jiddische Kantate" has been performed and recorded in several countries.

Iván Fischer is founder of the Hungarian Mahler Society and patron of the British Kodály Academy. The president of the Republic of Hungary awarded him the Gold Medal, and the French government honoured him as Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres. In 2006 he was decorated with the Hungarian Kossuth Prize, in 2011 with the Royal Philharmonic Society Music Award and the Dutch Ovatie Prize, and in 2013 he was named an honorary member of the Royal Academy of Music in London.

Iván Fischer is honorary citizen of Budapest and Vicenza.