



**Press release—for immediate release
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More than 300 conductors entered the second Zoltán Kodály International Music Competition in Debrecen

The call for applications was met with a huge international response: 308 young musicians from 56 countries on five continents applied for the competition. The competition will take place in Debrecen between 20–28 August, with 38 conductors selected at the preselection stage, and the jury will be chaired by world-renowned Finnish conductor **Jorma Panula**.

Unusually, the competing young conductors will conduct not only orchestral pieces, but several oratorio pieces as well. Candidates, including conductors from Venezuela, Morocco, Estonia, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, and New Zealand, took part in a video preselection before the three-round competition to see who would be invited to the live competition between 20–28 August. The preselection board decided that 38 competitors may start the competition, including six Hungarians: Marcell Dénes-Worowski, Dániel Erdélyi, Johannes Marsovszky, Paul Marsovszky, Csaba Tóth Sámuel, and Levente Zsíros.

"The 100th anniversary of the Kodály Philharmonic Orchestra this year coincides with the centenary of Psalmus Hungaricus, so we can finally realise our long-standing dream of organising an oratorio-conducting competition in Debrecen, for which the Zoltán Kodály International Music Competition, launched last year with great success, provides a great framework", said **Dániel Somogyi-Tóth**, the General Music Director of the City of Debrecen. "We could hardly believe it when we saw the number of entries, which exceeded 300, something that any competition in Budapest or even Vienna would be proud of. We need no better proof that Debrecen can put on a musical event of international standing and visibility", added **Dávid Zsoldos**, the competition's director.

The seven-strong international jury is chaired by a true legend, 92-year-old Jorma Panula, who as a professor at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki has had students such as Esa-Pekka Salonen, Mikko Franck, Sakari Oramo, Jukka-Pekka Saraste, and Osmo Vänskä. The jury will be composed of **János Ács** (Italy/Hungary), **Peter Broadbent** (UK), **Remy Franck** (Luxembourg), **Zsolt Hamar** (Hungary), **Oksana Madarash** (Ukraine), and **Dániel Somogyi-Tóth** (Hungary).

In the competition organised by the Kodály Philharmonic Orchestra, which is also celebrating its centenary, Jeunesses Musicales, the world's largest youth music organisation, and Papageno, Zoltán Kodály's masterpiece *Psalmus Hungaricus*, composed 100 years ago this year, will occupy a central place. As last year, the University of Debrecen will be an important partner of the Kodály Competition, which will showcase young musicians from all corners of the world.

Following the video preselection, the contestants will compete in three rounds between 20–28 August 2023, in partnership with the Kodály Philharmonic Orchestra and Kodály Choir Debrecen. Conductors have 15 minutes in Round 1, and 30 minutes in Round 2 to perform the programme set by the jury. The jury will select a maximum of 12 competitors to go through to the 2nd round, and 6 to the 3rd round, where all finalists will conduct the hundred-year-old *Psalmus Hungaricus*. The detailed rules of the €40,000 competition can be found [on this link](#).

The Zoltán Kodály International Music Competition is held in variable categories, with the first time in 2022 that string (violin, viola, and cello) artists competed. Exactly 200 young musicians from 43 countries on five continents entered, with the jury deciding that the first prize should go to 18-year-old Spanish cellist [Carlos Vidal](#).