



**Press release – for immediate release  
14 July 2025**

## **Sandro Hirsch won the 3rd Kodály Zoltán International Music Competition**

**Seven young instrumentalists have reached the finals of the 3rd Kodály Zoltán International Music Competition, held in Debrecen from 5-13 July. The prestigious jury, chaired by horn player Marie-Luise Neunecker, awarded the first prize to Sandro Hirsch.**

The 3rd Zoltán Kodály International Music Competition continued with the final on 12 July. The seven finalists each performed a concerto as soloists of the Kodály Philharmonic Orchestra at the Kölcsey Centre in Debrecen.

**The international jury made the following decision after listening to the concertos:**

**1st - Sandro Hirsch**

**2nd - Vanyó Karsa**

**3rd - Brendan Connellan**

**4th - Tobias Krieger**

**5th (shared) - Mustafa Khalilov, Hayato Kodama, Oded Saig**

The Zoltán Kodály International Music Competition concluded on 13 July with a Gala concert and Awards Ceremony, during which the first four runners-up took to the stage at the Kölcsey Centre in Debrecen.

Special prizes for the competition have been offered by Editio Musica Budapest Zeneműkiadó Kft, Editions Bim, Festival Academy Budapest, Kodály Philharmonia Debrecen, Hungarian Academy of Arts, Miskolc Symphony Orchestra, Banatul Philharmonic Orchestra Timisoara and the Liszt Academy.

### **Special prizes**

#### **Tobias Krieger**

- Sheet music gift voucher offered by the Editio Musica Budapest Zeneműkiadó Kft.

#### **Brendan Connellan**

- Special prize of the Festival Academy Budapest – a concert invitation to next year’s festival
- Special prize of the Miskolc Symphony Orchestra – concert opportunity
- Special prize of the Kodály Philharmonia Debrecen – concert opportunity

### **Vanyó Karsa**

- Sheet music gift voucher offered by the Editio Musica Budapest Zeneműkiadó Kft.
- Special prize of the Festival Academy Budapest – invitation to the masterclass of Sergei Nakariakov
- Special prize of the Miskolc Symphony Orchestra – concert opportunity
- Special prize of Papageno
- Special prize of the Liszt Academy – concert opportunity in the Solti Hall
- Special Prize of the Hungarian Academy of Arts’ Section of Music for the best Hungarian competitor.

### **Sandro Hirsch**

- The Editions Bim Prize for the best interpretation of Roland Szentpáli’s Cover
- Special prize of the Festival Academy Budapest – a concert invitation to next year’s festival.
- Special prize of the Banatul Philharmonic of Timișoara, a concert opportunity with the orchestra.

In addition to **Marie-Luise Neunecker** (horn, Germany), the international jury of the competition – with prizes worth a total of €40,000 – consisted of teachers from the world’s most prestigious institutions: **Gábor Boldoczki** (trumpet, Hungary), **Abbie Conant** (trombone, USA), **Frits Damrow** (trumpet, Netherlands), **Gusztáv Hőna** (trombone, Hungary), **Wim Van Hasselt** (trumpet, Belgium) and **Szabolcs Zempléni** (horn, Hungary).

The Gala Concert with the Awards Ceremony—featuring the best contestants—will be held on 13 July at 7 pm at the Kölcsey Centre in Debrecen. The award ceremony can be followed live online on the competition’s website and on Papageno’s YouTube channel.

All rounds of the competition, as well as the final and the gala concert, can be watched on Papageno's YouTube channel.

*The competition is organised by Kodály Philharmonia Debrecen and Papageno, and its professional partner is Jeunesses Musicales Hungary, the Hungarian representative of the world's largest youth music organisation.*