

# BUDAPEST GYPSY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

**Conductors : Sandor Buffó RIGÓ & József Csócsi LENDVAI**

## HISTORY

The "Budapest Gypsy Symphony Orchestra", in Hungarian "Szaztagú Cinanyzenekar" (100 - head Gypsy Orchestra) is the World's largest gypsy symphony Orchestra. It has been founded in 1985, when Sandor Jaroka, at the time Hungary's most famous "primas" (gypsy soloist) died. All Hungarian gypsy musicians had come to his funeral. After the ceremony they begin to play. The orchestra had been born out of that improvised moment.

The Orchestra has already had enormous success over the last years in many world - famous concert halls and festivals, notably in Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italia, Japan, Latvia, Luxemburg, Monaco, Netherland, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovenia, Slovakia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey.

Until his tragic death in December 1997 Laszlo Berki, the conductor of the National Hungarian State Ensemble, was leader of the Orchestra. With is outstanding artistic personality he has left a remarkable stamp on the orchestra.

It is his merit that Hungary's best musicians are members of the orchestra.

Names like Lakatos, Lendvai Csocsi, Boross, Berki - all members of the orchestra - are the « crème » of the Hungarian gypsy musician dynasties. Sándor Buffó Rigó is now the President, the Artistic Director and the leader of the orchestra with Joszef Lendvai Csocsi, as first primas.

One of the most outstanding members of the orchestra is the cimbalom virtuoso Oszkar Ökrös. He is the best player of this instrument in the world.

The orchestra consists of 60 violins, 9 violas, 6 cellos, 10 double basses, 9 clarinets and 6 cimbaloms. The repertoire includes famous Hungarian and international Gypsy Music from Vittorio MONTI and Grigoras DINICU to classical pieces from Johannes BRAHMS, Georges BIZET, Aram KHATCHATOURIAN, Pablo de SARASATE, Johann STRAUSS.

Each appearance of the orchestra has an incomparable effect on the audiences: dressed in colourful, traditional dresses the orchestra is much larger than most classical orchestras! Their earthy, native energy thrills everybody. Notably also, that the entire orchestra plays by heart, without score.

Quick changes of rhythm, of colour, harmony and style are found in every piece they play, extraordinary variations, rich harmony and instinctive feelings for the unison of the ensemble, for seamless transitions are innate abilities of these musicians. All this shows from how deep inside their musicality comes -one has the impression to hear 100 Paganinis!

They transmit to the spectators the energy of a nation which has chosen music as universal language.

Instinctive as a gypsy gathering evening, rigorous as a Vienna concert, in black tuxedo or in national dress, the Budapest Gypsy Symphony Orchestra gives as much to look as to listen.

With no contest, it is the most exciting Symphony Orchestra of our time, the World's Largest Gypsy Symphony Orchestra.

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