

## AMADINDA

“They are among the most dazzling percussionists you might hear this side of Bali.”  
(The Guardian)

Formed in 1984, Amadinda will be celebrating their 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary next spring. The group’s members – Zoltán Rácz, Zoltán Váczi, Károly Bojtos and Holló Aurél – are all graduates of the Ferenc Liszt Academy of Music. At the time of its formation, the group set itself two core objectives. On one hand they desired to present a repertoire of classic percussion music hitherto unperformed in Hungary, while on the other they aimed to introduce the percussion pieces of Hungarian composers to audiences both at home and abroad. From the very beginning, Amadinda have endeavoured to inspire domestic and foreign composers alike to create new works. One of the first significant fruits of such labours was *Village Burial with Fire*. Composed by Englishman **James Wood** for Amadinda’s 1989 tour of the UK, the piece was premiered at the Queen Elizabeth Hall on London’s South Bank. In 1991, **John Cage**, the emblematic composer of the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, wrote the work entitled *Four*<sup>4</sup> for Amadinda and dedicated the composition to the group’s members. It was premiered in **Tokyo** in 1992.

In the second half of the 1990s, three new and distinctive goals appeared in Amadinda’s work – the research into traditional percussion cultures, the composition of new music by the members of the group, and the performance of pieces originating in earlier periods of musical history that had been adapted for percussion instruments. The result was the enrichment of Amadinda’s repertoire not only with traditional music from four continents, but also with Zoltán Váczi and Aurél Holló’s nine-piece cycle *beFORe JOHN*, and the adapted works of Ravel, Debussy, Mussorgsky, Bartók, Gershwin and other esteemed composers.

This unique repertoire has won Amadinda a rapturous reception for 30 years in 33 countries on 4 continents. The group has played the most prestigious concert halls of Europe, Asia, Australia, the USA and Mexico, including the Berliner Philharmonie, the Wiener Konzerthaus, the Stockholm Konserthuset, the Royal Albert Hall and the Queen Elizabeth Hall (London), the Arsenal (Metz), the National Concert Hall (Taipei), City Hall (Hong Kong), the Eugene Goossens Hall (Sydney), the Meyerson Symphony Center (Dallas) and Carnegie Hall (New York).

One of the highlights of the group’s career so far was the premiere in France of a work by **György Ligeti** that had been composed at the request of the Arsenal Concert Hall of Metz. An accompaniment to the poems of Sándor Weöres, *Síppal, dobbal, nádihegedűvel* was written especially for mezzo soprano Katalin Károlyi and Amadinda. A recording of the piece was released by Teldec in 2002.

The works of **Steve Reich**, one of the most renowned and influential composers of the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, have played a particularly important role in Amadinda’s repertoire. One of the fruits of the relationship between the composer and the group, which has spanned almost two decades, is *Mallet Quartet*, which was composed by Reich to celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Amadinda’s formation. The piece was premiered in December 2009 at the Palace of Arts in Budapest with the composer in attendance.

The music of Amadinda features on more than thirty albums. Perhaps their most prominent release to date is the nearly twenty-year labour of love which is the six-disc series of the complete works for percussion instruments of John Cage.

Over the years, Amadinda have been presented with many awards and accolades. In 1985 – their very first year – they won first prize at the International Gaudeamus Competition for Interpreters of Contemporary Music in Rotterdam. In the following years the group was awarded the Liszt Prize (1988),

the Officer's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Hungarian Republic (1997), the Kossuth Prize (2004), the City of Budapest Pro Urbe Award (2006), and the Bartók-Pásztory Prize (2008).

In the last thirty years Amadinda have worked with such well-known artists as Zoltán Kocsis, András Schiff, Éva Marton, György Kurtág, Péter Eötvös, Gábor Presser, András Keller, Paul Hillier, Rivka Golani and James Wood. Collaboration with such names has greatly contributed to the fact that informed international opinion holds Amadinda to be one of the most original and multifaceted percussion groups in the world.

[www.amadinda.com](http://www.amadinda.com)