

GIDON KREMER, biography

Of all the world's leading violinists, Gidon Kremer has perhaps had the most unconventional career. Born in Riga, Latvia, he began studying at the age of four with his father and grandfather, who were both distinguished string players. At the age of seven, he entered Riga Music school. At sixteen he was awarded the first Prize of the Latvian Republic and two years later he began his studies with David Oistrakh at the Moscow Conservatory. He went on to win prestigious awards including the 1967 Queen Elizabeth Competition and the first prize in both Paganini and Tchaikovsky International Competitions.

This success launched Gidon Kremer's distinguished career, in the course of which he has established a world-wide reputation as one of the most original and compelling artists of his generation. He has appeared on virtually every major concert stage with the most celebrated orchestras of Europe and America. Also he has collaborated with today's foremost conductors.

Gidon Kremer's repertoire is unusually extensive, encompassing all of the standard classical and romantic violin works, as well as music by twentieth- and twenty-first century masters such as Henze, Berg and Stockhausen. He also championed the works of living Russian and Eastern European composers and has performed many important new compositions; several of them dedicated to him. He has become associated with such diverse composers as Alfred Schnittke, Arvo Pärt, Giya Kancheli, Sofia Gubaidulina, Valentin Silvestrov, Luigi Nono, Aribert Reimann, Peteris Vasks, John Adams and Astor Piazzolla, bringing their music to audiences in a way that respects tradition yet remains contemporary. It would be fair to say that no other soloist of his international stature has done as much for contemporary composers in the past 30 years.

An exceptionally prolific recording artist, Gidon Kremer has made more than 100 albums, many of which brought him prestigious international awards and prizes in recognition of his exceptional interpretative powers. These include the „Grand prix du Disque“, „Deutscher Schallplattenpreis“, the „Ernst-von-Siemens Musikpreis“, the „Bundesverdienstkreuz“, the „Premio dell' Accademia Musicale Chigiana“, the „Triumph Prize 2000“ (Moscow), in 2001 the „Unesco Prize“, in 2007 the Saeculum-Glashütte Original-Musikfestspielpreis Dresden and in 2008 the Rolf-Schock Prize, Stockholm.

In February 2002 he and the Kremerata Baltica were awarded with the Grammy for the Nonesuch recording „After Mozart“ in the category „Best small Ensemble Performance“. The same recording received in the fall of 2002 an ECHO prize in Germany.

In 1981 Mr. Kremer founded Lockenhaus, an intimate chamber music festival that continues to take place every summer in Austria. In 1997, he founded the Kremerata Baltica chamber orchestra to foster outstanding young musicians from the three Baltic States. Since then, Mr. Kremer has been touring extensively with the orchestra appearing at world's most prestigious festivals and concert halls. He has also recorded a number of CDs with the orchestra for Teldec, Nonesuch and ECM. From 2002 - 2006 Gidon Kremer was the artistic leader of the new festival „les muséiques“ in Basel (Switzerland).

Gidon Kremer plays a Nicola Amati, dated from 1641. He is also the author of three books, published in German, which reflect his artistic pursuits.