

Violist **Gilad Karni** has been praised throughout the world for his tone and interpretation. His technique and musicality have earned him countless honors, from first prizes at international competitions to leadership roles in some of the world's finest orchestras. Equally at home in orchestral, solo, and chamber music settings, Karni performs on concert stages around the globe in a wide range of repertoire and recordings. He has appeared on some of the world's most prestigious stages, including Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, and the Berlin Philharmonie, both as a soloist and in distinguished chamber music collaborations.

He has participated in many of the world's leading festivals, including the Newport Music Festival (RI), the Rolandseck Chamber Music Festival with members of the Berlin Philharmonic, the Dubrovnik Festival, Båstad and Lapland Festivals (Sweden), Nordic Academy (Denmark), Festival PRO – Bahnhof Rolandseck and Neustadt Festival (Germany), Kfar Blum (Israel), Davos Music Festival (Switzerland), and Kuhmo (Finland), as well as the Aspen, Newport, Bellingham (WA), Santa Fe, and La Jolla Chamber Music Festivals in the United States. In 2010 he performed at the first Kaposvár International Music Festival in Hungary alongside Joshua Bell and Zoltán Kocsis. Karni can be heard on radio broadcasts in Israel, Germany, France, Switzerland, South Africa, and the United States.

Gilad Karni has distinguished himself at major international viola competitions, winning First Prize at the Lionel Tertis International Viola Competition (1994) and Third Prize at the ARD Munich International Music Competition (1993). His additional awards include Third Prize at the 1992 Bryan International String Competition (USA), First Prize at the Israeli Broadcasting Authority Competition (1991), the Peter Schidlof Prize for the Most Beautiful Tone at the 1991 Lionel Tertis Competition (England), and the Best Interpretation Prize at the 1989 Maurice Vieux International Viola Competition in France.

Among Karni's career highlights were performances with the late Isaac Stern at his 70th birthday celebration in Tel Aviv, and with the Guarneri String Quartet in Carnegie Hall. In 2009 he performed the world premiere of Prokofiev's *Romeo & Juliet* arranged for viola and orchestra with the Berlin Symphony at the Berlin Philharmonie, later repeating the premiere in North and South America with the Bogotá Philharmonic and the Hartford Symphony. He has performed Bartók's *Viola Concerto* in Germany, Switzerland, Romania, and Poland; Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante* with the Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich, Biel Symphony, Israel Sinfonietta under Maxim Vengerov, Symphony Rishon LeZion, Wuppertal Symphony, and the Berlin Symphony; and Strauss' *Don Quixote* alongside Yo-Yo Ma and Heinrich Schiff.

Karni has premiered Gideon Lewensohn's *ViolAlive* with the Israel Sinfonietta and gave the Hungarian premiere of Miklós Rózsa's *Viola Concerto* at the Budapest Spring Festival. These performances led to recordings on the Naxos label (released in 2008 and Grammy-nominated), as well as a Sony recording of Lewensohn's *ViolAlive* and the Shostakovich *Viola Sonata* arranged for solo viola, strings, and celesta with the Zurich Chamber Orchestra conducted by Ariel Zukerman. His recording of Bruch's *Romance* with the Biel Symphony appears on the Guild label.

His solo engagements include appearances with the Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich under David Zinman, Malaysian Philharmonic, Belgrade Philharmonic, NDR Radiophilharmonie Hannover, Hartford Symphony, Orquestra Metropolitana de Lisboa, Zurich Chamber Orchestra, Bamberg Symphony, Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra, Orchestra Sinfonica di Roma, Santa Barbara Symphony, and many others. He has served on the faculties of the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity, Aspen Music Festival, Lindemann and CISMMA festivals in Seoul and Chin. From 2008-2016 he was Professor of Viola at the Lausanne Conservatory, and until 2024 Professor of Viola and Chamber Music at Kalaidos University of Applied Sciences. He regularly gives worldwide masterclasses at institutions such as the New World Symphony, Curtis Institute, Boston University, and others.

Karni performs in Trio Karni with his wife, violinist Eugenia Karni, and pianist Nina Ardashir. He was a founding member of the Huberman Quartet and has toured as guest violist with the Jerusalem Quartet on a European tour including performing with clarinetist Paul Meyer and pianist Menahem Pressler.

Since 2004, Gilad Karni serves as Principal Violist of the Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich,. Previously, he held the position of Principal Viola at the Deutsche Oper Berlin and the Bamberg Symphony, and was the youngest member of the New York Philharmonic which he joined in 1992. He has also appeared as guest principal with the Staatskapelle Berlin under Daniel Barenboim, Bavarian Radio Symphony, Berlin Symphony Orchestra, and at the invitation of Claudio Abbado with the Orchestra of a United Europe among others. He is the artistic director of the Karni Classics label which he founded in 2025.

His most influential teachers were Chaim Taub and Paul Neubauer. He is a scholarship recipient of the America-Israel Cultural Foundation and an alumnus of the Manhattan School of Music. After performing for 25 years on the ex-Emmanuel Vardi viola by Hiroshi Iizuka, Karni now plays a 2025 viola made especially for him by Gianmaria Stelzer.