

47 FESTIVAL DAYS AWAIT

The 73rd Dubrovnik Summer Festival Opens on Sunday

Dubrovnik, 7 July 2022 – The **73rd Dubrovnik Summer Festival** will open on **Sunday, 10 July at 9 p.m. in front of St. Blaise's Church**, with the traditional raising of the *Libertas* flag to the verses of Ivan Gundulić's *Hymn to Liberty*. The rich and diverse programme, in which both local and foreign audiences of all ages will enjoy in the coming 47 festival days, was presented at the press conference held on **Wednesday, 6 July in the Sponza Palace** by the Festival's POA **Paulina Njirić** and Artistic Director **Dora Ruždjak Podolski**, where the City of Dubrovnik Mayor **Mato Franković** and Head of the Administrative Department for County Affairs and the Dubrovnik-neretva County Assembly Leader **Žaklina Marević** showed their support for the Festival as well.

– It is especially important to say that this 73rd edition of the Festival is actually a return to how things were before, for the first time after two years. I have to emphasise also the importance of the support we received in 2020 and in 2021, from the Ministry [of Culture and Media of the Republic of Croatia] as well as the City and the County. If the Festival hadn't been held then in its full format, I not sure that we would have been able to have such a rich programme now or be able to strategically look at the future that is certainly ahead of us – pointed out Artistic Director **Dora Ruždjak Podolski**.

The direction of the opening ceremony was entrusted to **Aida Bukvić** who co-wrote the script with dramaturge **Marijana Fumić**. Accompanied by the **Dubrovnik Symphony Orchestra** under the baton of maestro **Ivan Hut**, soprano **Kristina Kolar** will be joined by the **Pro musica Mostar Academic Choir**, **Libertas Mixed Choir**, **Dubrovnik Chamber Choir** and **Blasius Choir**, with the **Festival Drama Ensemble** and the **Acting students of the Zagreb Academy of Dramatic Arts** and **Lindo Folklore Ensemble** also performing. Alongside the large audience and important dignitaries gathered in front of St. Blaise's Church, the opening ceremony will be followed by viewers and listeners of the Croatian Radio and Television who will be broadcasting it live.

The drama programme includes two premiere titles and three hit reprise productions, performed by the Festival Drama Ensemble. One of the most famous 17th century Dubrovnik prose comedies (the so-called *smješnice*), the juicy play **Lovers** with a plot that does not lose any of its relevance even three hundred years after publication, directed by **Aleksandar Švabić** and sponsored by OTP Bank, will be staged on **19 July** at a new festival location – **in front of St. Jacob's Church**. The relationship between masters and servants, the ridiculing of covetousness, miserliness, artifice and superstition, all revolving around the theme of courtship, will be presented by the best actors of the younger generation **Marin Klišmanić**, **Andrej Kopčok**, **Boris Barukčić**, **Kristijan Petelin**, **Josipa Bilić** and **Veronika Mach**, led by **Nataša Kopeč** and **Dražen Šivak**. Set design and costume design are done by **David Morhan** and **Mia Popovska**, stage movement by **Damir Klemenčić**. **Maro Market** is the composer of the music, the lighting designer is **Martin Šatović**, and the advisor for Dubrovnik speech is **Maro Martinović**.

August brings the culmination of the drama programme in the premiere staging of the cult Federico García Lorca tragedy **Blood Wedding** directed by the award-winning **Franka Perković Gamulin**. Despite being tied to the rural environment in the first half of the 20th century, the play bears universal values, considering the story it tells. **Goran Ferčec** did the dramaturgy, **Igor Vasiljev** set design, **Doris Kristić** costume design, **Elvis Butković** lighting design. **Matija Ferlin** is in charge of stage movement and **Toma Serdarević** is the director's assistant. With an impressive creative team, the doubly-cursed dramatic characters confined within their own limits and enslaved by their own passions will be embodied on stage by an impressive festival ensemble led by **Ksenija Marinković**, **Jadranka Đokić** and **Nikša Butijer** together with **Lana Meniga**, **Luka Knez**, **Nikola Baće**, **Iva Kraljević**, **Tanja Smoje** and **Mojmir Novaković**, who also composed the music. On **17 August** the play

will premiere at two locations on the **island of Lokrum**, sponsored by Hrvatska elektroprivreda (Croatian Electric Company).

To the delight of the audience, reprises of Festival hits are on the programme. Starting on **13 July**, the drama programme will open with the award-winning staging of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* directed by **Paolo Magelli** which premiered at the anniversary 70th Festival with Dubrovnik's own **Frano Mašković** playing the title role. Last year's success *Lion House* will follow, based on the eponymous debut novel by Ivan Salečić and directed by **Aida Bukvić**, it's strong cast narrates the story of Dubrovnik, portraying it as a place where burdened history and burlesque transition clash. By now the audience favourite *Mara and Kata*, an original project by director **Saša Božić** done in collaboration with actresses **Nataša Dangubić** and **Doris Šarić Kukuljica** as the titular gossipmongers, is an indispensable part of the summer. The Festival will also host the Croatian National Theatre Zagreb and their stage adaptation of the world-renowned novel *My Brilliant Friend* by the mysterious writer Elena Ferrante, directed by the young **Marina Pejnović** already known well by the festival audiences. On the programme as well is the traditional performance by the **Lero Student Theatre** who will present a select *scrapbook of faded pages of lost and lonely owners, their sadness, foreboding, suffering and silence* in the play *Ladies' Park* directed by **Davor Mojaš**.

The festival audience will enjoy listening to the great names on the Croatian and world music scenes as part of the music programme, which will be opened by one of the most respected voices in the baroque and classical milieu, the acclaimed soprano **Nuria Rial**, who will perform together with the distinguished **Fahmi Alghai** and his **Accademia del Piacere** ensemble in the Rector's Palace and bring an inspiringly fresh early music oeuvre. The same stage will see a concert dedicated to Croatian music by the **Dubrovnik Symphony Orchestra Chamber Ensemble** under the baton of maestro **Ivan Hut**, joined by soloists **Franjo Bilić** on the harpsichord and **Lovro Merčep** on the saxophone, after which the music programme continues with an integral performance of Liszt's *Transcendental etudes* by a musician of *tremendous focus and energy* **Lovro Pogorelić**. The **Zagreb Quartet** with bassoonist **Žarko Perišić** and clarinetist **Milan Milošević** will perform at the Rector's Palace too, where the pianist **Fazıl Say** will play a Bach piece consisting of an aria and 30 variations, as well as his own original recital in the same week. After many years **Roman Simović**, *violinist of brilliant virtuosity and limitless imagination*, will return to the Festival. **Vadym Kholodenko**, *one of most musically dynamic and technically gifted young pianists to recently emerge on stage*, will first have a solo recital in the Rector's Palace atrium where he will then perform with the violinist **Alena Baeva** two days later. Magnificent baroque compositions performed by the **Antiphonus Vocal Ensemble** will also echo through the Rector's Palace, as well as the melodies played by the world's most respected classical guitarists **Miloš Karadaglić** who will also be performing there. Furthermore, the **Dubrovnik Symphony Orchestra** with the young and promising soloists **Lucija Stilinović** on the flute and **Veronika Ćiković** on the harp under the baton of one of the most charismatic conductors of the new generation **Dawid Runtz** will hold a concert there. The unique project *Dubrovnik on a Rock of Music* will once again gather brilliant Dubrovnik musicians in an exciting ensemble accomplished soloists under the direction of **Tomislav Fačini**, in this year's edition featuring two soloists – flautist **Dive Franetović Kušelj** and mezzo-soprano **Dubravka Šeparović Mušović**.

A big jazz concert in the Gradac Park sponsored by Mastercard® will be held by keyboard and organ virtuoso, producer, multi-instrumentalist and Grammy award winner, **Cory Henry**, who will, accompanied by talented musicians, reveal to the festival audience an unusual combination of jazz, funk, gospel and soul. Fans of world music will enjoy the performance of Indian musician **Arnab Bhattacharya**, who will present the deep and introspective sound of the sarod in the Sponza Palace atrium, on the occasion of *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav*, the celebration of 75 years of Indian independence, which is joined by the Dubrovnik Summer Festival, under the auspices of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations and the Embassy of India in Zagreb. The opera gala, the magnificent finale of the Festival on 25 August in front of the Cathedral, will bring one of the most interesting young soloists, the American soprano who has already had numerous performances on the world's most prestigious stages **Nadine Sierra**, and this year's *Boris Papandopulo* National Competition for Young Musicians winner Croatian tenor **Filip Filipović** accompanied by the indispensable hosts of the final concert, **Croatian Radio and Television Symphony Orchestra**, this time conducted by maestro **Ivan Repušić**.

Ballet and dance lovers will relish the acclaimed neo-romantic staging of Jane Austen's novel **Pride and Prejudice** in Gradac Park, choreographed and directed by **Leo Mujić** and performed by the Croatian National Theatre Zagreb Ballet, as well as the performance of frequent festival guests, the **Zagreb Dance Ensemble**, with a contemporary dance show **Revel Revel** by the Spanish choreographer **Roser López Espinosa**, in which five women question the limits of their own freedom. A key part of the festival programme is the **Lindo Folklore Ensemble**, whose performances at the Festival celebrate the rich Croatian folklore, dance and music heritage.

The rich accompanying programme includes **Response**, an exhibition by the exceptional Dubrovnik artist **Izvor Pende**, who will put up his large format abstract oil paintings of strong colouristic expression on two locations, in the atrium of the Sponza Palace and in the Lazareti, and **Livio Badurina's Diary of an Actor – Rehearsal Room/Space of Appearance and Disappearance** which will open at the Public Library Grad on the first day of August. The film programme brings the premiere of the Croatian Radiotelevision documentary **Time of Aretej** at the Jadran Open-air Cinema on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the premiere of the legendary play *Aretej* at the Dubrovnik Summer Festival, and the screening of the recently premiered documentary film **80 Years of Radio Dubrovnik** directed by Vedran Benić at the Slavica Open-air Cinema. On the same big screen, the festival audience can catch the winning domestic film from the Pula Film Festival, brought in cooperation with Dubrovnik Cinemas.

With the **Behind the Stage** programme in the Sponza Palace atrium, composers **Ardian Halimi** and **Nina Perović** will present themselves and their work as part of a two-week residency on the project *#synergy: Sharpening the capacities of the classical music industry in the Western Balkans*. The project is co-funded by the EU Creative Europe programme, with the aim of strengthening cultural cooperation and the competitiveness of cultural and creative industries in the Western Balkans. The main partner of the project is the KotorArt Don Branko's Music Days from Montenegro, and alongside the Dubrovnik Summer Festival, the project partners are: the Belgrade Festivals Centre (CEBEF) from Serbia, the Festival Ljubljana from Slovenia, the Kosovo Chopin Association from Kosovo and the Vox Baroque International Festival from Albania.

Always an important part of the Festival is the programme intended for the youngest audience, and this summer's the Festival are happy to announce real treats: one of the few plays in Croatia for children under two years of age – **The Story of the Wheel**, and for the slightly older kids the playful and interactive **The Princess and the Pea**, both of which will be staged by the Mala scena Theatre at the Bunić-Kaboga Summer Villa. The highlight of the children's program however will be put up at the Lovrjenac Fort, where the musical-stage work **The Enchanted Forest** will be premiered, with the support of the Caboga Stiftung foundation. The adaptation of the novel of the same name by the writer Sunčana Škrinjarčić is directed by **Lea Anastazija Fleger**, the dramaturge is **Nikolina Rafaj**, the music composer **Frano Đurović**, and the conductor is **Mateo Narančić**.

– I would like to thank all the sponsors and donors who have been with us for years, and none of whom have given up on us in the last two years of the coronavirus pandemic. Of course, besides the financing which is always very important, I can't help but thank all the people and all departments of the City who have, I would rather say fulfilled our wishes, than just worked with us – concluded the POA **Paulina Njirić**, extending special thanks to the citizens who have been *suffering* and loving the Festival for all these years.

The full programme of this year's Festival and as well as tickets to all performances are available online at the official website <https://www.dubrovnik-festival.hr/en/agenda> and through the service www.ulaznice.hr, with the latter also available Festival Palace Box Office (Od Sigurate 1), which is open every day from 9 a.m. to 9.30 p.m. Purchases made with Mastercard® and Maestro® cards provide a 10% discount, while purchases over HRK 500 receive a 30% discount voucher on festival souvenirs.

The Dubrovnik Summer Festival – the centre of Croatian and global spirit and culture, a place of creation and not just a place of visit, a place of community, ideas and new artistic expressions, is traditionally supported this year by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Croatia, the City of Dubrovnik, the Dubrovnik-neretva county, Dubrovnik Tourist Board and numerous sponsors Euroherc, Mastercard, HEP, ACI club, ALH, Kraš, Coca-Cola, Croatia Airlines and TuttoBene and donors Caboga Stiftung foundation, OTP bank, and other benefactors who helped bring this most prestigious cultural event in Croatia to fruition.

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