
IN SPITE OF THE RAIN

An amazing festival performance by excellent Croatian musicians

Dubrovnik, 8 August 2023 – The leading Croatian musicians of the younger generation, cellist **Latica Anić**, pianist **Krešimir Starčević** and violinist **Marco Graziani**, held an excellent concert **last night, 7 August in the Rector's Palace atrium**, with a specially selected repertoire to mark the big 150th anniversary of the birth of composers Sergei Rachmaninoff and Blagoje Bersa.

The select repertoire included demanding and rarely performed piano trios by composers Sergei Rachmaninoff and Blagoje Bersa, presenting an interpretative challenge to cellist Latica Anić, pianist Krešimir Starčević and violinist Marc Graziani, respectively laureates of numerous competitions. With an excellent performance that even the summer rain did not manage to interrupt for long, the three virtuosos showed that they were more than up to that challenge, displaying a high level of musicianship, exactness of phrasing and an expressive poetic approach to each section, no matter how demanding its passages were. The beauty of the tones of all three instruments was first demonstrated by the extraordinary *Piano Trio in the Classical style, Op. 7* written by Blagoje Bersa, a Croatian composer and music pedagogue who marked the first half of the twentieth century with his work, but whose chamber oeuvre includes only four compositions, mostly written during his studies. Some of the reasons for the rare performance of this piece are misunderstandings and doubts about the origin and fate of the *Trio* itself, as well as the lack of published contemporary sheet music until recently. Judging by the satisfied applause of the Festival audience, this composition truly deserves more attention. The second half of the evening was dedicated to Rachmaninov, first with a performance of the *Trio élégiaque No. 1 in G minor*, a one-movement piano trio composed under the great influence of Tchaikovsky, with which the then eighteen-year-old Rachmaninoff made his debut in Moscow in 1892, and the sound colours of which were subtly and enchantingly nuanced last night. After Tchaikovsky's death, Rachmaninoff composed the monumental *Trio élégiaque No. 2 in D minor, Op. 9*, in memory of his mentor. The last time the Rector's Palace was filled with the deep emotions of this work was in 2008, which testifies to the difficulty of performing this forty-five-minute trio, and the audience's ovation deservedly rewarded last night's performance. Anić, Starčević and Graziani treated the crowd to a cheerful encore, Sergei Prokofiev's *March* from his satirical opera *The Love for Three Oranges*.

The 74th Dubrovnik Summer Festival will also be hosting the top notch Hungarian musicians, renowned violinist Kristóf Baráti and award-winning Mendelssohn Chamber Orchestra, in the Rector's Palace on 10 August at 9.30 p.m. Tickets for the concert are available via the festival website www.dubrovnik-festival.hr or the service www.ulaznice.hr, at the box office in the Festival Palace (Od Sigurate 1) every day from 9:00 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. and in front of the DTS building (Vukovarska St) from Monday to Friday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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 once again 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 Mastercard, Dubrovnik Airport, ACI club, ALH, Euroherc, Studenac, HEP, Croatian Lottery, Coca-Cola, MG Motors, Kraš, Croatia Airlines, and donors OTP bank, Atlantska Plovidba alongside other benefactors who helped bring this most prestigious cultural event in Croatia to fruition.

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Media contact:

Katija Krečak Jarović

PR and Marketing Department

M. 095 323 20 52 / T. 020 326 111

E. katija.krecak.jarovic@dubrovnik-festival.hr

www.dubrovnik-festival.hr