



DUBROVAČKE LJETNE IGRE DUBROVNIK SUMMER FESTIVAL

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AGAINST THE WIND

Ovations for the Dubrovnik Symphony Orchestra, Josipa Bilić and maestro Valentin Egel

Dubrovnik, 22 August 2023 – A big concert was held **last night, 21 August** by the **Dubrovnik Symphony Orchestra** with soprano **Josipa Bilić**, under the baton of maestro **Valentin Egel, in front of the Cathedral**, and the brilliant musicians earned the applause of the audience for their musical performance that defied the strong wind.

The carefully thought-out repertoire of the concert held in front of the Cathedral, one of the most beautiful but also the most challenging Festival stages, was framed by the compositions of the Czech composer Antonín Dvořák. First, the mystical world of water fairies, monsters and tragic love came to life through the instruments of the Dubrovnik Symphony Orchestra, who beautifully coloured the rich and fairy-tale world of the symphonic poem, *The Water Goblin*, inspired by Erben's ballads of monsters, while the picturesque *Symphony no. 8, in G major*, which is said to exude one of the most cheerful atmospheres among the romantic symphonies. Resisting the wind, the ever-steady Dubrovnik Symphony Orchestra demonstrated uniform sound quality and skilful coordination of its members at its second concert held as part of the music program of the 74th Dubrovnik Summer Festival. Mozart's motet *Rejoice, be glad*, a sumptuous concert composition in the characteristically playful, yet elegant style of "musical Christ" as Tchaikovsky calls him, was performed by soprano Josipa Bilić. The youthful ardour and powerful voice of an enchanting bright colour delighted the audience, while the technically demanding vocal parts were delivered precisely and with a dash of coloratura by this young artist with indescribable naturalness and ease. The concert was made special by the premiere performance of the piece *Hommage* by the Dubrovnik composer Ivan Violić. The symphony responded perfectly to the demands of the maestro's meticulous score, while Valentin Egel's energetic conducting during the two-hour concert infected the audience with enthusiasm, making it clear why, after only four months of collaboration, the Rijeka Symphony Orchestra named him chief conductor even though he was only 26 years old at the time. The pure musical joy that the musicians brought to the crowd last night deserved the long applause and ovations that echoed in front of the Cathedral.

Tickets for the final concert at the Rector's Palace this season, which will be held on 23 August by established Croatian cellist Kajana Pačko and pianist Danijel Detoni, 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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