

THE 68TH DUBROVNIK SUMMER FESTIVAL IS ABOUT TO CLOSE

72 programmes have been successfully performed in 16 site-specific venues

Dubrovnik, 25 August 2017 – This year too, the Dubrovnik Summer Festival has gathered together about 2.000 artists from all over the world, who have performed 72 theatrical, concert, opera, dance, folklore, film and exhibition programmes within 47 days, from 10 July to 25 August, in 16 site-specific venues in Dubrovnik and its surroundings. On that occasion, on the Festival's last day, a press conference was held at the Sponza Palace Atrium. **Iva Hraste Sočo**, Deputy Minister of Culture of the Republic of Croatia, **Mato Franković**, Mayor of Dubrovnik, and **Žaklina Marević**, Deputy Prefect of the Dubrovnik-Neretva County, commented favourably on the 68th Dubrovnik Summer Festival programme. **Kazimir Bačić**, General Manager of the Croatian Radio and Television, talked about the collaboration between the two institutions, while the Festival executives, **Mladen Tarbuk**, Acting Artistic Director, and **Ivana Medo Bogdanović**, Executive Director, elaborated on this year's Festival programme and its financial results. Mladen Tarbuk used the opportunity to thank his associates and bid them farewell at the end of his mandate.

The 68th Dubrovnik Summer Festival's premiere theatrical programme was warmly received by the critics and audiences alike. Miroslav Krleža's *The Glembays*, directed by **Zlatko Sviben**, was performed by the Festival Drama Ensemble on the terrace of the Dubrovnik Museum of Modern Art. This classical play was performed at the Festival for the first time, so the huge interest of the media and audiences from the entire region was not surprising. Although critical opinions about the play were divided, they all agreed that the actors' creations were outstanding, highlighting Predrag Ejđus in the role of Ignjat Glembay, and Mijo Jurišić in the role of Leone. Everybody agreed that the Museum of Modern Art venue was an excellent choice by the play's director, and that this was a true site-specific play created in accordance with the Festival's programme policy. Staged to mark the 450th anniversary of the death of Dubrovnik's great playwright Marin Držić, the second theatrical premiere, *Marin Držić – Victory Over the Enemies* - based on dramaturgical concept of **Hrvoje Ivanković**, directed by **Ivica Boban** and performed by the Festival Drama Ensemble at the Art School Park - received enthusiastic response from both audiences and critics alike. The media portrayed it as a Festival's theatrical victory, hailing the outstanding acting of Ozren Grabarić in the role of Marin Držić, and of his main characters. *Večernji List* characterised Grabarić's acting as true art which deserves an essay on the art of acting and not merely a casual one-sentence mention in the review.

Last year's premiere plays also attracted numerous audiences, thus confirming their hit play status. The sold-out Carlo Goldoni's *La bottega del caffè* was directed by **Vinko Brešan** and performed by the Festival Drama Ensemble in front of Sponza Palace, while

Shakespeare's **Othello** directed by **Ivica Boban** was performed by the Festival Drama Ensemble at Fort Lovrjenac. The Festival's guest plays included some of the finest plays performed during recent theatrical seasons. The **Zagreb Youth Theatre** performed its award-winning **Hinkemann**, directed by **Igor Vuk Torbica**, on the Revelin Fort Terrace. The **Croatian National Theatre of Zagreb** appeared with its hit play **Three Winters** by Tena Štivičić, directed by **Ivica Buljan** at the Gradac Park, attracting numerous visitors of both shows. Foreign Festival visitors had the opportunity to enjoy all four aforementioned plays subtitled in English on their smart phones and tablets via *Vip script* real time application. Fort Lovrjenac also played host to Marin Držić's play **The Miser**, directed by **Ivica Kunčević** and produced by the **Marin Držić Theatre**, while the **Lero Students Theatre** featured its most recent production of the **City of Shadows**, directed by **Davor Mojaš** at the Lazaretto.

This year's programme was enhanced by the operatic premiere of **Georg F. Handel's Orlando**, directed by János Szikora in the amazing ambience of the Benedictine Monastery on the Island of Lokrum. Under artistic directorship of **David Bates**, the ensemble included an excellent group of soloists: the British countertenor **Owen Willetts** in the title role, alongside **Ivana Lazar**, **Renata Pokupić**, **Marija Kuhar Šoša** and **David Oštrek**, as well as the Orlando Award winning **Croatian Baroque Ensemble Ansambl** headed by its concertmaster **Laura Vadjon**. Ballet lovers had the opportunity to enjoy Tchaikovsky's **Swan Lake**, choreographed and directed by **Vladimir Malakhov** and produced by the **Ballet of the Croatian National Theatre of Zagreb** in the Gradac Park, as well as the ballet **The Birds**, conceptualised and choreographed by Edward Clug, produced by the Bitef Theatre and the Novi Tvrđava Teatar, and performed by the Bitef Dance Company.

The fifth season of the **Festival Features Writers and Poets** programme, conceptualised by Mani Gotovac, consisted of three projects under the motto "Love is the most endangered phenomenon in the modern world": **Old Loves - Tereza Kesovija Interprets Croatian Poets** at the Rector's Palace Atrium, and **Everest** by the poet **Drago Glamuzina** and **Elena Ferrante's My Brilliant Friend** at Sponza Pallace.

This season's music programme included 19 concerts. It opened with the magnificent Carl Orff's **Carmina Burana** in front of St Blaise's Church, performed by the **Dubrovnik Symphony Orchestra**, the **Zagreb Philharmonic**, and the **Ivan Goran Kovačić Academic Choir** conducted by **Ivan Josip Skender**, featuring the soloists **Nicola Proksch**, **Owen Willets** and **Nikola Mijailović**. The **Dubrovnik Symphony Orchestra** appeared in another two concerts alongside renowned soloists at the Rector's Palace Atrium. Other recitals featured such distinguished musicians as the cellist **Monika Leskovar** and the guitarist **Petrit Çeku**, the violist **Aleksandar Milošev** and the pianist **Lovro Pogorelić**, and the violinist **Stefan Milenković** and the pianist **Rohan de Silva**. Petrit Çeku also appeared in a concert with his guitar colleagues **Maroje Brčić**, **Zoran Dukić** and **Tvrtko Sarić** at the Rector's Palace. We also had the opportunity to listen to the remarkable chamber ensemble **Synergia 6** headed by the world renowned violinist **Nemanja Radulović**, as well as the young award-winning musicians **Filip Merčep** and

Nicolas Sinković in their authorial, percussionist, electronic and interactive project entitled *Dialogue*, performed at the Minčeta Foundry and Minčeta playground. The programme **Key to the Future** – young laureates of prestigious international competitions at the 68th Dubrovnik Summer Festival featured the young Russian pianist **Dmitry Shishkin** and the young Croatian guitarist **Srdan Bulat**. These young artists have already established themselves at an early age, and will definitely appear before the Dubrovnik Summer Festival audiences in the future. The piano recital of last year's winner of Queen Elisabeth Competition, Lukáš Vondráček, was unfortunately cancelled due to the artist's illness.

The 68th Dubrovnik Summer Festival will be closed tonight, in front of St Blaise's Church at 10.00 pm, with a concert of the **Croatian Radio and Television Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **Alberto Veronesi**, featuring last year's Orlando Award winner, the young Ukrainian violinist **Aleksey Semenenko**.

The Festival audiences had the opportunity to enjoy Croatia's rich dance and music heritage presented in four shows by the **Lindo Folklore Ensemble** on the Revelin Fort Terrace. The film programme realised in collaboration with the Dubrovnik Cinemas at the Jadran Open-air Cinema included seven screenings of nationally and internationally award-winning films shown at the Pula Film Festival, as well as two episodes of the HRT documentary series by Vedran Benić entitled *Stories About One-Offs – Dubrovnik's 'originals', bohemians, eccentrics and other one-of-a-kind people*. Sponza Palace Atrium and St Stephen's Church at Pustijerna were turned into galleries featuring exhibitions of **Nikolina Šimunović**, **Antun Masle** (marking the 50th anniversary of the artist's death), **Jagoda Buić** and **Aljoša Rebolj**. The book presentations included **Darko Lukić's Introduction to Applied Theatre: Who Owns the Theatre?** in collaboration with the Lazareti Art Workshop; **Father Stanko Lasić's Writings and Memories of a Parish Priest**; **Ivica Kunčević's Director's Notes** published by the Croatian ITI Centre; and the monograph **40 Years of Orlando Award** published by the Croatian Radio and Television.

The 68th Dubrovnik Summer Festival budget amounts to 12,734,000 kunas, 68% of which are public funds while 32% are the funds which the Festival obtained from ticket sales, sponsors and donors. The total budget is 7% higher than last year's budget primarily owing to the increase of the funds from new sponsors (Mastercard and Tele2) and from ticket sales. The income from ticket sales is 17% higher than last year's income, amounting to 1.950,000 kn total. This year saw an increase of funds from the City of Dubrovnik and the Croatian Tourist Board in comparison with last year. Huge interest of national and international media resulted in around 4000 media releases, including press, TV and online, while the Festival Press Office issued accreditations for ___ national and international media representatives. According to the *Google Analytics* method, the Festival website had around 50.000 individual visitors from 1 July to 24 August.

Ivana Medo Bogdanović, the Festival's Executive Director, expressed her gratitude to all those who support the Dubrovnik Summer Festival, without whose help the Festival's realisation would not be possible, including all Dubrovnik's public institutions and municipal services. This year's Dubrovnik Summer Festival would not have been so successful without

the support the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Croatia, the City of Dubrovnik, the Dubrovnik-Neretva County, the Croatian Tourist Board, the Dubrovnik Tourist Board, and numerous sponsors: Mastercard, Tele2, Croatia osiguranje, Hrvatska elektroprivreda, Croatia Airlines, Ford, hotels: ALH, Hilton, Valamar, Gulliver Travel, Clara Stones, Xenia Design, Viva voda, Lenovo, Kraš – Bajadera and Restaurant 360. This year too, the Festival donors included

OTP Bank, Dubrovnik Airport and Atlantska plovdba.

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