

STRONG START OF THE MUSIC PROGRAMME

Strong start of the 73rd Festival music programme with Nuria Rial & Accademia del Piacere

Dubrovnik, 12 July 2022 – The award-winning Spanish soprano **Nuria Rial** performed last night, 11 July in the **Rector's Palace atrium** alongside **Fahmi Alqhai** on the quinton and his **Accademia del Piacere** ensemble with an early music programme *Muera, Cupido, or Death to Cupid*, presenting to the festival audience 18th century Spanish theatre music.

The musical story told through the programme, which also brought artists the prestigious Opus Klassik in 2020, was opened by *Pavana* by the Spanish composer **Francisco Guerau**, which was followed by wholehearted applause and delighted shouts of "Bravo!" for **Barbara Strozzi's** *Che si può fare, Quantos teméis al rigor* from the zarzuela *Las nuevas armas de Amor* and *Sosieguen, descansen* from the zarzuela *Salir el Amor del Mundo* (the piece from which the name of the programme itself originates) by one of the most important Spanish composers of his time, **Sebastián Durón**, *Pastorella che tra le selve* by **Giovanni Bononcini**, madrigal *Si dolce il tormento* by the great **Claudio Monteverdi**, two compositions by **José de Nebra** *Adiós, prenda de mi amor* from the opera *Amor aumenta el valor* and *Tempestad Grande, amigo* from the zarzuela *Vendado es amor, no es ciego*, and for the artistic director, creator of not only the programme concept but of the **Accademia del Piacere** ensemble itself, **Fahmi Alqhai** who presented his improvisation *Xácaras & Folías* and arrangement of *Marionas & Canarios*. Alqhai, a Sevillian of Syrian-Palestinian roots, has established himself as one of the leading interpreters of early music by saving forgotten repertoires from the rot of time and updating the interpretation of historical music whose programming was mostly limited to German, English or Italian authors, as well as a virtuoso who brings freshness to early music through a truly unique genre mixing. The audience was especially delighted by the soprano **Nuria Rial**, one of the most prized voices on the baroque and classical scene today, with her natural but refined presence and the perfect combination of emotion, liveliness, vocal agility and refined phrasing, even more emphasized in the excellent acoustics of the Palace. The technical brilliance and expressiveness of **Leonardo Rossi** on the baroque violin, **Rami Alqhai** on the violone, **Johanna Rose** on the viola da gamba, **Miguel Rincón** on the baroque guitar, harpsichordist **Alejandro Casalo** and percussionist **Daniel Garay**, all members of the Accademia del Piacere ensemble, were peerless accompaniment to Rial, which convinced the festival audience that early music is very much alive and full of emotion. The evening ended on a high note of a musical addition, *La noche tenebrosa* by **Juan Hidalgo**, one of the central figures of the Spanish court of that time and, according to many, the father of Spanish opera and zarzuela.

The music programme of the 73rd Festival continues with a concert by the Dubrovnik Symphony Orchestra Chamber Ensemble conducted by maestro Ivan Hut, who will be joined by the young soloists **Franjo Bilić** on the harpsichord and **Lovro Merčep** on the saxophone in an evening dedicated to Croatian music at the Rector's Palace.

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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