



# DUBROVAČKE LJETNE IGRE DUBROVNIK SUMMER FESTIVAL

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AN EVENING OF CROATIAN COMPOSERS

## Franjo Bilić and Lovro Merčep with DSO's String Chamber Ensemble tomorrow at Rector's Palace

**Dubrovnik, 13 July 2022** – The **Dubrovnik Symphony Orchestra String Chamber Ensemble**, accompanied by young soloists **Franjo Bilić** on the harpsichord and **Lovro Merčep** on the saxophone, under the baton of maestro **Ivan Hut** will perform **tomorrow, 14 July at 9:30 p.m.** in the Rector's Palace atrium, performing works by Croatian composers Ruždjak, Bjelinski, Bersa and Papandopulo.

The **Dubrovnik Symphony Orchestra String Chamber Ensemble** and harpsichordist **Franjo Bilić** will open the concert programme with the composition *Andantino for strings and harpsichord* by the composer, professor and academic **Marko Ruždjak**, while saxophonist **Lovro Merčep** will present the piece *Sinfonietta for saxophone, strings and percussion* by the award-winning composer of a distinctive style, **Bruno Bjelinski**. After the break, founder of the Croatian Modern music **Blagoj Bersa's** *Idyll* will follow, arranged by Pavle Dešpalj and the *Sinfonietta for strings* by **Boris Papandopulo**, a composer known for his inventiveness and wit.

– It is a great honour for me to perform at the Dubrovnik Summer Festival this year, especially because I am doing so alongside my dear friend, colleague and co-member of a duo, saxophonist Lovro Merčep. I hope that together with Ivan Hut, we will give the festival audience an unforgettable evening, mainly because we perform works by Croatian authors, among which is the instrument that I love the most and play most often, the harpsichord, with the composition *Andantino* by Marko Ruždjak. I believe that we will be able to enchant the Dubrovnik audience who are already accustomed to a very high level of art which has historically surrounded them and still surrounds them with this slightly psychedelic composition – noted **Franjo Bilić**.

The **Dubrovnik Symphony Orchestra** is a traditional part of the Dubrovnik Summer Festival programme and an essential part of the rich and diverse cultural heritage of Dubrovnik and Croatia. They regularly interpret works by Baroque, Classical and Romantic music masters alongside well-known local and internationally renowned artists not only in the unique venues of their home city but on international tours as well. Conducting the concert at the Rector's Palace will be Ivan Hut, who is a skilled violist as well, discovered a love for conducting working with the great Pavle Dešpalj. Since December 2020, Hut is Resident Conductor at the Dubrovnik Symphony Orchestra and he had his conducting debut at the Dubrovnik Summer Festival last year, at the 72<sup>nd</sup> Dubrovnik Summer Festival.

The DSO's String Chamber Ensemble will be joined by **Franjo Bilić**, a magna cum laude graduate of harpsichord in the class of Pavao Mašić, and conducting in the class of Mladen Tarbuk at the Music Academy in Zagreb with a Dean's Award and the incredible six Rector's Awards. He has performed across Europe and even in Wisconsin, as well as successfully collaborated with almost all orchestra and most of ensembles in Croatia. Also performing will be young saxophonist **Lovro Merčep** who honed his craft at the Music Academy in Zagreb as well as Conservatories in Amsterdam, Lyon and Versailles. As a soloist and a chamber musician he has performed at festivals and concert cycles abroad and at home, collaborating with promising young Croatian musicians. Merčep pays special attention to the promotion of music by Croatian composers. At the 66<sup>th</sup> Dubrovnik Summer Festival he gave a premiere performance of *Concerto for saxophone and string orchestra* by Ivan Končić, a Croatian composer.

Concert tickets are available online at the Festival's official website <https://www.dubrovnik-festival.hr/> and through the ticket service [www.ulaznice.hr](http://www.ulaznice.hr), as well as the Festival Palace Box Office (Od Sigurate 1), which is

open every day from 9 a.m. to 9.30 p.m. Tickets can also be purchased at the venue, two hours prior to the performance. Purchases made with Mastercard® and Maestro® cards provide special benefits and discounts.

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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