

Orlando Award for best artistic achievement in the drama programme of the 72nd Dubrovnik Summer Festival – the play *Lion House**Statement*

After seeing all the plays of the 72nd Dubrovnik Summer Festival drama programme, the **Orlando Award Jury for Drama**, composed of president **Perica Martinović** and members **Petra Jelača and Srđana Šimunović**, decided by a majority vote to award the Ivan Salečić play ***Lion House***, directed by Aida Bukvić, adapted by Marijana Fumić and performed by the Festival Drama Ensemble.

In relation to Ivan Salečić's novel *Lion House*, many parts of the play have been changed and supplemented, noticeably by working together with the actors who shaped their own characters in collaboration with the director and the author of the adaptation. This synergy is visible throughout the play and consistently implemented. Emphasis on events from the past, the choice of a film-type dramaturgy and the same kind of rhythm, the constant intertwining of faces from the present with those from the past are the basic characteristics of the adaptation and directing. The author of the adaptation and the director managed to turn the cruel and rather gloomy feeling that the novel exudes into realism, into a course of events that is both meaningful and dramatic enough to keep the audience's attention for two hours without a break in full, and yet sufficiently directorial and dramaturgical to not lose the basic thread – the highlighted connection between the past and the present, their simultaneous existence. The choice of location is not only functional but also atmospherically accurate: a remote place in Dubrovnik overlooking the City itself. The main reason for choosing to award the play in its entirety is a series of very successful acting accomplishments. Amar Bukvić is confident and convincing in the role of the narrator; he gets along well in a net of adventures which are constantly emerging. Such a narrator position is demanding as he is a kind of stage coordinator of happenings, without him always being present in all events. Maro Martinović plays Gundulić with a dignity and reserve through every facet, layering parental warmth, fatherly concern, lordly restraint and the insecurity of a poet. Maro Martinović made a great contribution to the whole play as a language advisor. He linguistically located and accentuated the entire text of the adaptation, given the Baroque and modern times of the plot. Jadranka Đokić who plays two roles, Gundulić's wife Nika and Salečić's girlfriend Laima, made one of the best achievements in the ensemble; she easily transitions from one completely different character to another with lots of originality, creativity and measure. Gundulić's loyal housekeeper Luce is entrusted to the always excellent Doris Šarić Kukuljica; Gloria Dubelj stood out as the abused and raped maid Kate, and Veronika Mach in the role of a young girl, Gundulić's daughter Džive. An excellent miniature was created by Dražen Šivak as Salečić's friend Šeh, without any admixture of exaggeration or caricature, while Iva Kraljević as Vanja showed her energy, persuasiveness and cohesion through contemporary Dubrovnik speech. In his recognizable manner, Branimir Vidić Flika very wittily portrayed Master Nikša, while Romano Nikolić and Marin Klišmanić embodied the Gundulić brothers: Šiško, a problematic bully and Mato, driven mad by war.

Successful adaptation, skillful and unobtrusive directing, excellent ensemble of actors, atmospheric choice of the playground under Minčeta view of the City which is thematized in the

play are the reasons why the Drama Jury decided by a majority vote to award the Orlando Award for best artistic achievement in the Festival's drama programme to the creative team and the cast of the play *Lion House*.

Orlando Award for best artistic achievement in the music programme of the 72nd Dubrovnik Summer Festival – soprano Julia Lezhneva

Statement

The Orlando Award jury, composed of **president Matija Novaković and members Dijana Hilje and Toni Kursar**, unanimously decided to give the **Orlando Award for the best artistic achievement in the music programme of the 72nd Dubrovnik Summer Festival** to soprano **Julia Lezhneva** for the concert held on 25 July 2021 in the Rector's Palace atrium.

Like a beautiful porcelain doll come alive, soprano Julia Lezhneva shone brilliantly in the Dubrovnik evening, singing Porpora, Graun, Vivaldi and Handel just as they should be sung – stylistically accurate and technically perfect. Julia Lezhneva has precise, light melodies at perfect pitch, long and thoughtful musical phrases, which leave no one indifferent.

Baroque music – the theme of the exceptional musical evening – does not have to delight each and every listener. However, listening to Julia Lezhneva's utter ease of singing, the beautiful darkness of her voice, with perfect mastery and coloratura play, dynamic shades and baroque ornaments behind which are deep thoughtfulness and rumination on the musical text, be it strong suggestive invocations of longing (*Senza di te mio bene*), crying (*Spoza son disprezzata*) or conjuring up the sound of the wind in (*Zeffiretti, che sussurrate*), is what truly delights everyone.

Soprano Julia Lezhneva had perfect accompaniment in the "La Voce Strumentale" ensemble and the superb conductor Dmitry Sinkovsky.

It was an exceptional musical gathering, in the manner of the greatest festival seasons, in which Julia Lezhneva completely enchanted and captured the hearts of the festival audience. Quoting a review by a prominent Dubrovnik music critic: "All the musicians left the Rector's Palace as radiant as the audience. An audience that partook in their own blessing of music, music that the performers elevated to the divine level",

we announce the Laureate of the Orlando Award for Music at the 72nd Dubrovnik Summer Festival: soprano Julia Lezhneva.

Grand Prix Orlando for exceptional artistic contributions to the entirety of the Dubrovnik Summer Festival programme through several festival seasons – Lindo Folklore Ensemble

Statement

Even though they were not the hosts, they were always there. It was understood that every season of the Dubrovnik Summer Festival since 1967 was enriched with their performances, which they held mostly on the terrace of the Revelin Fort. Often they are the most beautiful part of the Festival's Opening Ceremony itself. And no one has yet wondered what it would have happened and how it would be like if they weren't a part of the Festival. And no one has

certainly wondered how much time these 55 years of performances actually add up to. How many hours is it of singing, tuning strings, wearing costumes, knitting braids, putting on hairpins, quick changing between points. How many hours of thunderous applause from the delighted and enthusiastic domestic and international audiences to which the members of the Ensemble brought forth the best of our tradition. And to what extent has this pursuit of tradition influenced some Lindo members to choose to devote themselves to ethnology and ethnography. To fall in love with the heritage of their ancestors, but also to fall in love with each other and establish "Lindo marriages". To the parents whom their children and grandchildren succeed. And for everyone to become deeply aware that amateurs are just as important as professionals.

We can specify the exact number of participants, performances and tickets sold. But such statistics do not matter now – a though the number of 332 performances is breath-taking. The most important thing is that the Lindo Folklore Ensemble has become a iconic constant at the Dubrovnik Summer Festival in all these decades. That part of us which we should proudly show off to the world. And to make that world take Lindo to their homes as a most precious memory. While we keep it as a promise for the future. The performances of the Lindo Folklore Ensemble, with their quality, richness and diversity, as well as an irresistible combination of youth and experience, have always been a guarantee of top artistic feats.

As then, so today.

And that's why: *nemoj ferat Lindo, odlično je bilo. I bit će akobogda. Amen, dabogda!* (Don't stop Lindo, it was great. And it will be so, God willing. Amen, by the grace of God!