

## A strong and compelling performance of Bach and Messiaen

Dubrovnik, 20 August 2021 – The **Harlequin Art Collective** chamber ensemble consisting of flutist **Dani Bošnjak**, trombone player **Alan Bošnjak**, vibraphonist **Šimun Matišić**, accordion player **Stjepan Vuger** and soprano **Marta Schwaiger** performed **Johann Sebastian Bach's** collection of canons, fugues and other pieces based on a single musical theme titled *Musikalisches Opfer* or *The Musical Offering* and the song cycle *Poèmes pour Mi* by **Olivier Messiaen** last night, 19 August at the **Bunić-Kaboga Summer Villa** in a concert sponsored by the Caboga Stiftung foundation.

The unique ensemble with a new and unusual sound, they opened the concert with *Ricercar a 3* – a three-voice fugue, *Sonata sopr'il Soggetto Reale* – a trio sonata featuring the flute and *Ricercar a 6* – a six-voice fugue from **Johann Sebastian Bach's** collection of canons, fugues and other pieces based on a single musical theme titled *Musikalisches Opfer* or *The Musical Offering*, a work considered today to be one of the most complex in the entirety of music history. For the nine song cycle *Poèmes pour Mi* by **Olivier Messiaen** arranged by **Šimun Matišić**, soprano **Marta Schwaiger** took to the stage. The ease with which the soprano performed the extremely challenging notes and the ensemble who accompanied her with their marvellous playing made the sweltering evening that much more bearable and unique. The audience showed their appreciation with a long round of applause, while vibraphonist **Šimun Matišić** and flutist **Dani Bošnjak** gave a special musical treat for the crowd in the garden above the Villa.

**The Harlequin Art Collective** chamber ensemble was founded in Zagreb in early 2018 at the initiative of **Dani Bošnjak** and, though seemingly at first the atypical combination of instruments and voice is actually highly harmonious and compatible, rich in musical possibilities. Harlequin musicians are active in many fields. **Šimun Matišić**, who was proclaimed the future of jazz in Croatia by the jazz legend **Boško Petrović** when he was just twelve years old, is completing his studies in percussion and composition at the Zagreb Academy of Music. **Stjepan Vuger's** graduation concert, where he was supposed to conduct the performance of **Stravinsky's** *Petrushka* and **Šimun Matišić's** Piano concerto, was cancelled last spring due to the pandemic but he is already very active as an educator and conductor. He graduated in accordion under **Borut Zagoranski** at the Department of Music, University of Pula. **Marta Schwaiger** graduated in singing at the Vienna Conservatory under **Robert Fontane** and, besides her other engagements, often performs at the Croatian National Theatre Zagreb. **Dani and Alan Bošnjak** have, in addition to their permanent engagements with the Zagreb Philharmonic Orchestra and the Croatian National Theatre of Zagreb Opera Orchestra respectively, performed in numerous other ensembles and chamber combinations.

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 and numerous other sponsors and benefactors who helped bring this most prestigious cultural event in Croatia to fruition.

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