



DUBROVAČKE LJETNE IGRE DUBROVNIK SUMMER FESTIVAL

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PART OF THE “PORT OF DREAMERS” PROJECT

Slovenian “Celebration” is a moving yet poignant tribute at Lazareti

Dubrovnik, 19 July 2021 – The second play produced as part of the *Port of Dreamers* EU project, the Slovenian play *Celebration*, which is an **SNT Maribor** production based on an **Ivor Martinić** text and directed by **Jan Krmelj**, was performed last night, **18 July**, and is on again for the final time this Festival season tonight, **19 July, at 9.30pm** also at **Lazareti**. The play is in Slovenian, with Croatian subtitles.

Celebration deals with the still burning issue of migrants and refugees. The skilfully crafted diptych narrative confronts politics and real human tragedies, the vague bureaucratic jargon and an intimate first-hand account. The cuttingly sharp and farcical humour (which actually lays bare the ugly truth, hypocrisy and corruption underneath the surface) of the play’s first part – in which a prominent Slovenian politician in the European Parliament is planning a face-saving charity celebration after recklessly using the loaded syntagm “final solution” in reference to the refugee crisis – elicited uproarious laughter from the Festival audience. Then, however, a deep and solemn silence ensued as the tone shifted with the actors, not unlike the chorus of classical Greek tragedies, told the true life story of Navid Fadaee Nazer, an Iranian political refugee who travelled the gruelling migrant route over Turkey, Greece, Macedonia, Serbia and Croatia to Slovenia back in 2015, two weeks before the borders closed. The complexity of the compellingly clever narrative subsumes also themes such as the pandemic, which has effectively superseded migrant issues in the public eye and the news cycle, and also political correctness, corruption and duplicity in a wider sense, then touching subtly on linguistics and aesthetics but, perhaps most strikingly, on the emotions of all those involved in the discourse of migrations, as emotions such as fear influence directly the opinions and actions of all individuals on a personal level. Long applause and ovations were bestowed onto the brilliant cast and Navid himself who joined them for a final bow to the deeply moved audience.

The director, as well as set and light designer is **Jan Krmelj**, dramaturge **Vili Ravnjak**, costume designer **Špela Ema Veble**, while composers are **Gašper Torkar** and **Julija Đorđević**. The cast are **Ksenija Mišič**, **Maša Žilavec**, **Vojko Belšak**, **Matevž Biber** and **Petja Labović**.

The last play created within the *Port of Dreamers* project to be performed at the 72nd Festival is *Under the Same Roof* by Kulturanova Association and Novi Sad Újvidéki Színház Theatre **on 29 and 30 July**. *Port of Dreamers* project within which these two plays and the earlier premiered “Besides Oneself” were produced is co-funded by the *Creative Europe Programme – Culture Sub-programme* of the European Union.

All 72nd Dubrovnik Summer Festival programmes are certified as safe gatherings, meaning the events will be organised according to current rules and recommendations by the national and local Civil Protection Headquarters and the World Health Organization, according to which maintaining

physical distance of one seat with compulsory face masks has been deemed sufficient for audiences at low-risk events and the attendees are not obligated to present their EU digital COVID pass.

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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