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PRESS RELEASE

Festivals as laboratories of creativity and promoters of innovation – Launch of the FestLab for Creativity and Innovation

On 27 March 2009 in Prague, the European Festivals Association (EFA) launches its FestLab for Creativity and Innovation. Initiated at the occasion of the European Year of Creativity and Innovation, European Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture and Youth, Ján Figel', assigns 25 major European festivals from 15 different European countries with the FestLabPass: a Pass that commits festivals to act as laboratories of creativity and promoters of innovation.

“The FestLab is established to demonstrate the important role that culture, arts, artists and festivals play in creating a fruitful ground for the development of innovative and creative talents,” stresses EFA Secretary General Kathrin Deventer. “Nurturing creativity in people through the arts – and in particular in the festive environment of an arts festival – is almost self-referential evidence. Policies will need to follow evidence!”

Conceived as a laboratory, the FestLab spotlights the many diverse creative approaches of festivals and their multiple potential for innovating our societies – be it through the support of young artists, be it through educational activities, be it through the use of unusual venues, be it through cross-sectoral partnerships, be it through a striking piece of art. On 27 March, festivals from Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain are the first to commit to the objectives of the FestLab and bring its message to life.

The launching moment is organised in the framework of the Czech EU Presidency event „Forum for Creative Europe“, in partnership with the Czech Ministry of Culture and in collaboration with the Czech Association of Music Festivals, Prague Spring International Music Festival, Brno International Music Festival, Janáček May International Music Festival and Concentus Moraviae Festival.

“It is a key mission of EFA, the representative network for festivals in Europe, to support festivals in their ambition to join forces, enter into new collaboration and foster artistic creativity and creation,” as EFA President Darko Brlek underlines. A webpage dedicated to original and unique projects in the festival world including full and up-to-date information about the contribution of festivals to the European Year is available on the EFA webpage at www.efa-aeef.eu.

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The European Festivals Association (EFA) is the umbrella organisation for festivals across Europe and beyond representing more than 100 festivals, national festivals associations and cultural organisations from 37 countries. The FestLab is an initiative of EFA taken at the occasion of the 2009 European Year of Creativity and Innovation.