



**The Patron of the 2017 Ljubljana Festival is the Mayor of the City of Ljubljana, Mr Zoran Jankovič.**

### **PRESS RELEASE**

### **LJUBLJANA FESTIVAL – CULTURAL HUB AT THE HEART OF YOUR SUMMER CULTURAL EXPERIENCE**

*A summer tinged with culture awaits us once again in the Slovenian capital as the Ljubljana Festival brings an array of world-famous names to the city for its jubilee 65th edition. The festival opens on 27 June with a performance of Carl Orff's scenic cantata Carmina Burana by internationally renowned theatre company La Fura dels Baus in Congress Square. Even before the festival officially gets under way, the programme offers us the musical Vesna (7–10 June), the hit musical Mamma Mia! (18 June) and the traditional Summer Night concert, which this year is dedicated to the 80th anniversary of the birth of Jože Privšek (21 June). Opera evenings at this year's Ljubljana Festival include a gala concert by Elina Garanča, the operetta The Gypsy Princess, the chamber opera Svadba, Madama Butterfly performed by the China National Opera from Beijing, and the Mariinsky Theatre's performances of the third and fourth parts of Wagner's Ring Cycle. Highlights of the summer will also include performances by top soloists and orchestras. The St Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Yuri Temirkanov and the Mariinsky Theatre Orchestra with Valery Gergiev are both coming to Ljubljana. Among the soloists we welcome pianists Martha Argerich, Gian Maria Bonino, Anastasya Terenkova, Stephan Keifer and Akane Sakai, cellist Nie Jiapeng, violinists Dmitry Sitkovetsky and Lana Trotovshek, flautists Boris Bizjak, Claudi Arimany, Michael Martin Kofler, Martin Belič and Massimo Mercelli, accordionist Richard Galliano, harpist Mojca Zlobko Vajgl and the young soprano Nika Gorič. Chamber ensembles include the Trio Astra, the Belgrade Philharmonic String Quartet, the Ulysses Quartet, contemporary music ensemble MD7, the Franz Liszt Chamber Orchestra and the Slovene Philharmonic String Chamber Orchestra. A more relaxed atmosphere will be provided by Roby Lakatos with an evening of Gypsy music, Tomaž Domicelj with new arrangements of popular works, Marko Hatlak and singer-songwriter Iztok Mlakar, and Vlado Kreslin. Sam's Fever will bring back memories of Elvis, the king of rock 'n' roll, while a musical evening of Highlights from West End and Broadway Musicals will cater for fans of songs from legendary shows. The programme also includes the monodrama Immaculata, dedicated to the director Tomaž Pandur, who died suddenly last year, and an evening with preeminent actor John Malkovich, who will be joined by the famous chamber ensemble I Solisti Aquilani. This jubilee edition of the Ljubljana Festival incorporates the 20th edition of the International Fine Arts*

***Colony and creative workshops for children, a series of events on the river Ljubljana, and concerts by the Branimir Slokar Academy.***

### **Great operatic works**

This year's jubilee 65th edition of the Ljubljana Festival opens with the famous cry to the Empress of the World – "O, Fortuna!" The magnificent scenic cantata for symphony orchestra, choir and soloists, **Carmina Burana** is brought to the Ljubljana stage by the Barcelona theatre company **La Fura dels Baus** who, together with a huge cast of singers and musicians from all over Slovenia, will immerse the audience in the powerful and deeply emotional music of Carl Orff. (27. 6.)

Internationally acclaimed diva **Elīna Garanča** returns to Ljubljana this year. We can look forward to another remarkable evening of music from the Latvian mezzo-soprano, with selections from the Russian, French and Italian opera repertoire and Neapolitan songs, conducted by Romanian-born maestro **Ion Marin**, a noted operatic and symphonic conductor with an extensive discography on the most prestigious labels. (29. 6.)

With his operetta **The Gypsy Princess**, the Hungarian composer Emmerich Kálmán earned himself a permanent place among the leading composers of this genre. On this occasion the passionate and stirring melodies of his well-loved arias and choruses will ring out under the guidance of conductor **Veseljko Barešić**, who conducts the work for the first time, and director **Ivan Leo Lemo** from Croatia, with the combined strength of the Ljubljana Opera ensemble and Zagreb's Komedija Theatre. Resplendent in the starring role of the famous cabaret singer Silvia is the actress and opera singer **Sandra Bagarić**. (4. 7.)

The programme also features a performance of **Svadba**, a chamber opera in the Serbian language for six female voices a cappella and occasional percussion accompaniment, in a new co-production by the Académie du Festival d'Aix-en-Provence and the Ljubljana Festival. The work, with music and libretto by the Serbian-born, Montreal-based composer Ana Sokolović, received its premiere in Toronto in 2011 and since 2015 has been travelling around European festivals in a new staging from the Festival d'Aix. This is its first performance in Slovenia. (22. 8.)

Following its hugely successful performance of Turandot at the 63rd Ljubljana Festival, the **China National Opera from Beijing** returns to Ljubljana, this time with Giacomo Puccini's popular opera **Madama Butterfly**. Since its foundation in 1952, the China National Opera has worked hard to ensure the highest level of professionalism and has consistently encouraged the development of new musical talents. In charge of proceedings is the musical director and chief conductor of the China National Opera **Yang Yang**, one of the most active young conductors in China, whose first appearance at the Ljubljana Festival came in 2011 with a concert by the Hangzhou Philharmonic Orchestra. (23., 24. 8.)

Two monumental music dramas by German opera revolutionary Richard Wagner – **Siegfried** and **Götterdämmerung** (Twilight of the Gods) – receive their first staging in Slovenia. To mark the bicentenary of Wagner's birth in 2013, the **Mariinsky Theatre** and **Valery Gergiev** brought the first two parts of his great tetralogy to the Ljubljana

Festival. This year they return with what promise to be magnificent stagings of the third and fourth parts. (29., 30. 8.)

### Orchestras and conductors

The celebrated **St Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra**, the oldest symphony orchestra in Russia, comes to Ljubljana. The orchestra's Ljubljana concert, which is entirely dedicated to the great Russian masters, will be conducted by **Yuri Temirkanov**, its long-serving chief conductor and artistic director. (3. 7.)

The concluding evening of the 65th Ljubljana Festival features the **Mariinsky Theatre Orchestra**, of the oldest ensembles in Russia, with famed conductor **Valery Gergiev**. On this occasion the orchestra will also be joined by a rising star of the piano firmament, the Uzbek pianist **Behzod Abduraimov**.

### Soloists and chamber ensembles

Legendary Argentine pianist **Martha Argerich** is a commanding figure on the concert stage, whether as a soloist or performing with the world's greatest musicians, orchestras and conductors. In Ljubljana she appears with the excellent musicians of the Franz Liszt Chamber Orchestra from Budapest and the philologist and actress Annie Dutoit, who will provide narration for a performance of Camille Saint-Saëns's *Carnival of the Animals*. (10. 7.)

Another soloist appearing at this year's Ljubljana Festival is the cellist **Nie Jiapeng**, a graduate of the National University in Singapore and the Hochschule für Musik und Theater in Hamburg. The orchestra will be conducted by **Zhang Guoyong**, a teacher and head of the conducting department at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music and artistic director of the Shanghai Opera. Both these Chinese musicians performed at the Ljubljana Festival in 2014, to an enthusiastic reception. (11. 7.)

The violinist and conductor **Dmitry Sitkovetsky**, who thrilled the Ljubljana audience at last year's 64th Ljubljana Festival, has appeared at major international music festivals in Salzburg, Lucerne, Edinburgh, Istanbul and Newport. This year he will perform twice both as soloist and conductor: first as soloist with the **Slovene Philharmonic String Chamber Orchestra** (7. 8.), and then sharing the stage with the outstanding Slovene flautist **Boris Bizjak**. (9. 8.)

Also appearing with the **Slovene Philharmonic String Chamber Orchestra** are French accordion and bandoneon virtuoso and world-renowned composer **Richard Galliano** (1. 8.) and the internationally active Slovene soprano **Nika Gorič**, who is currently completing a doctorate in the opera department at the Royal Academy of Music in London. (3. 8.)

Renowned pianist and harpsichordist **Gian Maria Bonino** brings a programme drawn from the classical piano repertoire to the Ljubljana Festival. He will play an 1803

fortepiano (Anonymous, after Johann Schanz) and a fortepiano from Schumann's time, built in 1845. On the same evening he will perform with the **Trio Astra**, consisting of three outstanding young performers from Moldova and Italy. (8. 8.)

The **Belgrade Philharmonic String Quartet** is a highly active chamber ensemble that has performed in numerous venues in Serbia and around the world. These string players from the Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra are joined at the Ljubljana Festival by the acclaimed Catalan flautist **Claudi Arimany**, of whom the great flautist Jean-Pierre Rampal once said: "*[He] is one of those virtuosi who put technique, sonority and the colours of phrasing at the service of musicality and sensitivity, something not within the grasp of many.*" (27. 7.)

Another very interesting concert programme featuring different combinations of instrumental chamber ensembles will be provided by the **Ulysses Quartet** with soloists **Mojca Zlobko Vajgl** (harp) and **Massimo Mercelli** (flute). (31. 7.)

More flute music will be offered by the well-known Austrian flautist **Michael Martin Kofler** and the acclaimed young Slovene flautist **Martin Belič**. Both are members of the Munich Philharmonic. Accompanying them on the piano will be **Stephan Kiefer**, a member of the Radio Filharmonisch Orkest from the Netherlands. (2. 8.)

With its very first concert on 20 November 2002, the new line-up of **MD7**, which describes itself as an "ensemble for contemporary music", set out the path it intended to follow: as the interpreter of works that consistently take into account the specific make-up of the ensemble and are written for it. MD7's jubilee concert will be directed by the acclaimed American conductor **Steven Loy**, who has lived and worked in Slovenia for a number of years. (28. 8.)

## Musicals

The programme of the 65th Ljubljana Festival includes the premiere performance of **Vesna**, a musical based on Slovene cinema's first romantic comedy. The new musical is the work of the proven creative team that brought the hit musical Blossoms in Autumn to the stage three years ago. (7.-10. 6.)

Returning to the festival programme this year is the popular musical **Mamma Mia!**, co-produced by the Ljubljana Festival and the production company of former ski champion Jurij Franko, the winner of the silver medal in the giant slalom at the 1984 Winter Olympics in Sarajevo. (18. 6.)

Don't miss the evening of **Highlights from West End and Broadway Musicals**, featuring popular show tunes from the two world capitals of musical theatre. Accompanied by the Slovenian Philharmonic Orchestra, four outstanding soloists will sing a selection of well-known extracts from musicals, including several legendary hits. The orchestra will be conducted by **Robert Purvis**, who has many years of experience conducting musicals. (21. 8.)

Another contribution to the relaxed atmosphere of the Ljubljana Festival comes with the **Summer Night** concert, organised by the Ljubljana Festival in collaboration with **RTV Slovenia**, which this year celebrates the 80th anniversary of the birth of the pianist, conductor and composer Jože Privšek. (21. 6.)

Pure Acoustics III, another highlight of this year's programme, will in many ways be even more varied than the two previous Pure Acoustics concerts. Alongside new compositions, the programme will include new arrangements (reggae, samba, bachata, cumbia) of old songs – some famous, some less well known – because this time **Tomaž Domicelj** will be joined on stage by two of his friends from the Canary Islands: Toñín Corujo and Yarel Hernández (the latter originally from Cuba). (30. 6.)

The 65th Ljubljana Festival will also pay homage to director Tomaž Pandur, who died suddenly last year, with a performance of his **Immaculata**. A masterful director with big ideas and an exacting artistic credo, he left his mark on many theatres around the world. Beginning in 2002 and continuing right up until his premature death last year, he was responsible for eight co-productions with the Ljubljana Festival: Dictionary of the Khazars (2002), One Hundred Minutes (2004), Tesla (2006), Tesla Electric Company (2007), Baroque (2008), Hamlet (2009), Medea (2012) and Faust (2015). The monodrama *Immaculata*, interpreted by the award-winning actress Nataša Matjašec Rošker, is shaped into "*fourteen mental landscapes from Mary's journey, into an altar of love, of loss, of solitude, of the search for meaning in wounds.*" (12. 7.)

**Roby Lakatos** is a brilliant virtuoso and a musician of remarkable agility and flair, as he and his ensemble will demonstrate with a programme of traditional Gypsy and Hungarian songs. He performs classical compositions with the same skill that he brings to jazz and Hungarian folk music. (19. 7.)

Another very special evening will see **I Solisti Aquilani** and pianist Anastasya Terenkova joined, for a performance of Schnittke's Concerto for Piano and Strings, by the famous American stage and screen actor, director and producer **John Malkovich**. He will add his voice, like part of the music, to the performance of Schnittke's Concerto, with a carefully chosen selection of texts from the chapter "Report on the Blind" from Ernesto Sabato's novel *On Heroes and Tombs*. (20. 7.)

Pioneers of tango music in Slovenia, accordionist **Marko Hatlak** and **FUNtango** appear this year alongside the popular songwriter, actor and singer **Iztok Mlakar**, who last year appeared with Hatlak for the first time with a selection of pieces from his own repertoire, to the delight of a packed audience. (10. 8.)

Slovene rock and folk music legend **Vlado Kreslin** continues his annual tradition and returns to the Ljubljana Festival for the 26th time. As always, he will be joined by an interesting selection of guests. (25. 8.)

As we mark the 40th anniversary of the death of Elvis Presley, we remember the biggest hits of the King of Rock 'n' Roll. Slovene group **Sam's Fever** formed in 2012 with the stated aim of reviving **Elvis's** music through their own interpretations. They will appear

with Jazzva, a Slovene a cappella vocal ensemble with a growing reputation, and the energetic accompaniment of the RTV Slovenia Big Band, enhanced for the occasion by a string section. The evening will be further enlivened by the dancers of swing group Retronom. (29. 8.)

From 16 to 21 July the **20th International Fine Arts Colony**, led by selector **Tomo Vran**, will take place at Križanke. Meanwhile, children will have an opportunity to develop their talents in **free themed creative workshops**: a dance and singing workshop based around the musical Vesna, a junior art colony and a dance and theatre workshop organised by the Committed to Steps project.

This year the wide range of attractive Ljubljana Festival venues will include the Ljubljanica, the river that flows through centre of the city. The **Ljubljana Festival on the Ljubljanica** takes place on pleasure boats, offering a unique view of the city. Waterborne performances will be given by students from the Academy of Music and the Ljubljana Conservatory of Music and Ballet. In this way, the Ljubljana Festival gives the younger generation of Slovene musicians the opportunity to perform for the festival public. Training talented young artists and helping them establish their careers is one of the most important goals and activities of the Ljubljana Festival. (30. 6.–3. 7.)

### **Sponsors and supporters**

We would like to express our sincere thanks to the **City of Ljubljana** and its mayor **Zoran Jankovič**, without whose generous support it would not be possible to put on a festival programme lasting more than two months. We would also like to express our gratitude to all our sponsors and supporters. Thanks are also due to the media for their coverage of our events, and to all who attend the festival.

A 10% discount is available on tickets purchased in advance (until 6 June), increasing to 20% for Ljubljana Festival Club members. To become a member of the Club, visit [www.ljubljanafestival.si](http://www.ljubljanafestival.si), where you can also purchase tickets. Tickets are available from the Križanke box office, Eventim outlets, Petrol service stations, post offices, Kompas shops and railway ticket offices in Ljubljana, Celje, Koper and Maribor. Thank you for taking the time to discover the Ljubljana Festival programme.

### **Information / Public relations**

Živa Steiner

Tel. +386 (0)1 241 60 18

[Ziva.Steiner@ljubljanafestival.si](mailto:Ziva.Steiner@ljubljanafestival.si)

[www.ljubljanafestival.si](http://www.ljubljanafestival.si)

[www.facebook.com/ljubljanafestival](https://www.facebook.com/ljubljanafestival)

[www.instagram.com/ljubljanafestival](https://www.instagram.com/ljubljanafestival)

[twitter.com/FLjubljana](https://twitter.com/FLjubljana)

The founder of the Ljubljana Festival is the City of Ljubljana, which also provides financial support.



Mestna občina  
Ljubljana



Organizacija Združenih  
narodov za izobraževanje,  
znanost in kulturo



LJUBLJANA:  
MESTO/CITY  
OF/LITERA-  
TURE ...  
Unescovo  
kreativno mesto  
od 2015

\*\*\*

**Main Sponsor of the 65th Ljubljana Festival:** Zavarovalnica Sava d.d.

**Sponsors:** Energetika Ljubljana d.o.o., VPC, JP Vodovod-kanalizacija d.o.o., Spar Slovenija d.o.o., Telekom Slovenije d.d., Petrol d.d., Riko d.o.o., Zavarovalnica Triglav d.d., Lekarna Ljubljana, Geoplin d.o.o., Plinovodi d.o.o., Pivovarna Union d.d., Javna razsvetljava d.d., Four Points by Sheraton Ljubljana Mons, Nova KBM

**Sponsors of individual events:** Zavarovalnica Sava d.d., Telekom Slovenije d.d., Delo d.d., Zavarovalnica Triglav d.d., Mladi upi, UniCredit Bank, Petrol d.d., Riko d.o.o., Poslovni sistem Mercator d.d., Parada plesa, Europlakat d.o.o., Spar Slovenija d.o.o., Interenergo d.o.o., TRIMO, Geoplin d.o.o., Plinovodi d.o.o., SRC d.o.o., BTC d.d.

**Main Media Sponsor:** Delo d.o.o.

**Media Sponsors:** Europlakat d.o.o., Infonet media d.d., Radio 1, Finance d.o.o., Aerodrom Ljubljana d.d., Radio Center, Kobe d.o.o., Styria, Parada plesa

**Friends of the Ljubljana Festival:** NP Consulting

**Partners of the 2017 Ljubljana Festival:** RTV Slovenia, Slovenska Filharmonija, SNG Opera & Ballet Ljubljana, SNG Opera & Ballet Maribor, Cankarjev Dom, Komedia Theatre Zagreb, National Theatre Sarajevo, Art Design

**Transport partners:** Avtohiša Malgaj d.o.o., Avto Aktiv d.o.o., LPP d.o.o.

**Event rail partner:** Slovenske železnice

**Official wine supplier:** Pullus

**The founder of the Ljubljana Festival is the City of Ljubljana. The Festival has been a member of the European Festivals Association (EFA) since 1977.**