Warsaw, 28 August 2024  
Press release

**“A Closer Dimension of the Classics”  
– 14th La Folle Journée de Varsovie “Origins”**

**27–29 September 2024**

**Teatr Wielki – Polish National Opera (1 Teatralny Square)  
Tent at Teatralny Square  
Church of Art Societies (18b Senatorska Street)**

**Ticket sales for the 14th La Folle Journée de Varsovie begin on September 1. 3 days, 6 stages, more than 800 artists, 56 symphonic concerts, chamber concerts and recitals, events for children and young people. Classical, traditional, jazz, film and early music. Award-winning performers and Polish premieres. The theme of the edition is “Origins.”**

**A crazy idea**

**La Folle Journée** is celebrating its 30th anniversary in France this year. Being one of the largest classical music festivals in the world, it stands on the same level as the British BBC Proms and the German Rheingau Musik Festival. It is held each year in several locations around the globe – France, Japan and Poland. It is a unique event of its kind and scale, with a popularizing flair and a unique festive atmosphere.

The festival combines the high quality of the presented music with affordable ticket prices, an ambitious repertoire with an audience-friendly concert length. This year’s edition in Nantes and the Loire country included almost 500 events, for which more than 170,000 tickets were sold. The Polish edition of the festival, which was named **Szalone Dni Muzyki** (Crazy Days of Music), can also rival popular and alternative music festivals such as OFF Festival in Katowice or Green Festival in Olsztyn in terms of the participants’ number. The 13 editions of La Folle Journée de Varsovie to date have attracted a total audience of 400,000 people.

**An ambitious programme**

“During this edition, the audience will be able to hear works that are considered the source that has paved new directions for music with their innovation,” declares the festival’s artistic director, **René Martin**. “We will present Vivaldi’s *Four Seasons*, Dvořák’s Symphony *From the New World*, Bartók’s Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion or Bernstein’s *West Side Story*.” In keeping with the edition’s theme – ***Origins*** (French: ***Origines***) – the festival program will also direct the public’s imagination towards nature: to the murmur of gushing water and birdsong, ancient ways of human communication, primordial rhythm or traditional calling and singing. Listeners will also have the opportunity to look at traditional instruments and folk inspirations in classical music and jazz.

**Quatuor Hermès** will perform the Polish premiere of **Leonard Bernstein’s** recently discovered ***Music for String Quartet***, **Paul Lay Trio** will present the ***Rhapsody in Blue Extended 1924-2024*** project for the first time in Poland, while albums ***Tsuzamen*** by **Sirba Octet** (2023) and **Maciej Skrzeczkowski’s** ***The Real John Bull*** (2024) will have their concert premiere in Poland.

**A clear mission**

“I believe La Folle Journée de Varsovie is the best proof that classical music is not reserved only for connoisseurs, does not have to be foreign and rigid, but can move and inspire anyone who is open to it,” says Janusz Marynowski, director of Sinfonia Varsovia, which has been organizing the Polish edition of the festival since its first edition. “We attach great importance to the educational path of the festival. After all, that’s how we educate our future listeners.”

The festival’s educational path will include two chamber programs of the ***Smykofonia*** series (0–2, 2–5 years), two symphonic concerts with **Bazylek** (3–8 years) and **Panakota** (7+ years), as well as audience participation events: ***About Clave and the Origins of Rhythm*** (9+ years) hosted by **Jerzy Rogiewicz** and **Hubert Zemler**, and ***Treasures from the Instrument Market*** (12+ years), during which traditional instruments will be introduced by their builders and musicians.

“We are looking for our audience even among passers-by,” Marynowski states. “15 of the festival’s 56 concerts are free, and since they take place in spaces near Teatralny Square, strollers in Warsaw’s downtown can stop by in passing. They are attracted to the live music being played. We can see the enthusiasm awakened then in these casual listeners for a world often unfamiliar to them, which for a moment becomes so easily accessible, almost at their fingertips.”

“One could say that an informal festival of the best youth orchestras from all over Poland takes place here,” notes Łukasz Strusiński, co-author of the festival program. “La Folle Journée de Varsovie is a place where young performers from music schools often take the big stage for the first time in front of an audience of several hundred music lovers.” During this year’s edition, **Young Performers** will take part in 15 concerts. A total of 10 ensembles selected by the Centre of Art Education will perform: a dance ensemble from the **Warsaw Ballet School** and 9 orchestras from **Białystok, Bytom, Łódź, Olsztyn, Poznań, Radom, Warsaw, Sosnowiec and Żory**.

“La Folle Journée de Varsovie is a unique event on the cultural map of our country, with an extremely rich and diverse repertoire. It is not only an encounter with music and performance of the highest order, but also an opportunity to experience new sounds,” says **Robert Piaskowski**, director of the National Centre for Culture. “Thanks to international artistic exchange, the festival enriches our culture with new insights, inspirations and experiences, creating a space for dialogue, built on a foundation of diversity. A distinguishing feature of the festival is also its family-oriented nature. Opening the festival to the youngest, child audience, who together with their parents have the opportunity to experience musical emotions, is a unique value of La Folle Journée de Varsovie, as is breaking down economic barriers to high culture access. The festival expands the space for participation in culture – regardless of age, experience or wallet. I value the festival for its promotion of young talents and musical education of children and young people. These are activities that are part of the mission of the National Centre for Culture, so I am glad that we support this endeavor.”

**Outstanding artists**

The core of the festival constitutes **Sinfonia Varsovia’s** concerts, both in symphonic casts and in chamber ensembles; among others, as **Sinfonia Varsovia Wind Quintet & Guests**. In the opening and closing concerts, the ensemble will be conducted by **Julien Masmondet**, the orchestra will also be led by **Jacek Kaspszyk**, **Aleksandar Marković**, and in the family concerts by **Grzegorz Wierus** and **Daniel Mieczkowski**. **Orchestra of the Teatr Wielki – Polish National Opera** under the baton of **Marta Kluczyńska** and the **Jerzy Semkow Polish Sinfonia Iuventus Orchestra** under the direction of **Alexander Humala** will perform. Soloists for these concerts will include **Valentine Michaud** (saxophone), **Raphaël Sévère** (clarinet), **Emmanuel Strosser** (piano), **Klara Min** (piano), **Marcel Markowski** (cello), **Aleksandra Orłowska** (soprano) and **Hubert Zapiór** (baritone). Solo recitals will be given by **François Lazarevitch** (bagpipes), **Raphaël Feuillâtre** (guitar), **Illia Ovcharenko** (piano), **Maciej Frąckiewicz** (accordion) and **Maciej Skrzeczkowski** (harpsichord).

Chamber concerts will feature **Quatuor Hermès**, **Geister Duo**, **Chopin University Percussion Ensemble**, **Valentine and Gabriel Michaud**, **Eva Zavaro**, **Raphaël Sévère** **and Emmanuel Strosser**, early music will be unconventionally transformed by **Les Musiciens de Saint-Julien**, klezmer, Armenian and Roma music will be played by **Sirba Octet**. In addition, their own jazz history will be presented by **Marcin Masecki**, **Chopin University Big Band** and **Paul Lay Trio**, while an original blend of the genre with Polish folk music will be showcased by the combined line-ups of **Kapela Maliszów** and **Suferi**.

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Tickets, priced PLN 25–35, go on sale on September 1 (Sunday) at 10:00 a.m. – online at [szalonednimuzyki.pl](https://szalonednimuzyki.pl/en/) and [eventim.pl](https://www.eventim.pl/artist/szalone-dni-muzyki/), and will be also available at the Teatr Wielki – Polish National Opera on September 1 between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.

The concerts in the spaces of the tent at Teatralny Square and Church of Art Societies are free of charge. For all 15 concerts taking place there, admission is free within the seating limit. For more information on the artists, program and ticket sales, visit [szalonednimuzyki.pl](https://szalonednimuzyki.pl/en/), [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/szalonednimuzyki) and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/sinfonia_varsovia/).

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The rules for press accreditation for the festival and the application form can be found at: [szalonednimuzyki.pl/en/press/](https://szalonednimuzyki.pl/en/press/).

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