

2 March 2022

Appeal of culture and art festivals in Lithuania to the European Festivals Association and art festivals in each country

We, culture and art festivals in Lithuania, are joining the initiative of public institution Vilnius Festivals, and are calling on European Festivals Association and the festivals of each country to be proactive in all areas of culture, art and other fields and to do everything possible that the Russian war in Ukraine would be stopped immediately.

It's hard to believe that a war could wage in the 21st century Europe. The criminal war action of the Russian authorities suddenly affected all Europe and the world. The war started by Russia against the sovereign country, Ukraine, is not just a crime against an innocent country but also a crime against mankind and humanity. The communication of the Russian authorities about the "special military operation" means yet another lie, because even civilian infrastructure is bombed in a brutal and cynical way, a lot of people, including children and persons in hospitals, are dying. A huge number of Ukrainians are forced to flee from their homeland, because their homes are destroyed, they massively seek asylum in other countries.

Watching all this we can't be tolerant or silent – we invite you to stand in solidarity with Ukrainians, to condemn the war action of Russia and to stop any collaboration with the Russian Federation.

With this war the Russian Federation wants to show they can decide on their neighbouring countries' rights to freedom, life, sovereignty, democracy, wellbeing. This is absolutely unacceptable, we all must say NO – no country has any right to interfere with the neighbouring or another country, especially in a brutal way of a huge war.

We are therefore calling on all European festivals of culture and art to stop any cooperation with the Russian culture and art organizations, festivals, theatres, orchestras, individual artists if they do not condemn this war in public and do not participate in stopping this war.

We demand that the European Festivals Association would immediately ask Russian festivals, culture and art organizations, individual artists, with whom they cooperate, that they would publicly condemn the war by the Russian Federation against Ukraine and in all possible ways help to stop it. If Russian festivals, culture and art organizations and individual artists do not agree to do this, their membership in the European Festivals Association and in other European networks must be cancelled, and festivals, culture and art organizations in European countries should not

collaborate with or invite those Russian artists to their events. We can't be together with those who justify war in Europe.

Glory to Ukraine!

Remigijus Merkelys, VILNIUS FESTIVALS:

Martynas Budraitis, Kristina Savickienė, Vilnius International Theatre Festival SIRENOS

Gintarė Masteikaitė, International Contemporary Dance Festival NEW BALTIC DANCE

Vytautas V. Jurgutis, Vilnius International Contemporary Music Festival GAIDA

Darius Stabinskas, International Early Music Festival BANCHETTO MUSICALE

Algirdas Ramaška, Vilnius International Film Festival KINO PAVASARIS

Jurgita Murauskienė, ST. CHRISTOPHER SUMMER FESTIVAL

Judita Bartoševičienė, VILNIUS MAMA JAZZ Festival

Gintarė Šiaulytė, CULTURE NIGHT Vilnius

Antanas Gustys, VILNIUS JAZZ Festival

Rūta Prusevičienė, VILNIUS FESTIVAL

Also:

Jolita Balandytė, Ineta Pliekaitytė, Judita Strumilaitė, International Festival for Young Audience KITOKS,

International Street Theatre Festival SPOT, International Contemporary Circus Festival HELIUM

Jonas Jučas, KAUNAS JAZZ Festival

Gediminas Gelgotas, KINTAI FESTIVAL

Laima Vilimienė, International KLAIPEDA FESTIVAL

Inga Grubliauskienė, KLAIPEDA CASTLE JAZZ Festival

Leonidas Šinkarenka, NIDA JAZZ MARATONAS Festival

Jūratė Kučinskaitė, Arnas Simėnas, Igoris Švedko, JAZZ FONTANAS Festival

Arkadij Gotesman, JEWISH ART FESTIVAL in Lithuania, MOLETAI PERCUSSION JAZZ Festival

Birutė Letukaitė, International Dance Festival AURA

Goda Giedraityte, International Arts Festival PLARTFORMA

Gintarė Masteikaitė, International Performing Arts Festival ConTempo

Ana Ablamonova, Contemporary Opera Festival NOA (New Opera Action)

Liudas Mikalauskas, INTERNATIONAL TAURAGĖ MUSIC FESTIVAL and INTERNATIONAL PABERŽĖ FESTIVAL

Giedrė Mikaitienė, INTERNATIONAL PAŽAISLIS MUSIC Festival

Rūta Kačkutė, International Literature Festival VILNIUS PAGES

Diana Kuprytė, Alternative Music Festival RUMSHK

Vitalis Vidikas, BROMA JAZZ Festival Kėdainiai

Zigmas Vileikis, BIRŠTONAS JAZZ Festival

Remigijus Ruokis, ŠIAULIAI JAZZ Festival

Valdas Latoža, TAURAGE JAZZ Festival