



PRESS RELEASE

THE FIRA MEDITERRÀNIA HAS EVEN MORE PREMIERES AND CO-PRODUCTIONS

- Nearly a third of the 113 shows included in the programme will be appearing in Catalonia for the first time
- Ten of the events at the Fira are being presented thanks to the policy of coproductions

Given the massive number of festivals, fairs and art markets currently operating around the world, one of the basic elements of success is the ability to structure a program that can offer new ideas, events interesting enough to arouse the attention both of professionals and the general public. This premise has always been one of the basic *leitmotifs* in organising and structuring the **Fira Mediterrània of Manresa**. And this sixteenth edition is no exception. Of the **113** shows included in this year's listings, **36** have never been presented before in Catalonia; that means almost a third of the entire programme. So we can say, without a shadow of a doubt, that this will be a **Fira** of premieres.

You don't need to look very hard at the program to see this, since the opening show, on Thursday 7 November, is a grand premiere for Catalonia: the concert *Mare Nostrum*, given by the great maestro **Jordi Savall** —the guest artist at this year's Fira— accompanied by the ensemble **Hespèrion XXI**. This work is a profound musical reflection on the history and the idiosyncrasies of our sea and the peoples who live around it. The following day, Friday 8 November, also in the field of music, but in a very different style, we have the veteran troubadour, **Kiko Veneno**, who has chosen the **Mediterrània** to give the world premiere of a project which is both unusual and ambitious: he revisits his most popular songs with the backing of an orchestra that will perform under the guidance of the very special conductor, **Raül Fernández 'Refree'**.

Nor will the theatre and dance stages lack this element of innovation. One of the most interesting items on the programme for this 16th edition of the **Fira of Manresa** is on Saturday 9 November, with the first performance in Catalonia of the award-winning production, *Manta*, by the choreographers **Héla Fattoumi** and **Eric Lamoreux** leading the **Centre Choréographique National de Caen Basse-Normandie**. This is a powerful piece of contemporary dance created around the role of women in the Arab world. We must also highlight the poetry of the equestrian show *Ma bête noire*, the Spanish premiere of a choreography by the French artist **Thomas Chaussebourg**, designed for a unique duo: a dancer and a horse without reins or a saddle.

Two theatre companies that have chosen the **Fira** for the premiere of their new productions (also on Sunday 10 November) are **Iguana Teatre**, from Mallorca, and the Catalans of **Taaroa Teatre** and **Bufa & Sons**. The former company presents the work *Centaures*, an adaptation of three short stories by the writer **Miquel Àngel Riera**; the latter bring us *El baró pels arbres*, an adaptation for family audiences of the novel *The Baron in the Trees* by **Italo Calvino**. There are yet more Catalan premieres within the theatre offer. There will be two performances (on the Saturday and the Sunday) of the production *Los Rodríguez: una familia en crisis* by the Madrid-based company, **Teatro La Rueda Social**. There will also be the first appearance in Catalonia of *Passagem*; with the four programmed performances of this piece (from Wednesday to Saturday) the members of the Portuguese company **PIA – Projectos de Intervenção Artística** will transform public space into a privileged stage for visual poetry.

Yet another event which has its Spanish premiere is *Mañana es Mañana*, the latest creation of **Cridacompany**, a young, modern and bold circus company which operates between France and Catalonia, experimenting with silence, sound and different states of the body.

The list is long and the space is limited, but we can not leave out the world premiere that **Franca Masu**, the singer from Alghero, Sardinia, will bring us on the Saturday with her new show entitled *Almablava*. Nor should we omit the first peninsular performances of new concerts by the Occitan group **Moussu T e lei Jovents**; by the prestigious Belgian trio **Aka Balkan Moon** in collaboration with musicians from the Bulgarian folk scene; by the Israeli singer **Mor Karbasi**; and by the Turkish artist, **Ozgur Akgul**, to give just some examples of the international acts premiering at Manresa.

CO-PRODUCTIONS POLICY

It is not only the crisis that leads the **Fira Mediterrània of Manresa** to search for new allies, and to extend links with other international events, so as to able to present a qualitatively better program. No wonder then that **10** of the shows on the program are being presented thanks to a co-production policy that reflects an impossible arithmetical operation: **less is more**. Apart from thinking about how to fight the lack of funds and how to survive tax increases (the Spanish government more than doubled VAT on cultural events last year), co-productions bring a breath of fresh artistic air, opening doors and windows to broaden viewpoints and clarify perspectives.

In music, the **Fira** has worked with **Kiko Veneno** and **Sergi Sirvent**, but we should also highlight the option for a closing show which the **Agrupació Musical Sinenca** will perform on Sunday 10 November, under the title *Música en terres de cruïlla* (*Music in a land of crossroads*) bringing together the voices and the arts of **Carmen París**, **Pep Gimeno Botifarra**, **Quico el Cèlio**, **el Noi i el Mut de Ferreries**, **Claudio Gabriel Sanna**, **Miquela Lladó**, **Montse Castellà** and **Pep Vila**.

A very significant part of the investment in coproduced work has also been dedicated to performances aimed at family audiences. In this section we have the street show based on Manresa's festive imagery brought to us by the **Giants of Manresa**; the production *Anima'ls* by the company **L'Obrador dels Somnis**; and the piece *Vatua l'olla, quina patxoca que fan!*, by **Paco Asensio**.

Regarding dance we have a very special piece on offer from the choreographer **Alvaro de la Peña** and the dance workshop in which he prepared a performance with inmates of the **Lledoners Prison** (world premiere) which can be seen on Sunday 10 November in the courtyard of Kursaal theatre, as well as the video-mapping show called *Cruïlla*, brought by the group **SlideMedia**. The list ends with the multidisciplinary offer of music, poetry and traditional song by the ensemble **Dallonses**, led by the Catalan musician **Guillem Ballaz**, which the **Fira** co-produced in conjunction with the **(A)phonica** festival of Banyoles.

Press room (documents, graphic material...):

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