

VESZPRÉMFEST PRESS CONFERENCE

20 February 2020, 11:00 am, Veszprém, Városháza Kossuth terem (Town Hall, Kossuth Room)

DIDO double concert, Postmodern Jukebox, Juan Diego Flórez and Jazz+Az at VeszprémFest!

The programme of the 17th VeszprémFest is now complete. The music festival lasting 5 days this year will feature Jazz+Az, the Hungarian band returning after 20 years, while DIDO will perform on two consecutive nights given the huge interest. Postmodern Jukebox as well as one of the most popular opera stars of the world, Juan Diego Flórez, will also take to the stage for one night.

VeszprémFest celebrating its 17th year in a row is the open-air summer music event of the year, which will be held on 14-18 July this year. Performers of the first two days of the premium music festival were previously announced, and at the press conference in the Kossuth Room at the Veszprém Town Hall the organisers revealed the full programme.

The conference was held in the presence of *Dr. Tibor Navracsics*, government commissioner of the Veszprém-Balaton Cultural Capital of Europe 2023 programme, *Gyula Porga*, mayor of the county town of Veszprém, who talked about the town's connections with the festival, and *Zoltán Mészáros*, managing director of VeszprémFest, who presented this year's festival programme.

On Day 0 of VeszprémFest **Jazz+Az**, the short-lived but highly successful Hungarian pop group, will perform after returning to the stage following a 20-year hiatus. We are delighted to be able to welcome the band's frontman *Péter Geszti* among the festival artists again after 8 years, since in 2012 he performed for our audience with his group called *Gringo Sztár*, also on Day 0.

Jazz+Az was established by *Péter Geszti* and *László Dés* in 1997 with three exceptional female singers *Orsi Kozma*, *Eszter Váncsi* and *Dóri Behumi*. They released only two albums and a remix album. In 2000 at the height of their success, they announced the break-up of the band and their career ended with a farewell concert in the Kistadion in Budapest. On the 20th anniversary of this farewell concert, they decided to get on stage again in January 2020 to perform the best songs of their career with resounding success in front of a crowded auditorium at the Arena.

After the hugely successful concert, the band have decided to perform on two additional occasions in the summer around the country. Audiences will be able to see them first on 14 July in Veszprém.

On 15 and 16 July our audience can enjoy the first double concert in the history of VeszprémFest on two consecutive days. The stage at Historia Garden will be occupied by none other than Britain's **DIDO**. Tickets for the singer's concert on 15 July sold out at lightning speed following the announcement in December, so there was no question about it for the organisers: if the tour programme allows, they would ask the singer for another show.

DIDO is one of the most celebrated performers of the United Kingdom. During her career she has sold more than 40 million records, and her first album entitled *No Angel* was the most popular debut record ever among British female singers. To this day it has sold 21 million copies and reached platinum status in 35 countries.

During her more than twenty-year career the singer has never performed a solo show in Hungary, so this concert in Veszprém will be the first where Hungarian fans can enjoy an entire concert with her emotional and gripping songs. Dido's sparkling career in music is hallmarked among other things by global hits such as *Here with Me*, *Thank You*, *White Flag*, *If I Rise* or the collaboration with *Eminem* on the song *Stan*. Some of these will most likely be heard at VeszprémFest too.

On 17 July the stage will be occupied by **Postmodern Jukebox**, one of the most exciting music ventures of the 2000s established by Scott Bradlee. Postmodern Jukebox started in New York in 2009 and is actually not a band in the classical sense of the word, but a formation with constantly changing members where only two things are constant. Bradlee's creative powers transcending all the boundaries of music and the concept of

exceptionally talented musicians performing world hits adapted in different styles such as jazz, swing, soul, blues or even doo-wop, with an end result of an unparalleled experience for audiences.

Since it began, PMJ has reached more than 1 billion views on YouTube, 4.4 million subscribers and 2.1 million Facebook followers. More than 70 artists have featured since its establishment, including renowned musicians as well as talents at the start of their career. They have released 19 albums, topped the iTunes and Billboard charts, performed on the "Good Morning America" show and toured the world.

On the VeszprémFest stage they will perform their "*Welcome to the Twenties 2.0 Tour*" show. It will propel the audience back in time to 1920s' America, giving them a taste of what Gatsby's dream nights or Sinatra's legendary New Year's Eve parties were like.

Juan Diego Flórez, one of the most celebrated "bel canto" tenors of today, will close the 17th VeszprémFest on 18 July. The Peruvian opera star is often referred to as *Pavarotti's* heir, and is currently one of the most sought-after tenors. During his career he has performed in almost all the major opera "temples" of the world, such as the *Metropolitan* in New York, the *Scala* in Milan, *Covent Garden* in London, *Liceu* in Barcelona, and the *Staatsoper* in Vienna.

Flórez's career is down to a lucky coincidence when at the age of 23 he stepped in at the last minute at the Rossini Opera Festival in Pesaro to substitute for Bruce Ford, to play the main role in Rossini's *Matilde di Shabran*. His step-in performance was a huge success, and it set him off down the path of international stardom forever.

His soaring, shiny tone and graceful delivery makes Flórez unique, which coupled with his masculine elegance and Latin machismo mesmerises his audiences. At VeszprémFest his show will include *Donizetti*, *Verdi*, *Puccini*, *Bizet*, *Offenbach*, *Gounod* and *Bernstein* songs, and will be accompanied by the *Hungarian State Opera Orchestra* conducted by *Jader Bignamini*.

All the events of the 17th VeszprémFest will be held at the Historia Garden all starting at 9:00 pm. Venue in event of rain: VeszprémAréna

Further information is available and photos can be downloaded at <http://veszpremfest.hu/sajto-media/letoltesek>.

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