



Media release

by the Alpine Town of the Year association for the joint concert by young people from Slovenia and people with disabilities from France

Idrija / Chambéry, 04.09.2012

Young, mentally handicapped, musically talented

Language, environment and a distance of over 800 kilometres separate the two orchestras of Tétrás Lyre and the Miners' Brass Band. On 7 September the musicians from Chambéry and Idrija will be giving their first joint concert at the Alpine Week in Poschiavo. On stage will be around 90 people –all talented, some very young, some mentally handicapped.

Chambéry in France and Idrija in Slovenia have two things in common: both towns have been awarded the title of "Alpine Town of the Year" and since then have been working together within the international association of that name. And both cities have very special orchestras: the Tétrás Lyre in Chambéry and the Miners' Brass Band in Idrija. On 7 September 2012 both orchestras will be appearing together for the first time in Poschiavo, Switzerland. This is not just a premiere: it represents a special challenge for the musicians, who live 800 kilometres apart at opposite ends of the Alpine Arc, speak two different languages and play in completely different contexts.

Tétrás Lyre: music to overcome handicaps

The Tétrás Lyre orchestra has 41 musicians between the ages of 15 and 59. The majority (34) have some form of mental handicap. Some cannot read music; many were born with trisomy 21. Making music together in the orchestra and going to the appropriate music schools are essential for their integration, for memory training, for learning social skills and for their independence. Tétrás Lyre rehearses three times a week, practising some 60 pieces from the classics, jazz and film. It makes around ten appearances each year in Savoy and is increasingly being invited to events in France and abroad. The musicians from Chambéry and the surrounding area for example appeared in 2006 with the internationally renowned pianist François-René Duchâble. The commitment of the members of Tétrás Lyre and their conductor Isabelle Herlin to the integration of people with disabilities has been recognised several times with awards, for instance the "Prix départemental des Victoires de l'accessibilité".



Miners' Brass Band: one of Europe's oldest wind bands

Over 500 years of mercury mining ceased at the end of the 1980s in Idrija, in the Alpine foothills of Slovenia. The mine was the second largest in the world and is today a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The Miners' Brass Band, one of the oldest wind bands in Europe, originates from the era of the mining industry and today bears witness to Idrija's lively cultural and social scene. The Miners' Brass Band has 55 musicians, two thirds of whom are under 26 years old, with the youngest aged just 13. They have also been awarded numerous prizes, among others the 2003 Gold Medal as best Slovenian wind band. The Miners' Brass Band is led by Domen Prezelj who has himself specially composed a piece based on traditional Slovenian melodies for the joint concert in Poschiavo.

Poschiavo: first joint appearance and premiere

Isabelle Herlin and Domen Prezelj met for the first time in March of this year in Idrija. Their common language was in fact music: Isabelle on the one hand speaks French and German, while Domen speaks Slovenian and English. The idea for the concert arose the previous year at a meeting of the Alpine Towns of the Year. The Miners' Brass Band and Tétrás Lyre have been rehearsing since March, modifying scores and adapting the music to their respective notions and needs. The first joint rehearsal will take place on 6 September in Brusio/Val Poschiavo.

The two conductors will alternate their roles at the concert, which will present a challenge for the mentally disabled musicians in particular. Pieces from the repertoires of both orchestras will be played, including the Queen's greatest hits, traditional songs from Slovenia and melodies from France. The concert takes place on Friday, 7 September at 9 p.m. in the auditorium in Poschiavo. A general rehearsal, open to the public, will be held on the same day at 10 a.m. in Brusio sports hall. The concert is free and the programme can be found at:

http://www.alpenstaedte.org/de/projekte/jugend/de/projekte/jugend/alpinetownsinconcert_program-1/at_download/file (de/fr/it/sl)

The concert has been made possible by the Alpine Town of the Year association with the support of the International Alpine Protection Commission, CIPRA. It is part of the young@lpweek project which is being promoted by (among others) the Val Poschiavo Region, Jugend in Aktion, Migros Kulturprozent, Kulturförderung Graubünden and ARE, the Swiss Federal Office for Spatial Development.

Any questions? Please contact :

Isabelle Herlin, Conductor of Tétrás Lyre: +33 613 289 664, i.herlin@mairie-chambery.fr

Tomaz Vencelj, Manager of Idrija's Miners' Brass Band, +38651440524, tomaz.vencelj@gmail.com

Websites of the orchestras: <http://tetraslyre.free.fr> (fr), <http://godbeno-drustvo-rudarjev-idrija.si> (sl)