



Press release

Žilina, 1 June 2023

František Macek is the new chief conductor of the Slovak Sinfonietta Žilina

The Slovak Sinfonietta will enter its jubilee 50th concert season 2023/2024 with a new chief conductor, the young Czech conductor František Macek. This appointment follows his debut with the orchestra in 2021 at the Allegretto Žilina Festival, where he won the Allegretto Žilina Festival Prize and received an invitation to open the 2022 festival season. In the upcoming season, František Macek will conduct 5 productions with the Slovak Sinfonietta.

Karel Hampl, the General Director of the Slovak Sinfonietta, stated: *"I am very pleased that we are entering the jubilee 50th concert season with our new chief conductor, František Macek. Since I took up the position of director of the Slovak Sinfonietta in early 2020, I have strived to fill the position of chief conductor with the best possible candidate. More than three years have passed since then, which have been very challenging for the orchestra, the organization, and each one of us. I believe that we have found the perfect match and that this upcoming artistic collaboration with our new chief conductor will deepen the artistic enthusiasm and quality of the orchestra, building upon the previous collaborations with outstanding former chief conductors such as Eduard Fischer, Jan Valta, Leoš Svárovský, Oliver Dohnányi, and Simon Chalk. I wish the new chief conductor and the entire orchestra many beautiful artistic achievements."*

The new chief conductor of Slovak Sinfonietta, František Macek, will present himself with the orchestra at five subscription concerts in the 50th concert season 2023/2024 at the Fatra House of Arts in Žilina: at the Season Opening Concert on September 14, 2023, with a program featuring works by Ludwig van Beethoven and featuring soloist Juraj Čižmarovič; at a concert on October 12, 2023, with renowned French trumpeter Romain Leleu; at concerts on February 15 and 16, 2024, dedicated to the Year of Czech Music and featuring soloist Ivo Kahánek; at Easter concerts on April 4 and 5, 2024, featuring Dvořák's Mass in D major; and at a concert on May 23, 2024, featuring works by Franz Schubert and Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy.

František Macek expressed his thoughts on his previous collaboration with the Slovak Sinfonietta: *"The nature of the Slovak Sinfonietta, as a chamber orchestra, demands artistic work focused on the smallest musical details. I have prepared two concert programs for the Allegretto Žilina Festival and the recent Easter program with the orchestra, and each time it was an inspiring and mutually enriching collaboration. I am delighted that we share the same artistic vision and I am pleased to see that the enthusiasm from our collaboration is also transmitted to our audience."*

František Macek

Hailed for his "energy and intensity" (Prague Spring Festival), the young Czech conductor, František Macek, is gaining a reputation for his distinctive musicianship and commitment to artistic excellence.

František Macek gained recognition in the professional conducting world in 2018 when he emerged as the winner of an international competition organized by the Polish National Radio Symphony

Orchestra (NOSPR) in Katowice, which boasts one of the best modern concert halls in Europe. The main prize earned him the position of assistant conductor to NOSPR's then chief conductor, Alexander Liebreich.

In 2020, František Macek became the artistic director of the International Music Festival "Music in the Gardens and Castle of Kroměříž," which is dedicated to classical music performed in the UNESCO sites of the city of Kroměříž. In the spring of 2021, he made his debut at the Prague Spring Festival with the Prague Radio Symphony Orchestra and regularly performs with other Czech orchestras such as the FOK Prague Symphony Orchestra, PKF – Prague Philharmonia, Brno Philharmonic, Janáček Philharmonic Ostrava, Moravian Philharmonic Olomouc, Pilsen Philharmonic, Bohuslav Martinů Philharmonic Zlín, and Czech Chamber Philharmonic Pardubice. František Macek has also successfully established himself on the international stage, having performed with orchestras such as the Orquesta de Valencia, Singapore Symphony Orchestra, Opéra Orchestre National Montpellier, Sinfonietta Cracovia, Silesian Philharmonic Katowice, and the Chamber Orchestra of the Kraków Philharmonic, among others. He has also collaborated with the Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich, Moscow Philharmonic, Aspen Festival Orchestra, Lucerne Festival Strings, Gstaad Festival Orchestra, Norrköping Symphony Orchestra, Gävle Symphony Orchestra, Norrlands Operan Orchestra, Västerås Sinfonietta, Dalasinfoniettan, Orchestra Giovanile Italiana, and the Netherlands Symphony Orchestra.

František Macek possesses unique versatility in understanding musical styles and interpretive traditions. He acquired these experiences during his studies of orchestral and choral conducting at the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague and the Royal College of Music in Stockholm. He is also a graduate of organ performance from the Conservatory in Kroměříž and historically informed interpretation at the Collegium Marianum in Prague. He further refined his conducting skills through masterclasses with Bernard Haitink, Daniel Gatti, and Manfred Honeck, and he has completed the prestigious American Academy of Conducting at Aspen and the Menuhin Festival Academy in Gstaad, Switzerland.