Ostrava, 6 April, 2022

**FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HISTORY THE EXCELLENT SINFONIA VARSOVIA IS PERFORMING AT THE LEOŠ JANÁČEK INTERNATIONAL MUSIC FESTIVAL**

**For many years now, Sinfonia Varsovia has held the post of one of the top European orchestras. The sovereign orchestral art the ensemble performes has been appreciated by listeners around the world. This year, for the first time in the history, this renowned Polish ensemble will be a guest of the Leoš Janáček International Music Festival. Due to its unique qualities, the orchestra was chosen for the Slavonic Evening, which will take place in the middle of the Festival, that is, on 16 June, at the House of Culture of the city of Ostrava.**

‘Of course, our Festival is also responding to Russia's uncomprehensible and cruel aggression against Ukraine, to a war that no one in Europe expected to take place in the 21st century. The concert program is intentionally and especially built with a strong reference to Ukraine,’ says Jaromír Javůrek, the director of the Leoš Janáček International Music Festival.

After the really silent music of the Ukrainian author Valentin Silvestrov, who will take us virtually and symbolically through the ruins of Kharkov and Mariupol, we set out in the symphonic poem by Zygmunt Noskowski, a Polish contemporary of Antonín Dvořák, to the broad plains of eastern Poland. Ludwig van Beethoven's Symphony No. 5, which has a timeless and still strong and relevant moral appeal and a humanitarian dimension, will close the extraordinary evening.

Sinfonia Varsovia will perform under the direction of Yaroslav Shemet. Only a 25-year-old Polish conductor of Ukrainian origin (born in Lviv) is one of the greatest hopes of the young conductor's generation. He has been invited to the special concert of the Festival mainly for his artistic mastery, but the young artist's Ukrainian origin adds another dimension to the exceptional concert.

Programme:

Valentin Silvestrov Silent Music for Strings (Czech premiere)

Zygmunt Noskowski Step, symphonic poem, Op. 66 (Czech premiere)

Ludwig van Beethoven Symphony No. 5 in C minor of Ludwig van Beethoven, Op. 67

The Leoš Janáček International Music Festival will take place from May 29 to July 1, 2022, and visitors can look forward to thirty events in Ostrava and other cities in the Moravian-Silesian region. The complete program, including the possibility of booking tickets, is available at www.mhflj.cz/program.

**FESTIVAL IN NUMBERS:**

30 events

22 concerts

6 cities of the Moravian-Silesian region – Ostrava, Hukvaldy, Opava, Frýdek-Místek, Příbor, Ludgeřovice

11 countries of the world where our performers will be traveling from – France, Germany, Poland, USA, Iceland, Monte Negro, Great Britain, Ukraine, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Croatia,

and 1 fox (Little Vixen)

**ABOUT THE FESTIVAL:**

The Leoš Janáček International Music Festival was established in 2018 by merging two important classical music festivals named after Leoš Janáček: Janáček's May and Janáček's Hukvaldy, and it continues their more than 70-year long history. Its aim is to present works of classical music in the Moravian-Silesian region, with an emphasis on the work and legacy of Leoš Janáček, performed by top Czech and foreign artists and ensembles. The festival is a long-term member of the European Festival Association, where together with the Prague Spring it is the only representative of the Czech Republic, and thus represents Czech festival events and Czech classical music on this now worldwide platform.

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