Press release, 30. 4. 2019, Brno

**Victory for the Janáček Brno Festival at the prestigious International Opera Awards!**

The Janáček Brno Festival has become the first festival in the Czech Republic to receive the Festival of the Year award (for the 2018 edition) at the prestigious International Opera Awards. This success was achieved despite strong competition from other shortlisted festivals such the Ruhrtriennale and Opera Holland Park. The director of National Theatre Brno, Martin Glaser, and the head of the theatre’s Janáček Opera, Jiří Heřman, collected the award at a festive gala evening in London on 29th April 2019.  Other prize winners included Opera Vlaanderen (Opera Company of the Year) and London Covent Garden (Production of the Year).

*“With this victory, National Theatre Brno and its festival have come to stand in the illustrious company of the very best artists and ensembles in the whole opera world. After only 6 editions of the festival this is an almost unbelievable success...”* said Martin Glaser, director of National Theatre Brno. The 6th year of the international opera and music festival Janáček Brno 2018, which was held from 17th November to 5th December last year, attracted a record number of visitors (13 278 paying spectators from more than 30 countries around the world, which is an average visitor rate per production of over 95%).

 *“It is an opera Oscar for us, and we believe that it is an important moment of cultural significance for the whole Czech Republic. With it we have sent a signal out into the world that Leoš Janáček´s work lives on, and not only abroad, but also in the Czech Republic,”* Martin Glaser and Jiří Heřman said on collecting the award.

The International Opera Awards was created in 2012 with the aim of supporting exceptional feats and artists in the field of opera all over the world. The patrons of the organization include personalities such as Sir Thomas Allen, Janet Baker and Mirella Freni. Every year, a jury of leading opera experts selects award winners in eighteen categories, aiming to determine the previous year’s best individual artistic performance, production, world premiere, orchestra and opera ensemble, for example.

The Janáček Brno Festival 2020 will be held from 28th September – 16th October 2020. The festival will be ceremonially opened by the premiere of a new production of the opera Fate by Leoš Janáček. The programme of the Janáček Brno Festival 2020 will be published on 1st December 2019 on the occasion of a preview concert by the first-rate ensemble Pavel Haas Quartet at the Reduta Theatre in Brno. Festival tickets will also go on sale in November this year.

## *“In order to make the waiting period shorter for the fans of our biennale, we have prepared a series of preview events and concerts which will take place this autumn in Brno. October will feature our excellent production of Janáček´s Jenůfa, which will be broadcast to the whole world via the Opera Vision platform. In November, theatregoers can look forward to a ceremonial first recital with Janáček´s restored original Ehrbar piano at the Leoš Janáček Memorial, along with other attractive concerts,” Jiří Heřman, the art manager of the Janáček Opera, National Theatre Brno, added.*

Information about the Janáček Brno 2020 festival and our preview concerts will be updated continuously on the web pages [www.janacek-brno.cz](http://www.janacek-brno.cz)

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