P R E S S  R E L E A S E

**THE PLASTIC PEOPLE OF THE UNIVERSE WITH BRNO PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA AND THE PROJECT BOLO NÁS JEDENÁSŤ – POHODA WILL BE OPENED BY TWO CONCERTS DEDICATED TO THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VELVET REVOLUTION**

**11. – 13. JUL 2019 – AIRPORT TRENČÍN**

Freedom is an important dimension of art. If it weren't for the events of November 1989, only people in uniforms instead of music stars would be walking through the Trenčín airport until today. The 30th anniversary of the greatest milestone in our history will be commemorated in several ways at Pohoda 2019. As far as music is concerned, there will be two different approaches that artists used to come to terms with the reality in times of freedom deprivation. The underground one is represented by The Plastic People of the Universe and the Brno Philharmonic Orchestra with the project “Co znamená vésti koně" (translated as Leading Horses). Coping through humour is presented by the project Bolo nás jedenásť (translated as There Were Eleven of Us), which had its live premiere at Pohoda 2017. This time it will be performed with an extended line-up and programme as well. Yael from Lola Marsh, Zuzana Krónerová, Juraj Benetin, Vec and Peter Lipa will accompany the original line-up.

**"Co znamená vésti koně" - The Plastic People of the Universe and Brno Philharmonic Orchestra**

"New Bond?" asked Matwe, when the Plastic People with the Philharmonic started to play in our office. All sort of people have played with an orchestra, in this case, however, it is an exceptionally successful union, as the songs of the Plastic People sound fantastic. The arranger Michal Nejtek added the Plastic People an unprecedented power through a hypnotic theme.

"Co znamená vésti koně" is the third thematic project of The Plastic People of The Universe. The music of Hlavsa is united with the original lyrics by Vratislav Brabenec from 1967– 1979 and with the text of Samson by Pavel Zajíček that fits spiritually into the concept of the project. "Horses" were created when the band was banned, played about once a year at secret events and each concert was the premiere and at the same time the last performance of the new programme. For example, they pretended their performances were weddings of their friends and fans.

The concert "Co znamená vésti koně" took place in March 1981 in Kerhartice near Česká Lipa. Thanks to thorough secrecy, it was played without an intervention of the repressive forces, but the house where it was held burnt down a few weeks after the event. The ŠtB’s (State Security) message was clear – every space where a concert will be held illegally will be burnt down. After this experience, the band didn’t play anything in that line-up and Brabenec emigrated after further pressure. "Horses" are not only the highlight of the cooperation between Hlavsa / Brabenec, but also the bravest excursion to the little explored areas of rock. As if in the most difficult time of their existence (when they could no longer play publicly or privately), the band responded to the situation by internal exile and escape from the rock spirit and rock matter: "If you do not allow us to play songs, we will make an oratorio."

The Plastic People of the Universe (PPU) were founded in 1968. Their work, initially influenced by the American Velvet Underground, Captain Beefheart and Frank Zappa, became one of the most original ones not only on the Czech rock scene. The group didn’t allow themselves to be forced into concessions and compromises against the regime (the authorities demanded the repertoire to be edited, the name to sound Czech and their hair to be cut), which deprived them of the necessary professional license. Without it, they couldn’t play officially or receive royalties, they had their equipment taken from them, and so on.

The band's systematic persecution culminated in 1976 with the imprisonment of several of its members. The group of opposition intellectuals, headed by Vaclav Havel, then organized a campaign to support them and release them which culminated in Charter 77. The Rock'n'roll band thus became a stimulus to the union of the democratic opposition of all directions, unprecedented in the then communist countries. The musicians became friends with Václav Havel and recorded two of their semi-professional illegal records at his cottage in Hrádeček. Throughout the whole time, the group maintained a clear artistic vision and developed musically into an unmistakable expression that gained recognition around the world, where their records often got in extremely complicated ways.

*“The Plastic People have kept admirable inner freedom all the time. They liked the music so much that they didn't make any compromises. At times, there is an opinion that in their case “it wasn’t about music” – I don’t know anyone on the home scene who lived for music as much as they did. They were willing to go to prison for it – yet they’ve kept perspective all the time and often refuse too much praise to their address. Yet, if someone in our area is an example of the power of art, it’s them. If you think they’re still not your cup of tea, come to see their Philharmonic concert, it's worth it,”* adds Michal Kaščák.

**Bolo nás jedenásť**

**"**Do batôžka si nalož pretvárku lož a faloš“ (loosely translated as Put pretence and falseness into your bag) – this song was one of the anthems of the Velvet Revolution. According to Milan Lasica, it’s too pathetic, but we disagree. After all, it’s known that the album Bolo nás jedenásť is stored in a display case in the music section of the Paris International Bureau of Weights and Measures as a basic unit of artistic perspective. Even though Lasica and Satinský are considered to be theatrical performers, they managed to record the best album of our history (according to many people) – Bolo nás jedenásť – thanks to their collaboration with brilliant Jaro Filip. Their singing qualities were brought to the fore by the totalitarian regime – when they were forbidden to make their own theatre, the theatre Nová Scéna (New Scene) took them under their wings. They still encountered bans, but a number of their dialogues came out on LPs and some were filmed by television*. "If the Communists were lacking something (as it is, in fact, with most of the top politicians until now), it’s staying on top of things and having sense of humour. It’s humour that becomes a wonderful weapon and Lasica and Satinský could use it really masterfully. Maybe I’ll sound pathetic now, but the work of Milan and Julo – we all kind of appropriated them – notably helped to bear the grievances of the regime with a smile, though often only internal,”* said Michal Kaščák.

Album Bolo nás jedenásť was presented live for the first time in history at Pohoda 2017. Since then it has been played in studio L + S at sold out concerts every time. After one of them, Milan Lasica had a slip of the tongue before the encore – the perfect candidate for a possible new Slovak anthem, the song "My" (Us) – when he told the audience that more encores would be presented at Pohoda. It is true – in addition to the songs from the album Bolo nás jedenásť, many more from the following ones will be performed. Milan Lasica will sing Lasica, Dorota Nvotová will sing her father Jaro Filip’s part and several famous personalities will alternate Julo Satinský.

The brass instruments will be played by Michal Žáček, Martin Valihora and Marek Minárik (exLucie) will take up the rhythm section, Dano Salontay (Longital) will play the guitar and Andrej Jarolín will play the cimbalom. The band is expanded with a string quartet (Gabriela Rybárová, Milan Adamec, Slavo Solovic, Peter Kaščák) and Julo Satinský's parts will be shared by Braňo Jobus, Martin Višňovský (Chiki liki tu-a), Juraj Podmanický (Billy Barman), Tomáš Šedivý „Lasky "(Para) and Michal Kaščák. The “traditional singing line-up” at Pohoda will be joined by Peter Lipa (who else should sing Valutový cudzinec? (The Currency Stranger)), Juraj Benetin (who else should sing "Chcel by som byť taký báči, čo sa všetkým ženám páči“ (I’d like to be such a man that all women like)), Vec (who else should rap one of the first Slovak raps "Rodinné záležitosti” (Family Affairs)). The icing on the cake will be the song “Čerešne” (Cherries) sung by Zuzana Kronerová and Yael Shoshana Cohen, the singer of Lola Marsh. Jan Šicko and his students Šimon Chovan and Barbora Bohušová will take care of the projection.

The concert Bolo nás jedenásť will also be dedicated to Jaro Philip, who turns seventy up in the heaven in June. *“Jaro Filip played at the second edition of Pohoda. It was the year of elections, under the governance of the Prime Minister Mečiar. He had a great speech on the subject. It was very powerful, he achieved an absolute success with it. He was then travelling Slovakia with humourists and agitated,”* recalls Michal Kaščák in an interview for Denník N. Filip had an invitation to Pohoda 99 as well, but got into a car crash. In summer of 2000 his music was played only by his bandmates and friends at the festival. He died of a heart attack on July 11, and in a few days the first commemoration was held at Pohoda. Now there will be another, already the third one in a row, as part of the celebration of the thirtieth anniversary of the Velvet Revolution at our festival.

**VIDEO:**

* **Co znamená vésti koně - The Plastic People of the Universe & Filharmonie Brno** [**https://youtu.be/XdFP2JcYTUw**](https://youtu.be/XdFP2JcYTUw)
* **Bolo nás jedenásť – Live at Pohoda 2017** [**https://youtu.be/7MJbwxpXlR0**](https://youtu.be/7MJbwxpXlR0)

**About Pohoda Festival**

Pohoda offers an eclectic program that ranges from classical to techno, and all the way through experimental music. Pohoda is a multidisciplinary festival, where theatre, dance, literature, and visual arts are also strongly represented. The festival has won the European Festival Award (EFA) for Take a Stand 2018, our CEO Michal Kascak won EFA Award for Excellence & Passion in 2018 and in 2017 Pohoda won the EFA for Green Operations.

**Confirmed artists Pohoda 2019:**

Liam Gallagher, Lykke Li, The 1975, The Roots, Skepta, Mac DeMarco, Charlotte Gainsbourg, Michael Kiwanuka, Mura Masa, Lianne La Havas, Death Grips, Michael Kiwanuka, Jeff Mills, The Plastic People of The Universe a Filharmonie Brno, Lola Marsh, Amadou & Mariam and The Blind Boys of Alabama, Vitalic, Sofi Tukker, Dimension, Bolo nás jedenást, Trojan Sound System, Calypso Rose, Shortparis, Sudan Archives, IC3PEAK, Viagra Boys, Helsinki Cotonou Ensemble, The Venopian Solitude, Emmanuel Jal & Nyaruach, Bazzookas, Alxndr London, BaBa Zula, Para, Donny Benét, Slobodná Európa, Korben Dallas, Bukahara, Ultrazvuk, Show Me The Body, Veronica Vasicka, Dream Wife, Noga Erez, Gleb, FAKA, Alyona Alyona, Cari Cari, Raketkanon, Life, Kokoko!, Illnurse, Sho Madjozi, Penelope Isles, Haiku Hands, Ekman Live, Sink Ya teeth, Čavalenky, Snapped Ankles, Trio Katastrofa, Shibuya Motors, Natalie Sharp,...

Videos & more information can be found here: [www.pohodafestival.sk/en/artists](http://www.pohodafestival.sk/en/artists)

Tickets for Pohoda 2019, can be purchased here: [www.pohodafestival.sk/en/product/3-day-ticket-2019](http://www.pohodafestival.sk/en/product/3-day-ticket-2019)

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