

Superlative artistic quality and enthusiastic public response at this special edition of the Jazzaldia

The 55th San Sebastian Jazz Festival will be remembered by everyone, and not only because we went to its concerts wearing a mask and in small numbers, in special and clearly adverse circumstances, but also for its incredible concerts, its unique moments and its excellent quality throughout. The public response to the situation was exemplary, demonstrating great responsibility, yet with no loss of enthusiasm and almost full capacity at all venues. We must also highlight the total absence of incidents.

This year, for the first time, we gave three Donostiako Jazzaldia Awards, an extremely well-deserved recognition for three Jazz geniuses: Jorge Pardo, Chano Domínguez and Iñaki Salvador. All three also took the centre stage, either together, or with their bands, to give memorable concerts at the main Jazzaldia venues: the Plaza de la Trinidad, the Kursaal Auditorium and the Victoria Eugenia Theatre.

Alongside the afore mentioned figures, we had the opportunity to enjoy a selection of the best Spanish artists and groups. All of them, delighted at being able to give live concerts once again, brought us incredible moments packed with musical quality and art: Chano Domínguez, Marco Mezquida, Perico Sambeat, Carles Benavent, Chicuelo, Sílvia Pérez Cruz, Antonio Serrano, Raül Refree with the Portuguese singer Lina, Josemi Carmona, Tino di Geraldo...

We also had concerts by Basque groups and artists of spectacular calibre. In the “Trini”, Oreka TX and Michel Portal gave two concerts, also leaving us with a joint improvisation that will stay with us forever. San Sebastian’s Iñaki Salvador with

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two concerts, one at the Kursaal together with Chano Domínguez, and the other at the Victoria Eugenia Theatre with Jorge Pardo and Bizkaia's Borja Barrueta, who also performed with Pamplona's Javier Colina in the "Trini". In the San Telmo Museum cloister two pianists from San Sebastian, Paul San Martín and Mikel Azpiroz. And on the last day of the Festival, at the Victoria Eugenia Theatre, Joseba Irazoki with his friends.

Completing the list of local performers, we also had the opportunity to see many young artists on the Kursaal Terraces, where we introduced a new format encompassing 21 concerts, all free of charge and with controlled audience numbers, in a space which turned out to be a magnificent spot to have a drink while enjoying great live music, all with spectacular views and the fantastic weather that accompanied us throughout the whole Festival.

Three of this year's best concerts featured Portuguese artists: Lina together with the Catalan Raül Refree at the Victoria Eugenia Theatre, Salvador Sobral at the Kursaal and Mariza in the Plaza de la Trinidad.

The remaining artists, although some of them live in Spain, hailed from other countries: Norway, Sweden, France, Germany, Serbia, the United States... Rymden, Joachim Kühn, Anja Lechner, François Couturier, Bojan Z., Randy Greer (who lives in Valencia), Sean Clapis (who lives in Madrid)...

One new feature this year took the shape of the concerts given in streaming mode, a total of 15 performances, followed live by myriad aficionados all over the world and which have already clocked up more than 14,000 viewings. A service offering free concerts and admission for those unable to attend the concerts in person. Also worthy of note is the fact that we now have 34,000 followers on social media.

The eighth edition of Txikijazz brought 4 concerts which were hugely enjoyed and appreciated by the families who came along to watch them on the Kutxa Kultur Terrace at Tabakalera and on the Kursaal Terraces.

At the end of the day, a Festival to remember both for the excellent quality of the concerts and for the incredible response of the Jazz aficionados, despite the adverse circumstances.

The San Sebastian Jazz Festival, to run from 21-25 July 2021, reveals a substantial part of its line up

The 56th Jazzaldia is already well on the way to completing its programme for 2021. Trusting that by then audience numbers will have returned to their original capacities and the conditions will have been restored to normal, part of the programme will be recovered, while hugely important names are also added to the Festival line up.

Stellar incorporations to the next edition of the Jazzaldia are Herbie Hancock, Gregory Porter, Mulatu Astatke, Yann Tiersen, Brad Mehldau and the young female saxophonist, Lakecia Benjamin.

Simple Minds, Cécile McLorin Salvant, Kurt Elling, with a new project including the guitarist Charlie Hunter, Hiromi, León Benavente and Vintage Trouble continue to feature as per the programme announced for 2020 prior to the Covid outbreak.

John Zorn postpones the presentation of his two Masada quartets in the Plaza de la Trinidad until 2022.