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MESSE BREMEN · M3B GmbH

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jazzahead! Trade fair & festival 2024 opens

Yesterday the start of the 18th edition of jazzahead! is taking place in Bremen from 11 to 14 April. One of its first highlights was a well-attended opening ceremony with several performances by musicians from the 2024 partner country the Netherlands and representatives of the focus theme "Jazz from Africa".

Götz Bühler, Artistic Advisor of jazzahead!, was in his familiar role as presenter of the lively programme and also expressed succinctly what jazz from the Netherlands means and what an important political message this music conveys.

"For me, contemporary jazz represents the progressive nature of humanity: jazz advocates openness and encourages curiosity in a society where people are becoming more and more restricted, day by day. I see jazz as an exciting place, a space for free-flowing ideas and experimentation," said Viktorien van Hulst (Director Performing Arts Fund NL) in her welcoming speech.

Hans Peter Schneider, Managing Director of M3B GmbH, and Kai Stührenberg, Chairman of the Supervisory Board, welcomed the substantial audience. Minister of State for Culture Claudia Roth gave an address by video message which was enthusiastically received: "We see jazz as a living part of our culture and our society, as a prime example of tolerance and openness."

The festival offers a total of 120 concerts. A final highlight is the gala concert on Saturday evening. The internationally renowned Dutch youth jazz orchestra NJJO (Nationaal Jeugd Jazz Orkest), conducted by star trumpeter Maïté Hontelé, will perform in the large concert hall of the Congress Centre Bremen with two real "special guests": Ramón Valle and Ronald Snijders. Guests at the opening ceremony were given a first taste of the Gala Concert.

Tickets for all festival events are available at the advance booking offices, by calling +49 421 - 36 36 36, from Nordwest Ticket via its own webshop, at all advance booking offices and at the box offices of the participating venues. Further information can be found under "Get your tickets" at www.jazzahead.de.

Here are the first impressions of the opening day:

You can download images from the following links:

Image 1: © M3B GmbH/Jan Rathke https://newsroom.messe-bremen.de/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/DSC_4807.jpg

Caption: Beaming with anticipation: the organisers of the 18th edition of jazzahead! and the partner country, the Netherlands.

Image 2: © M3B GmbH/Jan Rathke https://newsroom.messe-bremen.de/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/DSC_0769.jpg

Caption: Trumpeter Maïté Hontelé in duo with Cuban pianist Ramon Vallé got the audience singing along.

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Image 3: © M3B GmbH/Jan Rathke https://newsroom.messe-bremen.de/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/DSC_0610.jpg

Caption: Kika Sprangers and Tijn Wybenga, two young stars of the Dutch scene, in a very personal exchange about what makes the scene so special.

Image 4: © M3B GmbH/Jan Rathke https://newsroom.messe-bremen.de/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/DSC_1128.jpg

Caption: South African guitarist Vuma Levin and his sextet performed with musicians from the partner country, the Netherlands.

Image 5: © M3B GmbH/Jan Rathke https://newsroom.messe-bremen.de/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/DSC_1058.jpg

Caption: The percussionist Vernon Chatlein from Curacao is an integral part of the Dutch scene.

Image 6: © M3B GmbH/Jan Rathke https://newsroom.messe-bremen.de/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/DSC_0176.jpg

Caption: Celebrating his 82nd birthday next week: drumming legend Han Bennink in a trio with guitarist Reinier Baas and saxophonist Ben van Gelder.

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