**Banja Luka, October 14, 2023**

**JURY DECISIONS AND JUSTIFICATIONS**

The jury for the 22nd International Festival of Children's Theatres BANJA LUKA 2023 composed of: Marijana Prpa Fink, a Ph.D. and professor from Novi Sad, Serbia; Goran Bulajic, a playwright and director from Podgorica, Montenegro, the president; Zorana Suman, an actress from the Children's Theatre of the Republic of Srpska, a member, who assessed 14 plays from nine different countries competing for awards between October 8 and October 14, 2023.

Participants: Youth Theatre, Novi Sad, Puppet Theatre "Pinocchio" and Little Theatre "Dusko Radovic", Belgrade, Serbia, City Theatre "Firebird", Zagreb, Theatre Company "Pinklec", Cakovec and Zadar Puppet Theatre, Zadar, Croatia, Theatre "Vessel", Veliko Trnovo and State Puppet Theatre, Ruse, Bulgaria, Youth Theatre, Sarajevo, Theatre "LALKA", Warsaw, Poland, Institute "Kuskus" and Art Production, Ljubljana, Slovenia, Theatre "Tyjatar", Nitra, Slovakia, "Kemal Fatih Polat" Shadow Theatre, Istanbul, Turkey and "Neamera" Theatre, Puerto Real, Spain.

The jury unanimously made the following decisions during the final session on October 14, 2023:

SPECIAL AWARD FOR COLLECTIVE PLAY is given to the ensemble of the State Puppet Theatre, Ruse, Bulgaria

In the performance 'The Dog Who...', the actors develop a stage language through the joy of playing and have a strong impact on children as the audience.

SPECIAL AWARD has been given to the performance “When it was Dark”, Little Theatre “Dusko Radovic”, Belgrade, Serbia, for nurturing and affirming poetry in the theatre.

SPECIAL AWARD for the design of puppet characters is given to the performance

"The Wizard of Oz", Theatre "Lalka", Warsaw, Poland

The cast of characters, created with exceptional skill through objects and puppets, enhanced the magic essential to the show.

SPECIAL AWARD for enhancing the connection between tradition and modernity is given to the performance “The World Stars Show” by the Shadow Theatre “Kemal Fatih Polat”, Istanbul, Turkey.

In the performance, the attitude toward tradition was expressed through the classic theatrical method “Karagöz” which allowed children to become acquainted with new musical expressions and so realize the significance of tradition while respecting contemporary stage and media expressions.

**ACTING AWARDS:**

**Kristina Savkov** - for the role of Coraline in the performance “Coraline” of Youth Theatre Novi Sad, Serbia

Actress Kristina Savkov brought the young audience through the lovely world of Coraline's adventures with an outstanding sense of delicacy in the multiple transitions that the protagonist went through.

**Amanda Prenkaj** - for the role of Frida in the performance "Little Frida," City Theatre "Firebird", Zagreb, Croatia

Actress Amanda Prenkaj accurately performs the assigned stage task, through physical expression, revealing the figure of a great painter to the children, and emphasizing the importance of friendship and sincerity in life as fundamental principles in life processes.

Three acting awards were given to the Theatre “Lalka”, Warsaw, Poland for the performance “The Wizard of Oz”.

**Magdalena Pamula** for the role of Dorothy, which she develops using a framework that originally tells a well-known stage story and allows kids to experience the wonder of acting abilities that similarly bring the emotion of magic to other stage aspects.

**Hani Turnau** for her performance as Dorothy, who convincingly conjures the character of Dorothy with her exceptional knowledge of performing and singing, as well as her subtle nuances in building relationships on stage with other characters.

To actor **Grzegorz Felus**, who, in the character of Oz, with a distinctive acting expression and authority of the role he portrays, acting nuances in stage expression, conjures up to children a world of trust, which is important in the process of growing up.

The Award "Dragan Banjac" for the most comical acting performance is given to **Dominik Karakasic** for the role of Karlsson, in the performance "Karlsson on the Roof", produced by the Zadar Puppet Theatre.

Dominik Karakašić's incredible energy, with whom he has once again captured the Banja Luka audience for the third time, is indisputable evidence that this year's Karlson, the charming and endearing puppet skillfully operated by this talented artist, has a heart that brings boundless happiness and laughter to our children.

AWARD FOR THE BEST DIRECTOR**: Jakub Maksymov**, "CORALINE", Youth Theatre, Novi Sad, Serbia

Director Jakub Maksimov brings to virtuosity the integration of the stage components of puppetry, scenography, light, and music in his production "Coraline." With an extraordinary sense of stage rhythm that leads to emotion, this virtuoso guided score of stage expression introduces youngsters as an audience to the exciting world of theatrical dance.

AWARD FOR THE BEST SCENOGRAPHY: **Igor Vasiljev**, "LITTLE FRIDA", City Theatre “Firebird”, Zagreb, Croatia

The scenery in the performance "Little Frida" serves a number of purposes. Apart from defining the area and signifying the play's location, it also plays a crucial role in the actions that dictate the roles of the actors and the fictional characters. Furthermore, it contributes to the dramaturgical turn of the performance, which also signifies the change in stage time.

AWARD FOR THE BEST MUSIC to **Peter Kus** in the performance "THE FOREST OF SONGS" by the "Kuskus" Institute and Art Production, Ljubljana, Slovenia

The music of the performance "The Forest of Songs" brings to life the natural world with stage components that blend virtuoso performance methods using musical compositions to create an emotionally charged stage environment.

The GRAND PRIX, BEST OVERALL PERFORMANCE: “THE FOREST OF SONGS” by Kuskus Institute and Art Production, Ljubljana, Slovenia.

The performance "The Forest of Songs" uses unique stage expression techniques to construct its stage language where the acting, puppet theatre principles, and everything visible on stage combine to create a play style that is based on moral and artistic principles and offers an amazing theatrical experience for children as audience.

Marijana Prpa Fink, Ph.D. president

Goran Bulajic, member

Zorana Suman, member

Ljiljana Labovic Marinkovic, director of the Festival