

The Inauguration of the Polish Presidency of the EU Council

WHEN:



The 1st of July, marked the inauguration of Poland's presidency of the EU council. A series of cultural events were planned to celebrate the event. Festivities were also held in several European cities

In the Polish capital, a concert entitled "TU Warszawa" / "Here, Warsaw" formed the main event of the inauguration festivities. This three and a half hour long performance, directed by Krzysztof Materna and Kuba Wojewódzki, was broadcast live on the Polish channel 'TVP' as well as online. It took place by the Palace of Culture and Science.

The first part of the concert featured compositions by Fryderyk Chopin, Andrzej Kurylewicz, Jan A.P. Kaczmarek, Krzysztof Komeda and Wojciech Kilar, performed by pianists Janusz Olejniczak and Leszek Możdżer, the Sinfonia Varsovia Orchestra and bands such as the Tomasz Stańko Quintet, 'Me, Myself and I' and the violinist Sebastian Karpień-Bulecka. Chris Botti, the American trumpeter was the special guest of the evening. The second part of the concert included performances by Perfekt, Myslovitz, Lech Janerka, 'Kapela ze Wsi Warszawa' / 'Warsaw Village Band' and 'Gooral'. Highlights included special guest appearances by the multi-Grammy winning vocal quartet 'Manhattan Transfer', singer Michael Bolton, Saxophonist Kenny G and vocalists Angie Stone and Dolores O'Riordan (of 'The Cranberries').

Friday evening also heralded the Warsaw Grand Theatre performance of Karol Szymanowski's opera "King Roger". Set to a libretto by Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz, the opera was directed by British conductor David Pountney.

Paweł Mykietyn's "III Symphony" also premiered at the Warsaw National Philharmonic. Mykietyn, one of the most inventive contemporary Polish composers working today, devised his experimental 50-minute orchestral and vocal piece especially for the inauguration of Poland's EU Council Presidency. The vocal part was performed by one of Poland's most prominent opera singers - Jadwiga Rappé. The conductor was Reinbert de Leeuw.

Another highlight of the 1st of July celebrations were performances from over a hundred European artists on Warsaw's New Town Square. The performances aimed to illustrate the ways that different ethnic musical traditions can join together to create unique performance trends.

The folk song and dance group Teka performed traditional pieces from various Hungarian regions. DROM, a band inspired by Gypsy-swing roots, took the stage with the outstanding Gypsy singer Adam Kozłowski. The Gypsies from the Bucharest-based ensemble Mahala Rai Banda were accompanied by Polish highlanders - Tomasz Jabko Łapka (violin), and Stanisław Karpień Bulecka (vocals), while Gooral (Mateusz Górny) spiced up their traditional sound with an electronic twist.

The Warsaw Village Band appeared alongside legendary Swedish musicians from Hedningarna. Western Europe was represented by 'The Destroyers', a 15-member group from the United Kingdom offering a fusion of Balkan, Celtic, Greek, and Italian music in a punk-cabaret style.

The presidency will also showcase Polish culture abroad. The world premiere of "Planet Lem" took place in London's Theatre Square by the National Theatre. The performance marked the beginning of the show's world tour performed by theatre group Teatr Biuro Podróży. [Watch online.](#)

The 2nd of July saw the next event of the "I, CULTURE - Contemporary Craft Workshop" project at London's 'Watch This Space' festival. I, CULTURE is a sewing project led by artist and fashion designer Monika Jakubiak. During the six months of the Polish presidency the residents of 12 capitals will each sew one piece of a giant quilt. After the London edition of I,CULTURE the next 'stop' of the touring project took place in Paris - the contemporary craft workshop visited the city on the 6th of July.

The events of the 1st of July inauguration formed a prelude to the jam packed and global programme that kicks off during the six months of the Polish Presidency of the EU Council. All events, ranging from cultural happenings to artistic projects, are part of the presidency's Cultural Programme. For more information about select events, see: [PKPP](#).

Events linked to the Cultural Programme are already underway. On the 1st of June an exhibition entitled "Golden Age of the Polish Republic" opened in Madrid's Royal Palace, featuring Poland's achievements in art and culture from the rule of King Casimir the Great (1310-1370) to the loss of independence in 1795.

Since the 24th of June, Brussel's Centre for Fine Arts (BOZAR) has hosted an exhibition of contemporary and modern Polish art, showcasing the works of acclaimed Polish artists, such as Mirosław Bałka, Monika Sosnowska, Paweł Althamer and Wilhelm Sasnal. The exhibition gathered significant acclaim from both critics and audiences alike, with a particularly enthusiastic [review](#) published in the 'Financial Times' by columnist Jackie Wullschlager.

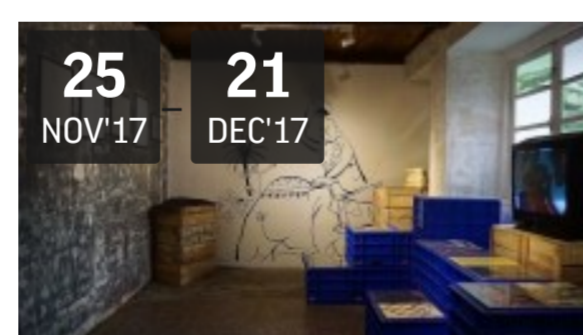
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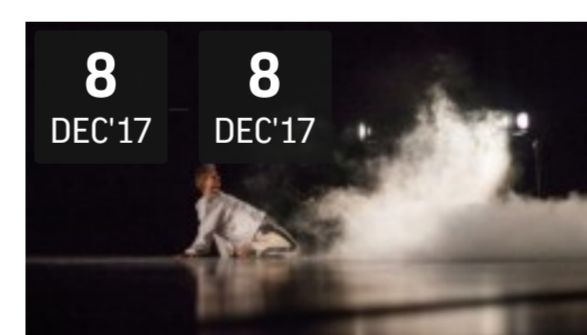
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