**Press release 29 April 2019**

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**Independent theatres join in calling for the dismissal of the Minister of Culture**

*On 29 April, International Dance Day, industry leaders join in support of the independence of the judiciary and to petition for the dismissal of the Minister of Culture.*

**Throughout Monday evening, PONEC – dance venue, Studio ALTA, Archa Theatre and Jatka78 will host a joint celebration of International Dance Day. On the same day participants will express their support for a major action to defend democracy in the Czech Republic: A Million Moments for Democracy and a petition for the dismissal of the Minister of Culture.**

In this context, they consider it necessary to appeal to the government coalition to **seek a true expert for the office of Minister of Culture**. In the first place, the government should be concerned with culture and art and with preserving and developing the values that it brings to society, as well as the Czech Republic's international reputation, not political considerations.

Experts agree that the Minister of Culture should at least consider:

\* Implementation of the Government Program Declaration, which clearly speaks of the prospect of a **1% share of the state budget earmarked for culture**. It should be added that this means purely support for culture, i.e. not including churches and religious societies.

\* The need to fundamentally increase **funding for live art** (the Cultural Activities program) and to conduct an **analysis of the needs** of individual artistic disciplines revealing the real needs for the development of all fields of art.

"For a cultural society, 1% is a critical commitment to culture. As funds grow, it is necessary to support the vast **development of the independent art scene** over the last 30 years and to fully professionalize the conditions for new progressive industries, including infrastructure investments,” explains **Yvona** **Kreuzmannová**, the director and founder of Tanec Praha. "The model of increasing employees' salaries in the state or public sector and thus further deepening the disproportion between contributory organizations and the independent scene cannot remain in place. Both these types of organizations provide beneficial services to the community; there should not be such a vast chasm between their working conditions."

**Štěpán Kubišta**, the director of Jatka78 and chairman of the Association of Independent Theatres agrees. "The system for supporting culture has not undergone the necessary transformation in the last 30 years. The second pillar of culture, which is made up of NGOs, is still perceived as a leisure activity, and its support reflects this. Most of the ministry's legislative, methodological and financial steps have led to even greater differences between the state and non-state cultural spheres. It is necessary to begin to perceive our sector not only as an integral part, but above all as a necessary part of the cultural offer, as is the case in all countries to which our cultural attention is turning."

Yvona Kreuzmannová, director, Tanec Praha / PONEC – dance venue

Lucia Kašiarová, director, ALT@RT/ Studio ALTA

Štěpán Kubišta, director, Jatka78

Ondřej Hrab, director, Archa Theatre

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**International Dance Day** takes place every year on **29 April** and enjoys attention the world over.

The event is open to the public free of charge from 5 pm for the Karlín Port 18600 venue. In case of bad weather, part of the program will be moved to the PONEC Theatre.

The following artists have promised to participate in the event:

Sabina Bučková, Cecile de Costa, Viktor Černický, Markéta Jandová, Johana Pocková, Martin Talaga, students of the Duncan Centre Conservatory, and others

Moderated by:

Daniela Voráčková

The event will conclude with:

DJ Spring