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Press Release, City of Bonn, January 2022

"Moving Together" - Cooperation of the United Nations in Bonn with Theater Bonn and Beethoven Orchester Bonn

The United Nations in Bonn and the City of Bonn with its two cultural institutions Theater Bonn and Beethoven Orchester Bonn have launched a strategic cooperation. Their joint goal is to bring the cultural programs of opera and orchestra to a broader international audience. The cultural sector's creative spirit and the ideals of the UN will blend in formats, forums for discussion and cultural life will be jointly developed with the intention of anchoring the issue of sustainability even deeper in public awareness and inspiring new ideas and impulses for this essential topic of the future.

Over the past 25 years, Bonn has successfully established itself as the Germany's United Nations City and as a center of international cooperation and sustainable development. Currently, 25 UN institutions in Bonn with over 1,000 employees from all parts of the world constitute the core of a unique international or internationally active cluster, uniting business, academia, civil society, the media and federal institutions. Many of them are working for a sustainable development.

Mayor Katja Dörner: "Bonn is an international, cosmopolitan city. In a way, this is inscribed into the DNA of our city and its residents. In Bonn, it is a natural thing to welcome people from all over the world. This was already the case in the days of the capital and continues today as a federal city and German UN City, where people from more than 180 different nations are living together. Now that Beethoven Orchester and Theater Bonn are specifically addressing our growing 'international family', we intend to tie this bond even more closely."

Patricia Espinosa, Executive Secretary UNFCCC representing the UN BONN: "With this partnership, the United Nations in Bonn have a singular opportunity to join forces and expand the outreach to the public through arts and culture. 'Moving Together' will bring the topics of the UN in Bonn closer to the citizens through cultural channels and will help to integrate the international staff in the local community."

Together for more Sustainability

Sustainability is one of the central topics for the future on the city's agenda. One of the functions of culture is to discuss the most vital issues of society, to stimulate dialogue and to provide inspiration for solutions through its creative spirit.

Director General of Theater Bonn Dr. Bernhard Helmich and General Music Director of the City of Bonn and Chief Conductor of Beethoven Orchester Bonn Dirk Kaftan are proud of developing new formats together with the UN in Bonn, to inspire dialogue between people, and to provide live and digital forums focusing on ideas for a more sustainable world and helping facilitate their implementation.

Together, Theater Bonn and Beethoven Orchester Bonn have decided to make a significant contribution to these topics of the future. "When I took up my position as Director General of Theater Bonn in 2013" says Dr. Bernhard Helmich, "it was my intention to bring our theater closer to all the people of this city and to make it part of their daily lives. Cooperating with the UN is a logical step in this regard, because the defining feature of both institutions is to bring people together - now and in the future." Dirk Kaftan confirms this: "Yes! Because it is possible to change something. Together! Music is a great way of transporting ideas into minds and hearts. You can only change the world if you are willing to start with yourself. And that's where music can help us. I'm convinced of that, and that's what drives our work."

Theater preserves our culture and develops our society; it preserves ideas, philosophy, music, literature, history, and dance - characteristics that define humanity - and it is a great repository of human emotion through the ages. Today, as at every time, it is essential to preserve these achievements, to develop them and thus to inspire and move people.

With this cooperation, theaters and orchestras are moving to the center of social dialogue and in this way contribute to strengthening the indispensable development of culture and society for sustainable and viable progress through preservation and adaptation.

Already since February 2021, Beethoven Orchester Bonn has been supporting the United Nations Climate Change Secretariat (UNFCCC) as a "Climate Ambassador" in its work for a more peaceful, inclusive and united world and in highlighting the importance of climate protection worldwide.

Offerings for international target groups

The offerings of the two municipal cultural institutions will be presented step by step to an international audience, while the topic of sustainability will be given a central role.

Information and communication offerings are now available in English: Website, surtitles at productions in the opera house and special events for international audiences. Theater and orchestra will use the city's international media in the future and communicate offers specifically for international audiences.

There are already English-language concert and opera introductions, guided tours of the opera house and behind the scenes, and a music theater and concert education program for children as well as for families or adults to allow expats as well as all other international guests of the city to experience opera and concerts up close.

Theater Bonn and the Beethoven Orchester Bonn are looking forward to many new live offerings for international target groups and will cooperate with as many international institutions in Bonn as possible to this end.

Further Information

More information on the cooperation is available at <https://www.theater-bonn.de/en/moving-together/>

Press contacts:

City of Bonn:

Barbara Löcherbach, Press officer, Tel. 0228 - 772112, E-Mail: Barbara.loecherbach@bonn.de

Theater Bonn:

Dr. Felicitas Weber, Press officer, Tel. 0228 - 778215, E-Mail: dr.felicitas.weber@bonn.de

Beethoven-Orchester Bonn:

Markus Reifenberg, Press officer, Tel. 0228 - 776615, E-Mail: markus.reifenberg@bonn.de

United Nations Climate Change Secretariat (UNFCCC):

Alexander Saier, Speaker, Tel: 0228 - 8151509, E-Mail: press@unfccc.int