

The Salzburg Festival is donating 50,000 Euro to facilitate musical education for Syrian refugee children in Jordan during the next two years



Riccardo Muti, Helga Rabl-Stadler, Anna Netrebko, Shirin Neshat, Francesco Meli, Angelika Svoboda and Ida Metzger-Niaghi.
photo: SF/Silvia Lelli

Salzburg, August 4rd, 2017 – The Salzburg Festival donate the net profit of the ticket sales for the dress rehearsal of the festival production AIDA, conducted by Riccardo Muti and directed by Shirin Neshat, with star soprano Anna Netrebko and Francisco Meli, to the NGO MECI (Middle East Children's Institute). With the 50,000 Euro, which have been raised to 100,000 Euro by a longtime patron of the Festival, 6,000 Syrian refugee children will receive musical education for the first time within the framework of the MECI program during the next two years. This way they will be able to develop their social skills as well as their self-expression.

Helga Rabl-Stadler, president of the Salzburg Festival, explains: "It is important to us not to forget those who need our help urgently over the enjoyment of the Festival. Thanks to the artists who forgo salary, and thanks to the customers who bought the tickets for the dress rehearsal, we can donate a substantial amount to MECI, an approved relief organization."

"It's my great honor to make a small contribution to this amazing organization by sharing the profit of our ticket sales. I'm so grateful to the Salzburg Festival for having initiated this wonderful collaboration. Such a humanitarian effort is rare, important

and a great model to follow in this moment of history”, says Iranian stage director Shirin Neshat.

MECI developed an innovative holistic model of multi-integrated services providing all students with learning and psychosocial support opportunities, life skills, and child protection services as well as access to the referral network of trauma therapists and self-development activities.

Lessons are held in public schools in the afternoons for girls and boys aged 6 to 14 years.

The MECI model shows that music and visual arts help children to overcome the trauma of war tremendously. „We thank the Salzburg Festival for this extraordinary financial contribution. We are very happy to be able to extend our educational offers to the very important sphere of music. Syrian refugee children in Jordan thus get another important building block to strengthen their confidence and self-expression“, MECI founder Lola Grace and the members of the board, Angelika Svoboda and Ida Metzger-Niaghi enthuse.



Anna Netrebko, Lola Grace, Helga Rabl-Stadler and Angelika Svoboda. photo: SF/Silvia Lelli

More Information:

Press office of the Salzburg Festival:
Mag. Ulla Kalchmair
u.kalchmair@salzburgfestival.at

MECI Austria:

Mag. Angelika Svoboda
Mölkerbastei 3/5; 1010 Vienna
Phone: +43 699 138 26 388