



## PRESS RELEASE

World-renowned saxophonist Jerry Bergonzi is the star of the 42nd edition of the international jazz festival JAZZFEST KARLOVY VARY 2025. Other programme highlights include the Karlovy Vary Symphony Orchestra, the quartet led by trumpeter Lukáš Oravec — featuring Bergonzi himself — soul diva Ingrid Arthur, and guitarist Libor Šmoldas performing alongside the stellar rhythm section of Jay Anderson and Adam Nussbaum.

Running from September to November, the festival concerts once again showcase a vibrant spectrum of modern jazz styles and their fusion with other genres. Organised by Jazzový kruh, headed by musician Milan Krajíc, JAZZFEST enters its next quarter-century of artistic leadership. The festival traditionally enjoys support from the City of Karlovy Vary and the Karlovy Vary Region, with patronage provided by Karlovy Vary Mayor Ing. Andrea Pfeffer Ferklová, MBA and Regional Governor Mgr. Jana Mračková Vildumetzová.

### From Symphonic Grandeur to Legendary New York Rhythms

JAZZFEST 2025 opens on **25 September** at the **Atrium of Imperial Spa** with a performance by the **Jan Kučera Trio** and the **Karlovy Vary Symphony Orchestra**. Conductor, pianist and composer **Jan Kučera** — Chief Conductor of the KSO from 2015 to 2021 — will present original compositions with his trio in the first half, while the second half features Kučera's symphonic arrangements of songs by Jaroslav Ježek, Voskovec & Werich, and George Gershwin, performed by the KSO and vocalist **Petra Brabencová** under Kučera's direction.

A chamber concert follows on **16 October** at the **Art Gallery**, starting with **Futur Swing**, a group inspired by the music of legendary guitarist Django Reinhardt, approached with inventive flair. In the second half, Karlovy Vary pianist and composer **Jindřich Henry Volf** will present his piece *Charles IV.*, performed with a string quartet and vocal duo.

On **23 October**, the **Hotel Imperial Concert Hall** will host a double-bill starting with **M. K. Collective**, led by saxophonist **Milan Krajíc**, returning with a fresh line-up and spotlighting talented 17-year-old singer **Julia Šlahařová**. The evening continues with the acclaimed **Lukáš Oravec Quartet feat. Jerry Bergonzi**. Led by trumpet virtuoso **Lukáš Oravec**, the ensemble has collaborated with jazz greats worldwide and recently recorded the album *Hope* with **Jerry Bergonzi** — considered one of the top 100 saxophonists of all time. Bergonzi has performed globally for over five decades with his own bands and jazz legends. The quartet is rounded out by pianist **Klaudius Kováč**, double bassist **Tomáš Baroš**, and drummer **Marián Ševčík** — all musicians of international acclaim.

November's concerts begin on **19 November** at **Kino Drahomíra** with **Jazz Inspiration VI**, a special edition of the **Poetry & Jazz** series. The **Drahomíra Poetry Group** will recite texts by Josef Kainar and poems by Václav Hrabě, interwoven with live music by **Milan Krajíc Duo**, featuring long-time collaborators saxophonist **Milan Krajíc** and pianist **František Nedvěd**. The headline act of the evening is American gospel powerhouse **Ingrid Arthur**, who has worked with international stars throughout her career and has been a successful solo artist since 2011. She will be accompanied by a top-tier trio: German keyboardist **Rolf Langhans**, Czech double bassist **Petr Dvorský**, and American drummer **Andy Winter**.

The festival finale on **25 November** takes place at the **Karlovy Vary Municipal Theatre**, opening with **Libor Šmoldas NYC Trio feat. Adam Nussbaum & Jay Anderson** — a brilliant union of European guitar virtuosity and elite American rhythm. The trio, far from a one-off collaboration, has released three albums to date. Anderson and Nussbaum have worked with countless top-tier jazz musicians, while Šmoldas tours worldwide and leads several projects in addition to the NYC Trio.

The closing performance features the **Cotatcha Big Band feat. Lenka Dusilová**. Known for its fusion of non-jazz genres with the big band sound, the Cotatcha Orchestra has previously collaborated with **Lenka Dusilová**, a nine-time **Anděl Award** winner. Dusilová enriches the ensemble not only with her distinctive vocals, but also with live electronics, adding sonic depth and originality to their work.

[www.jazzfest.cz](http://www.jazzfest.cz)