

CROATIAN WINE KNIGHTS AND CLASSICAL MUSIC

Since 2009, the Festival Kvarner association has been active in Croatia's oldest tourist resort, Opatija, organising numerous classical music concerts and events over 16 concert seasons. Since its inception, it has collaborated with an international academy from Austria led by leading musicians, which resulted in a partnership at European Union level. In its work to date, Festival Kvarner has hosted renowned classical music stars, numerous members of the Vienna and Berlin Philharmonics, as well as young musicians from all over the world. It has also developed its own concert formats and projects, such as Glagolica (Old Croatian script), which celebrated Croatia's accession to the EU with music in 2013. At all concerts, the focus has always been on the extraordinary – something that the city of Opatija can naturally offer thanks to its unique concert venues. One of these is the American Gardens, an exceptional natural, urban, atmospheric and horticultural space that lends itself to truly special concert experiences.

The Brotherhood of Croatian Wine Knights has been successfully collaborating with Festival Kvarner for six years, combining music and wine. Every year, after the concerts, they treat the audience and musicians to sparkling wine in the American Gardens in summer or in the Art Nouveau villas in winter. The sparkling wine is produced by local Wine Knights. In such settings and atmospheres, culture and wine blend to best effect. This combination delights not only visitors but also artists year after year, so these unique gatherings often last deep into the night under the stars, amidst hundreds of candles with views over the whole of Kvarner Bay. This was the case this summer, on 1 August, after the concert "Whisper" by the medieval musical ensemble SIBIL.LA. The Wine Knights offered three types of their sparkling wines made from two indigenous Croatian wine varieties – Teran and Belica – and from Chardonnay.

Mario Sušanj, Knight of Wine





