

**Address by the Mayor of Limassol, Mr. Nicos Nicolaides at the Great Ballets Festival 2017, on Thursday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2017 at 20.30 hours at the Garden Theatre «Marios Tokas»**

Ladies and gentlemen,

For one more year, I welcome you to the Great Ballets festival, the leading cultural event of our city.

Through the Great Ballet Festivals we have had the opportunity, for the past 17 years to enjoy excellent performances from the best ballet companies from all over the world. Amongst others, we have enjoyed: from Russia, the Bolshoi, Kirov, Eifman, the Kremlin and the Hermitage Theatre ballets, from Switzerland the Maurice Bejart ballet, from France, the Ballet National Marseille, from Israel, the Batsheva ballet, from Ireland the Lord of the Dance group, from Spain the Fuego group and many more important dance groups.

This year, it is with great pleasure that we welcome the leading Bolshoi ballerina, Svetlana Zakharova, in her performance, Amore. With 15 top soloists joining her, we are certain that the performance will be an amazing one.

Without the financial backing of RCBank, these performances would not have been realized and for this, I would like to extend my warmest thanks to RCBank.

Limassol has had a particularly important tradition regarding cultural activities and dance is a distinctive area of that tradition. There are dozens of dance schools and dance groups in our city that contribute to the high level of artistic creation in the area of ballet, and of modern and traditional dance.

All this local dynamism is further enhanced by organizing performances, in Limassol, from important dance companies from

abroad. In addition to the opportunity the public has to watch these leading performances, there is also the opportunity given to our own dance artists to broaden their experiences.

The municipality of Limassol warmly thanks its sponsors Marlow Navigation, OPAP, Petrolina, Baker Tilly, MetaQuotes and CTO.

Special thanks go to the media, and particularly our sponsors CYBC, Phileleftheros, Vestnik Kipra, Russian Wave radio, Premiere Magazine and Channel 6.

Finally, I would like to thank the audience, all of you who support with your presence the municipality's important events. Your support is our biggest motivation in order to continue our efforts for continuous advancement of our city's cultural events.