



PRESS RELEASE

Melina Mercouri Day in Pilsen, 18 June 2011, Is Devoted to Students

'On 18 June, turn Americká třída into Facebook and draw attention to yourself!' says Vilém Dubnička, who conceived this year's Melina Mercouri Day in Pilsen. The concept was first introduced to the public of Pilsen last year as part of the city's successful candidature for European Capital of Culture. The theme of this year's happening is 'From the Students for the Students. From the Students for Everyone!'

Melina Mercouri Day 2011 will once again transform the centre of Pilsen beyond recognition. After last year's success, Americká třída will, on Saturday, June 18, 2011, again present itself as a vigorous space for the arts, beating with the enthusiastic hearts of young artists who are getting an opportunity here not only to show what they know how to do and what they are interested in, but also, indeed mainly, to show what they like to do. The performers are mainly pupils and students from all kinds of schools, sometimes supervised by their teachers, sometimes as part of their spare-time activities.

Melina Mercouri (1920–1994) is a European cultural icon. She achieved success not only as an actress but also, indeed mainly, as the first woman to become Minister of Culture in Greece. She also conceived one of the most successful European Union projects, **the European Capital of Culture** (ECoC). It is in her honour and in celebration of the founding of the ECOC (in June 1985) that the Pilsen 2015 team is organizing Melina Mercouri Month. Focused on the arts, it culminates in Melina Mercouri Day, which this year falls on June 18.

On Americká třída (American Avenue), from Wilson Bridge to the Sirkova intersection, it will thus be possible from 2 pm to 10 pm to experience more than 45 performances. In the course of the day, the groups Grande Tete, Rubiano, Different D.I.S.C.O., TiDiTaDe, the Boycotlettes DJ's, the Chodská Junta DJs, and many others will perform. There will also be dance shows and theatre performances, including *Hamlet*, *Kate and the Devil* (by Antonín Dvořák), special juggling, drumming, and photography workshops, and even fashion, bartending, and BMX shows. For the thirsty, hungry, and tired, there will be cafés and refreshment stands. At the end of this day full of art and entertainment, visitors will be able to move on to the afterparty at the Music Club Anděl.

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'For students this is a unique opportunity to make themselves known, not five or ten or twenty years down the road when the adults let them get to work, but right now. For us adults this is a unique opportunity to look into the future. These people will be shaping our society,' says Vilém Dubnička about the project. And he adds that the aim of this year's edition is to unite young people from across the spectrum of the schools they come from, 'to prod them to be active, to let them feel their power and possibilities, and to encourage their self-confidence, responsibility, and sense of belonging'.

The Pilsen 2015 team would like to maintain the tradition of Melina Mercouri Month and Melina Mercouri Day for the duration of the ECoC project, that is, at least till the end of 2015. It thus wants to acquaint the people of Pilsen not only with the founder of the project, but also with the founding idea of her initiative, which is to bring together the nations of Europe by means of the arts. According to the artistic director of the Pilsen 2015 project, Yvona Kreuzmannová, Melina Mercouri Day will in the coming years be devoted to other interesting topics, including the culture of minorities, intergenerational dialogue between young people and senior citizens, and European regions in the European context, all of which deserves the attention of Pilsen and its inhabitants thanks to whom the city is alive.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.mesicmelinymercouri.eu/>

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This Press Release is part of the practical training experience of the student Nadě Buchtová, and is part of her course at the College of Media and Journalism (VOŠP), Prague.

About the ECoC project:

The European Capital of Culture is considered one of the most successful projects of the EU. It is intended for cities, but its importance is for whole regions. The city that is named the European cultural metropolis for a certain year becomes a sought-after destination for many tourists. In 2015 the title will be held by two European cities, Mons, Belgium, and Pilsen, the Czech Republic. Pilsen was officially granted the title 'European Capital of Culture 2015' on May 19, 2011, after approval by the Education, Youth & Culture Council of the EU.

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