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"Creative Connections Italy-Uzbekistan": L'Aquila international cultural hub thanks to ItARTS project

L'AQUILA – 7 May 2025 – From 12 to 17 May, L'Aquila will transform into an international crossroads of artistic and cultural exchange with the event "Creative Connections Italy-Uzbekistan. ItARTS International Cultural Hub," an intense week of meetings, concerts, workshops and moments of discussion between Italian and Uzbek students and faculty.

The initiative is part of the **ItARTS - Italy for ARTS: Resources, Time, Space** project, promoted and coordinated by L'Aquila's "Alfredo Casella" State Conservatory of Music and funded under the PNRR - NextGenerationEU. The project, which also involves the Academy of Fine Arts of L'Aquila, the Saint Louis College of Music in Rome, the Polytechnic University of Turin and the University of L'Aquila, aims to strengthen the internationalization of Italian Higher Education in Art and Music (AFAM), with a transdisciplinary STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, *Arts*, Mathematics) approach.

The goal is ambitious: to promote cultural heritage and stimulate contemporary artistic research by providing young artists with technological, entrepreneurial and digital skills essential for the creation of innovative and multidisciplinary live performances.

Guests include some of Uzbekistan's most prestigious arts institutions: the **State Conservatory of Uzbekistan**, the **National Variety Arts Institute "Botir Zakirov"**, the **Nukus branch of the State Conservatory**, and the **National Institute of Fine Art and Design "Kamoliddin Behzod"** in Tashkent.

Activities will take place between the Conservatory, the Academy of Fine Arts, Teatro dei 99 and the Istituto Comprensivo "Cesira Fiori" of San Demetrio ne' Vestini. The program offers a rich calendar of events, including:

- **lecture-concert about Uzbek piano music** with **Feruza Mukhamedova** (13 May, 2:30 p.m., Conservatory);
- **seminars on Uzbek musical culture** with composers **Xushnud Nazarov e Dilbar Fakhridinova** (16 May, 11 a.m., Conservatory), conductor **Gayrat Abrorov** (15 May, 4 p.m., Conservatory), singer **Rudakiy Allanbayev** (17 May, 10 a.m., Teatro dei 99);
- **exhibition** (13-17 May, Academy), **painting workshop** and **seminar** with **Eshmamat Khaitov**, (15 May, 2 p.m., Academy);

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- **lectures on art and new technologies** with **Umida Zunnunova** and **Sayyora Zakirova** (13 May, 4 p.m., and 14 May, 11 a.m., Academy).

Heartbeat of the week will be the three artistic ItARTS laboratories, in which mixed teams of artists, students and professors of the partner institutions - led by the composer **Michelangelo Lupone**, stage director **Francesco Saponaro** and writer **Giuliano Compagno**, and stage director **Stefano Vizioli** – are currently developing three original productions (*Shared*, *Dei Maestri Dipintori*, *Le Femmine d'Italia*) focus on the synergic convergence between languages and disciplines in live performance.

The Conservatory will also host **organ** masterclass (with **Arturo Sacchetti**), and **composition** (with **Alessandro Solbiati**), while the Academy of Fine Arts will set up exhibitions dedicated to contemporary creativity.

The highlight of the festival will be the **Uzbek music concert** planned for **Friday 16 May at 6 p.m.** in the Conservatory Auditorium, featuring Uzbek guests together with the 'Casella' string ensemble, conducted by Maestro Abrorov: a symbolic moment of dialogue and connection between cultures.

*«This event is an affirmation of the power of art as a universal language - states **Prof. Daniela Macchione**, Principal Investigator of the ItARTS project - and it represents a true opportunity to enhance creative diversity, building international alliances founded on innovation, research, and transdisciplinary training. **The "Casella" Conservatory** confirms itself as a point of reference in the AFAM (Higher Education in Art and Music) panorama for its teaching quality, artistic design, and international vocation».*

*«With great enthusiasm, - declares **Director Claudio Di Massimantonio** - we welcome Uzbek students and teachers for a week that will be an educational, cultural and human experience of great value. "Creative connections Italy-Uzbekistan" strengthens our commitment to an education open to the world and an art capable of building lasting bridges between people and cultures».*

L'Aquila is confirmed as the capital of creativity, of education and intercultural dialogue, thanks to a vision that focuses on art as a vehicle of innovation and international cooperation.

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