

TOOTS

PRESS RELEASE
Brussels, 29 March 2022

Toots 100: Brussels celebrates Toots Thielemans' 100th birthday

From 22 April onwards, Brussels will be celebrating the 100th birthday of Toots Thielemans. It will be a comprehensive, diverse and fitting tribute to the Brussels jazz icon who passed away in 2016. On the programme are lots of concerts, an exhibition, and above all, plenty of memories and discoveries.

Huguette Thielemans, Toots' widow, the Private Toots Thielemans Foundation and the Brussels-Capital Region have joined forces and contacted dozens of partners and organisations. The result is an fitting and balanced programme.

Rudi Vervoort, Minister-President of the Brussels Capital-Region: "Hosting major events in Brussels is of the utmost importance for making our region more tourist-friendly and boosting our image. That's why I am particularly pleased, together with my colleague Sven Gatz, to have given the green light for a series of events, including numerous concerts, a major exhibition and a conference, spread over four months and dedicated to the centenary of the birth of iconic Belgian and international artist Toots Thielemans."

Sven Gatz, Minister of the Government of the Brussels-Capital Region, responsible for the Image of Brussels: "With Toots 100, we honour our world-famous artist and his harmonica. With a range of organisations and partners, the Brussels-Capital Region is supporting a comprehensive and multi-faceted programme that runs from 29 April - the day local hero Toots Thielemans would have turned 100 - to Belgium's national holiday on 21 July."

Some highlights

On **22 April 2022**, the unique experience exhibition **Toots 100: The sound of a Belgian Legend** will open. At the exhibition, which will run until 31 August at KBR, the unique sounds of Toots' harmonica will come to life. You'll be swept away on a musical adventure with, among others, an impressive collection of musical instruments and never-before-published footage. The exhibition is a co-production of KBR and the MiM.

This will be followed a week later by a **unique concert** at BOZAR. After all, Friday **29 April 2022** is what would have been Toots' 100th birthday. The Brussels Jazz Orchestra, the Metropole Orchestra with Philip Catherine, Kenny Werner, Grégoire Maret, Tutu Pouane, along with Claudio and Ivan Lins will take you on a journey through the life of Toots. His musical friends will be interpreting his extensive body of work with new arrangements.

It's the start of a proper birthday weekend in Brussels. On **Saturday 30 April**, in cooperation with Vlammo, brass bands and orchestras from all over Flanders will be descending upon the Mont des Arts, Place de la Monnaie, Place de la Bourse and Place Sainte-Catherine. They will be performing their own repertoire, supplemented by some special adaptations of Toots songs. **Be yourself. No more, no less.** In the evening, you'll be treated to Jazz



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Station's **Toots Revisited**, with music by Toots in arrangements by his former pianist and friend Michel Herr. On the afternoon of **Sunday 1 May**, the **Toots concerto** (written by Roland Schoelinck) will take place at the Brussels Conservatory.

There will also be side activities, exhibits, walks and tours throughout the weekend that will ensure that Toots' music and personality will be heard, seen and felt everywhere.

After the birthday weekend, an impressive list of tribute activities is scheduled. The **Brussels Jazz Weekend**, for instance, will be paying tribute to Toots on **27, 28 and 29 May** with a free programme on various squares in the centre of the capital.

And on **Friday 1 July**, the opening day of the **Brosella** festival will be dedicated to its spiritual father. Brosella will be held again this year at the beautiful Théâtre de Verdure near the Atomium on 1, 2 and 3 July.

Of course, Toots will also be celebrated in the neighbourhood where he grew up. On **Wednesday 20 July**, there will be a grand Bluesette flute concert on Place du Jeu de Balle in the Marolles. This will take place during **Bal National**, the popular festival on the eve of Belgium's National Day. The next day, on **Thursday 21 July**, **Resto National** will be serving some of Toots' favourite dishes on the square where his parents once ran a café and where, as a young whistling boy, he began his long musical journey.

In addition this spring and summer there will be countless walks, workshops, photo exhibitions and discovery tours dedicated to Toots 100.

More Info

For all the info and a full overview, visit www.toots100.be, the Toots Thielemans Facebook page and Instagram @tootsthielemans.

Press information

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