

Madrid, March 17, 2022

TEATRO ESLAVA IS OPENING REIMAGINED BY PHILIPPE STARCK

The visionary French creator is the author of the complete rehabilitation of the historic Madrid venue that comes back to life to celebrate the magic and passion of Flamenco.

Teatro Eslava begins today a new story that will continue to add chapters to Madrid's historical tale. The space -now an institution of the city's cultural legacy- has witnessed numerous milestones over the last 150 years and has become an icon of freedom and rebellion; one that saw the birth of authors such as Federico García Lorca and hosted some of the most important artistic figures of the 20th century.

In its last era -initiated in 1981 and headed by Pedro Trapote, businessman and key figure of nightlife in the city-, Eslava became the home of a great number of artists and 'socialites'. Now, the iconic space located at Calle del Arenal returns maintaining its essence, although with a completely new modern vision.

The multifaceted and award-winning creator Philippe Starck, captivated by the power of flamenco, has dreamt and conceived a place that embodies the rawness and passion of one of the most visceral arts in the world. He cleaned the existing building of the various stratifications accumulated over time to get to the essential, its heart, its core, this central fire, this primitive cry that is flamenco. No decoration, no frills, just this violent, radical red earth cave, revealed by the thousand lights of magical flames.

“Teatro Eslava is a red soil grotto, glowing with a thousand modern candles. This voluntary deprivation welcomes in its center the fire of the primitive cry that is flamenco. All of Spain, all of Andalusia, all of History concentrated in a gesture, a sound, a force.”, says Starck about the project, and adds: *“This magic is protected by a hypnotic stage framing, work of Ara Starck, violent abstraction, reflection of the human drama. The Teatro Eslava is a complete, monolithic work of art to the eternal glory of flamenco.”*

“I painted the canvases of Teatro Eslava like a swell in a violent wind. As if we discovered inside a cave, a storm a few seconds before its unleashing. An exaltation (barely) contained by a single nail,” explains the artist Ara Starck.

Preserving the original architectural structure and several key heritage elements such as the moldings, the railings, the ceiling vault with its original pattern and the wooden medallions, Starck has carried out important modifications to the historic building, such as with the construction of an acoustic shell inside the theater to provide better phonic isolation to the hall.

Previous finishes have been removed and replaced with raw and natural materials, such as Pastellone –a millennial material created in Roman antiquity- on walls and ceilings, mortar for the floors and handmade terracotta for the bathrooms.

On the other hand, on the exterior, the facade has been reconstructed as it was before the 1980s, replacing the old mortar painted in brown with granite.

Everywhere, the Goodnight lamps -designed by Starck and edited by the Italian company Kartell-, inspired by traditional candles, seem to float in the grotto-like spaces guiding the visitors through the Teatro Eslava like magical and benevolent landmarks.

“Flamenco comes from the earth, from the desert almost; it is a fire that keeps you warm and fascinated. Because the emotion of flamenco is so pure, so naked, I had to do the less possible, radically covering everything with red mud. Decoration is weak compared to the absolute beauty and art of flamenco. I created the minimum a cave with candle-like lights to welcomes the fire of Flamenco.” Philippe Starck

At the heart of the Teatro Eslava is the greatness of 'cante' and 'baile', which, starting today, will come to live with the premiere of OléOlá: a brand-new concept of flamenco musical created by the dancer and choreographer Cristina Hoyos -to date, the most awarded of all time- and the three-time winner of the National Theater Award José Carlos Plaza.

Ten years after working together for the last time, two of our most celebrated figures in theater and contemporary flamenco bring us a show in three acts and in a "show-dinner" format -with a gastronomic proposal created by Ansón+Bonet- that will reinterpret the present, past and future of this prestigious and captivating art. "Hopefully, we can transmit a small part of the love we all feel for flamenco," confesses José Carlos Plaza.

On the other hand, the cultural proposal of the new Teatro Eslava will also include a live music offer focused on a wide variety of national and international genres, as well as several clubbing projects full of contrasts and aimed at a heterogeneous audience.

A crucial aspect to understand the success of this last business line is the technical infrastructure of the venue, with 100 square meters of LED screens, a 40,000W sound system, robotic spotlights and 50 motors, among other features.

Teatro Eslava is embarking on a promising and exciting future that aims to continue to honor the cultural institution that has been welcoming generations of Madrid locals and visitors.