



Hojsak & Novosel ft. Theodosii Spassov

Founded in 2016, two acclaimed virtuosos, **Tihomir Hojsak** (double bass) and **Filip Novosel** (tambura – Croatian traditional instrument) started their incredible musical journey behind the motto of *Bow vs Plectrum* – in which they merged two string instruments with different traditions of playing. Merging not only their instruments but also various genres including classical, contemporary jazz and Croatian ethno they created a specific and a unique style of their own. Their discography counts 4 albums on which they collaborated with some of the world renowned jazz and classical musicians and ensembles like Vlatko Stefanovski, Monika Leskovar, Ismail Lumanovski, Theodosii Spassov, Zagreb Philharmonic Orchestra and many more. After their second album *Strings Only* the duo was quickly recognized as *..the most original Croatian cultural brand in the world* (Branimir Pofuk, Večernji list) leading them to many stages across the globe. The duo has performed multiple times in USA, in China and all over Europe (Germany, Austria, France, Norway, Sweden, Latvia, Italy, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria..).

People refer to **Theodosii Spassov** as “the kaval player of the world”. Indeed, Theodosii Spassov’s fans all over the world form a very wide circle. Born on March 4, 1961 in the town of Ispirih, he graduated from the Philip Kutev National School of Folk Arts in Kotel and then the Plovdiv Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts. He is acknowledged as a virtuoso kaval performer, who is capable of playing any folk melody with style. What makes him even more popular are his original ideas, the realization of which brings together musicians of diverse genres. He was the first to play jazz on kaval and the mixing of traditional folk music with elements of jazz and classical music is at the basis of almost all original pieces composed by Theodosii. Throughout his career, Theodosii has toured all over the world, playing on all continents (including Antarctica). In 1994, he performed with Sofia Women's Radio Choir which was awarded with a Grammy award for "Le Mystere Des Voix Bulgares". In April 1995, "Newsweek" magazine recognized Theodosii Spassov as one of the most talented Eastern-European musicians in its "best of the East" article, noting that "Spassov... is not merely surviving the post-communist cultural wasteland. He has actually invented a new musical genre."

The partnership began in 2016, when Theodosii responded to an invitation from his Croatian colleagues. The three musicians quickly formed a strong bond, both personally and artistically, blending Croatian and Bulgarian musical traditions with elements of jazz and classical music. Their program features original works as well as creative arrangements, highlighting both the distinctiveness and the shared spirit of the two cultures.

In 2023, they released the album *Duckling Soup*, which caught the attention of maestro Matija Fortuna, chief conductor of the Tambura Orchestra of Croatian Radiotelevision. Impressed by their work, he invited them to collaborate on a new project titled *Duckling Soup REARRANGED*, for which Hojsak & Novosel created new arrangements that present the kaval, tambura, and double bass as solo instruments, accompanied by the tambura orchestra.