

ANTIGEL WILL NOT GIVE UP

Following the Swiss government's latest Covid-19-related decisions, Antigél regrets to announce that the 11th festival, scheduled from 28 January to 21 February, will not be able to take place as originally planned. Despite months of hard work and a revamped format, with 50 events in 20 communes, 112 artists, capped attendance of 50 people per event and a carefully developed health plan, the government's decisions on Wednesday 13 January do not allow such an event to take place. This is a hard blow. Nevertheless, the Festival has initiated a dialogue with the Department of Social Cohesion (DCS) and is currently working on concrete alternatives. Convinced that all forms of artistic performance in public cannot be put on hold, we are fighting to open up the field of possibilities and to restore culture to its essential role in society. We will not give up.

We were looking forward to dancing, partying and dreaming, only to find ourselves in the freezing cold, our feet in the mud, and our jackets soaked. Getting hit with 100 decibels in the face in a venue full to bursting point, partying until dawn at Grand Central, enjoying short-lived romantic liaisons or enduring the difficult aftermath of a great night: how we will miss those Antigél pains! Above all, what we will miss the most are the amazing events in unknown places, the artistic discoveries, the breathtaking performances, the laughter, the tears and the boredom at times during the shows, chatting with the artists, having a fondue with Patti Smith, the audience besides themselves and all the impromptu encounters that won't happen...

Nevertheless, we refuse to give up on these major moments in life. Out of conviction and solidarity with the many people without whom Antigél would not exist – the artists, technicians, partners, suppliers, volunteers and the public – we will fight on.

This 11th festival is the culmination of a process of analysis, questioning, transformation and innovation. For months the whole team has been working on different scenarios. From Plan A to Plan D, the Festival evolved until it found a final form, one that could respond both to issues of public safety and to artistic ambition. The new formula included a reduced capacity of 50 people, a health plan validated by health professionals, shows on repeat, and performances in the form of circuits.

This concept nevertheless remained close to our identity and our values: pushing borders ever further, discovering places that are as inaccessible as they are uncharted, enjoying privileged artistic meetings and unusual experiences... A festival dimension never before experienced and championed by 20 valiant Geneva communes: **ANIÈRES, AVULLY, BERNEX, CAROUGE, CHÊNE-BOURG, CHOULEX, COLLONGE-BELLERIVE, CONFIGNON, GENEVA, GENTHOD, GRAND-SACONNEX, LANCY, MEYRIN, ONEX, PLAN-LES-OUATES, SATIGNY, THÔNEX, VANDOEUVRES, VERNIER, VEYRIER** and with the support of the municipality of **PERLY-CERTOUX**.

The venues themselves took part in this transformation. While it is unthinkable to hold a festival without theatres and concert halls, we imagined new ways of using and experimenting with these spaces. Among them, the Alhambra and the Victoria Hall, two legendary venues, were meant to welcome the public for ultra-intimate and privileged concerts in completely redesigned scenography and under a new name: **ALHAMBRA ROOM** and **VICTORIA ROOM**.

We hoped to offer an innovative Festival, with the contribution of artists enthusiastic about taking up the challenge of these unprecedented circumstances. We planned for no less than thirty concerts, colourful events with such stars as **STEPHAN EICHER** for five intimate evenings in venues impacted by the health crisis: a palace, an international centre and the Victoria Room. We couldn't wait to hear the electronic anthems of **ARNAUD REBOTINI** and the sublime folk of **THIS IS THE KIT** at the Alhambra Room, the minimalist electro-pop of **MALIK DJOUDI** at Theatre Am Stram Gram, the polyphonic songs of **SAN SALVADOR** at the Manège d'Onex, the militant songs of **JESCA HOOP** at the Anières-Vésénaz parish or **EMILY JANE WHITE** at the Mansarde de Veyrier – a selection of artists who came forward despite the pandemic. This international, high-flying programme also

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included a booming Swiss scene, including **REVEREND BEAT-MAN**, **MARIO BATKOVIC**, **CYRIL CYRIL**, **SARA OSWALD** and **PIERRE OMER & THE NIGHTCRUISERS**...

In addition, the performing arts programme, with about ten shows, was supposed to radiate throughout the canton. Antigél hoped to present **L'ÉTANG** by **GISÈLE VIENNE**, in co-production with La Comédie de Genève and the Cultural and Communication Department of the City Vernier, **A DANCE CLIMAX** by **MATHILDE MONNIER** with the students of La Manufacture at ADC, the sequel of **GILLES JOBIN**'s work **THE MOEBIUS STRIP**, performed by the senior company **TANZTHEATER DRITTER FRÜHLING (TT3F)** at Point Favre, or **DUCHESSES**, **MARIE-CAROLINE HOMINAL** and **FRANÇOIS CHAIGNAUD**'s unique creation in the heart of Geneva's Museum of Art and History. We were eager to share these many grandiose creations. Not to mention the multitude of Swiss artists that the programme put the spotlight on.

The **MADE IN ANTIGEL** events for this 11th festival, were crazier and more numerous than ever. Designed as circuits, indoors or outdoors, on a monumental building site, in the heart of an urban forest, at the bottom of a basement or a car park, these custom-made creations meet health standards, but are nevertheless unauthorised. A trademark of the Festival and the keystone of its DNA, the Made in Antigél events will remain secret for a while longer... We will keep them warm until next year, or earlier, hopefully.

This year may not feature any shows or concerts, but our annual warm-up is still on with the **ANTIGEL RUN** sports challenges. Redesigned in a virtual format, the races will take place along new and idyllic routes. The bravest will be able to time themselves thanks to an app, solo or with their families. Good news also for electronic music fans hoping to let off steam in their living room: **GRAND CENTRAL** will be available in streaming, thanks to an international programme thought up by **MOTEL CAMPO** and **SHAP SHAP** in partnership with **COULEUR 3**. From Rio de Janeiro to Geneva, Johannesburg to Mexico City, Zürich to Abidjan, DJs will enhance the Festival's profile on the radio waves of Western Switzerland. Finally, let the lucky ticketholders for the **KRAFTWERK 3-D** concert be reassured, this event is currently still programmed for 8 June 2021!

This year's festival was impossible in its original form. But Antigél will not give up and is determined to bring culture to life through new and original formats. We are currently working closely with the Department of Social Cohesion (DCS) to change this situation and to offer alternatives. Culture will not be reduced to complete silence!

Finally, our hearts go out to all the Festivals, the artists and our cultural partners. We hope to meet them again in the near future, with new artistic projects, unusual explorations and surprise-filled cultural safaris. Until then, take good care of yourself.

See you soon,
Team Antigél

In the meantime,
discover the full programme on
www.antigel.ch

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