



UNIVERSIADE NAPOLI 2019: THE MAGIC OF MARCO BALICH'S OPENING CEREMONY UNVEILED IN MILAN

Naples at the centre of the world. The 30th Summer Universiade Opening Ceremony is scheduled to take place on July 3rd, at 09:00 PM, in San Paolo Stadium; the show is conceived and produced by Balich Worldwide Shows, featuring 1500 performers, as well as great talents, in order to celebrate university athletes from all over the world.

Marco Balich, renowned for his success in more than 20 Olympic Ceremonies, from Torino 2006 to Rio 2016, as well as Milan's Expo 2015 with his Tree of Life, will be the Creative Director: «After Turin, it is a great joy to come back in Italy and work on another sporting event Ceremony,» - he said - «I hope I will be able to contribute in giving the prominence that both Naples and Campania deserve, by narrating stories of hope full of contemporary emotions, and the memorable figures related to them. I feel great responsibility for the great investment made by Regione Campania, Fisu and the Napoli 2019 Organizing Committee. We all want to leave an unforgettable memory of this event.»

Linda Castelli will be the Director and the Artistic Director of the Ceremony, whose concept was built around the "U" of the Universiade logo, representing a welcoming embrace, with large arms extended towards the many athletes coming to the city of Naples and Campania.

The opening segment will feature Mariafelicia Carraturo, Neapolitan freediver and World Record holder, who will take on the role of the Siren "Parthenope", official mascot of the Games: through a series of special effects that will surely take viewers' breath away, the field of play of San Paolo Stadium is going to be "flooded" by the sea. Afterwards, the stage will turn into a hi-tech postcard, with a tridimensional representation of Mount Vesuvius, for the tribute segments dedicated to the athletes from all over the world. Two women full of charisma, strength and courage will then take the stage: Malika Ayane, among the most eclectic and appreciated singer-songwriters in the Italian music scene, and Bebe Vio, university student and Paralympic champion, one of the most beloved sport icons in our Country.

Space will be given also to the cultural excellences of the Campania Region. One particular scene will feature the famous fresco of the Diver of Paestum, symbolizing the union between past and present, as well as between sports and culture. The music of Anastasio, 21-year-old student and Neapolitan rapper, will then embody the many voices of new generations by igniting the "flame of knowledge", while hundreds of judokas, also including pupils from Gianni Maddaloni's gym in Scampia, will perform their moves creating, one after another, scenes depicting all eighteen sport disciplines of the Universiade. A few details about the closing ceremony were also disclosed: it will feature The Jackal, Neapolitan YouTube sensations, with their verve and creativity.

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