



Predsednica Republike Slovenije

NATAŠA PIRC MUSAR

**Message
from the President of the Republic of Slovenia, Nataša Pirc Musar,
on the occasion of Slovenian Cultural Holiday**

Presidential Palace, 8 February 2024

*Dear Slovenian Citizens,
Dear Slovenians at home and around the world,
Dear Residents of Slovenia,*

Culture is as old as humanity. Culture is our companion, reporter, creator, narrator and lamenter. It is the mirror image of us, because culture is us. Diverse and unique, yet inalienable parts of something greater than ourselves – humanity and society.

Prešeren Day, Slovenian Cultural Holiday, demonstrates that Slovenians have been aware of this for a very long time. We proudly recognise that culture is one of the foundations of our national identity and our state, and we are grateful for this.

Looking beyond the borders of our homeland to the wider world, we see how very important and far from self-evident it is that we are free to shape and express "our" culture, to be openly and sincerely proud of it and also to be critical of it. That there is not a single culture defined by someone as the "only right" one and which we people must accept unconditionally and adjust our feelings, creativity and expressiveness to fit into such a small box full of impoverished loneliness.

The diverse heart, character and image of culture are also reflected in the Prešeren Award and Prešeren Fund laureates, who are each year honoured on the eve of Prešeren Day. I would like to congratulate all this year's laureates. I am grateful for all their outstanding creative achievements and the excellence they express and strive for.

Citizens, Slovenians at home and around the world, Residents of Slovenia,

On the occasion of Slovenian Cultural Holiday, I extend my warmest congratulations to you, wishing that we celebrate culture in all its diversity with respect, experience and pride every day, wherever we are. This, among other things, will enable us to live the lines "When o'er earth's habitations no war, no strife shall hold its sway," written by the great poet after whom this day is named.