



THREE SILENT MINUTES for culture

**Dear audience, artists, colleagues, peers and press!**

For the first time in our 14-year-long pathway, Stockholm Fringe Festival (#STOFF2023) will participate in a Swedish nationwide PROTEST during the festival that runs from the 29th of Aug to the 2nd of Sept across 17 venues in and around Stockholm!

As it stands right now, the Swedish culture sector is risking unprecedented cutbacks that will affect artists, audiences, producers and the long-term cultural heritage.

To elevate this matter and show solidarity with our colleagues nationwide, #STOFF2023 will fall silent for 3 minutes during the 2nd last night of this year's programmed activities across all our stages.

We encourage other creatives to get engaged! More information on the organiser's call to action is on the following few pages. You can start by signing the petition:

[www.skrivunder.com/tretystaminuter](http://www.skrivunder.com/tretystaminuter)

If you're one of the artists who are part of this year's festival and are scheduled to perform on Friday night, Sept 1st 2023, your producers will be in dialogue with you about the practicalities of this action via Eventotron.

*Thank you!*

Adam Potrykus & Helena Bunker, co-founders and co-directors of Stockholm Fringe Festival (#STOFF2023).

[www.skrivunder.com/tretystaminuter](http://www.skrivunder.com/tretystaminuter)

## A call to action from the organisers

### **On September 1, Sweden's stage art falls silent!**

Culture refuses to be dismantled. On September 1, 2023, performing arts in Sweden will fall silent in a national manifestation for a sustainable and long-term cultural policy, better economic and structural conditions, and preservation of the cultural ecosystem. Three joint silent minutes will be observed across our creative landscape between 20.15 (8:15 pm) and 20.18 (8:18 pm) to showcase how empty Sweden becomes without culture.

"Three silent minutes" is a manifestation that originates at the grassroots level from culture professionals' desire to highlight the dismantling and deprioritization of the entire cultural sector. Art and culture enrich people's lives, creative drive, and imagination. A free and independent cultural life is crucial in developing and strengthening a democratic society. Freedom of expression is a cultural prerequisite and something culture promotes at its core.

In September 2021, the investigative "Restart for Culture" report was published. Amongst other things, the document recommended an extra 3.9 billion in funding for culture over the next two years. The report also recommended long-term post-pandemic recovery measures. The government at the time decided on various initiatives totalling 940 million, which were distributed in 2022. Unfortunately, post-election, the budget for the 2023 restart funds was scrapped. Subsequently, the culture received a billion less in funding than the previous year.

The performing arts are an indispensable part of the cultural ecosystem. The pandemic's effects and the otherwise strained economic situation are hitting both institutions and the independent field left, right and centre. Many practitioners have already left the industry, while others are considering changing their professional pathways. Rising inflation has increased venue rent, utility bills and production costs. This results in fewer productions and the disappearance of stages and meeting places. The possibility of broad access to culture and the creative landscape's diversity is diminishing. It has significant consequences not only for priority groups such as children and young people but for the public at large. As it stands right now, the cultural budget makes it impossible to achieve current cultural policy goals.

The "Three silent minutes" manifestation recreates a historical event that took place at the same time and date in 1988 when large parts of Cultural Sweden were paused for three minutes. An action that had significant media breakthrough and political impact.

– Thirty-five years ago, Sweden was a different country. Today's cultural sector suffers from weakened structures, short-term grants, and a lack of access to social security. Underfunding leaves the industry vulnerable and ill-equipped for prolonged periods of crisis, such as a new recession or future pandemics. Through a free artistic and cultural life, thoughts, feelings, and opinions can be expressed. It plays a crucial role in the cultivation of a democratic social spirit. It should be in many people's interest to want to preserve it, says Isabel Cruz Liljegren, playwright and initiative taker behind the 2023 "Three Quiet Minutes" protest edition.

"Three silent minutes" wanted to show a strong will to cooperate in defending the cultural landscape. That is why we're again joining forces in crisis and showing our collective power.

On September 1, 2023, at 8:15 pm, Sweden's stage art will be silent for three minutes. Let's unite for a sustainable and long-term cultural policy. For better economic and structural conditions. For the preservation of the cultural ecosystem. It is time to show that cultural life cannot be dismantled!

*Kind regards, team STOFF*

**Please contact us for more information about this action:**

Email: [press@stockholmfringe.com](mailto:press@stockholmfringe.com)

Web: [www.stockholmfringe.com](http://www.stockholmfringe.com)

SoMe: FB/IG/TW/VI: @Stoffholm TT: @stockholmFringe

