

Magical moments at the Casino of Bern

Classical music wins many new fans thanks to the Swiss National Orchestra



Yesterday, August 1, the Swiss National Orchestra (SNO) gave its inaugural concert at the Casino de Berne to a full house. The audience was enthralled by an unparalleled sound spectacle, featuring the finest Swiss musicians on the national and international orchestral scene. The concert, which was free of charge, aroused great enthusiasm for classical music among the numerous spectators.

On August 1, when the Swiss National Orchestra (SNO) began its first notes, the hall was filled with positive vibrations. During the 90-minute concert, time seemed to stand still. Guests immersed themselves in a world of sound that took them on an emotional journey through the ages.

New interpretations rich in tradition

Under the direction of renowned conductor John Axelrod, SNO offered a performance that captivated both experts and new classical music enthusiasts. The concert opened with a powerful performance of Hans Huber's "Tell Symphony", followed by Giacomo Puccini's haunting

Symphonic Intermezzo from Manon Lescaut, and the Polonaise from Tchaikovsky's opera Eugene Onegin - all works composed in Switzerland. The virtuosity, color and sound of the SNO emerged through its perfect harmony and dynamics, underscoring the timeless beauty of these masterpieces.

Geneva-based soloist Sébastien Jacot delighted the audience with Siegfried Wagner's Konzertstück for flute and orchestra, followed by Swiss composer Arthur Honegger's "Pastorale d'été". His flute solo continued with the infinite melody of Rachmaninov's Vocalise. To conclude, the famous William Tell Overture enthralled the audience, evoking the exploits of the national hero.

John Axelrod emphasized: "Music has the power to unite people and build bridges. It was an honor for me to conduct this orchestra of over 70 musicians in its first concert." The talents impressed with their high technical skills and perfect understanding - particularly remarkable, given that many of them are meeting and playing together for the first time.

Music for all

Artistic Director Igor Longato was very pleased with his team's successful performance: "Our aim was, and is, to offer first-class Swiss musicians the opportunity to play together, and at the same time to make music of the highest level accessible to everyone. And that's exactly what we've succeeded in doing today," he summed up.

SNO has clearly shown that classical music is by no means exclusive or inaccessible. The orchestra thus marks the start of a new era in the Swiss musical landscape, and makes a significant contribution to the preservation of Switzerland's rich cultural heritage.

Upcoming projects in Rome

Another large-scale event is already planned for November 17, 2024: a concert in the Vatican, to be held under the patronage of the Swiss Embassy. The aim is to present and promote Switzerland's rich cultural and musical tradition in a global context.

The enthusiasm and positive energy of the inaugural concert will also resonate beyond the Casino. Anyone wishing to be enchanted by the music should make a note of the forthcoming dates in their diary.

About the Swiss National Orchestra:

The Swiss National Orchestra is a non-profit, tax-exempt, non-religious and apolitical association based in Bern. Founded in 2016 by a group of Swiss musicians and administrators, the SNO represents all of Switzerland and stands for musical excellence and innovation. Today, the big names in music perform together for the first time on August 1, 2024. For further information: www.sno.ch