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Music review

Exciting, Support-Free Mahler

Mario Córdova

For the second consecutive year, January's musical offer started with the Concierto por la Hermandad/Concert for Humanity, once again with free admission at the Estación Mapocho Cultural Center. Its first version had brought Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, "Choral", performed by a large orchestra and choir under conductor Alejandra Urrutia, who was also the creator and manager of the event.

In every respect, the stakes were much higher this time: Gustav Mahler's Second Symphony, "Resurrection", a longer, more complex work, demanding huge sound resources, was programmed for the occasion, gathering more than 300 performers, instrumentalists and singers included. Once again, the audience responded with an attendance of several thousands.

This Concert for Humanity is a very special and unique case in our musical scene, for two reasons. On the one hand, there were no names (neither official nor created for the occasion) identifying the orchestra or choir, because those names did not exist. These hundreds of performers were not a permanent ensemble, but an anonymous collection of convened individuals who had previously applied and then joined the rehearsal schedule.

On the other hand, at the end of this mega-event there were no statements describing its organization, who developed specific functions or—this is very important—which institution was behind the scenes financing this production. Clearly such structure didn't exist either.

Thus, delivering a performance of the aforementioned Mahlerian work with the quality achieved on this occasion can only be described as a miracle—or, more earthly put, as the wonderful result of a hard work done "support-free", which must be seen as an infinite love for music and the desire to share it.

Over its eighty minutes, the "Resurrection Symphony" goes through the most contrasting moods of the human soul, with extremely powerful and furious sonorities, as well as others of serenity and dancing kindness, and a great ending which brings a breathtaking spirituality and moved to the core the immense audience that crowded the Estación Mapocho. Great choral preparation by Paula Elgueta, and excellent solo performances by Claudia Lepe and Fanny Becerra.

Alejandra Urrutia deserves praise for her great conducting, and also for leading the organization and production of this Concert for Humanity, whose definitive establishment seems to be mandatory for years to come.