

MY AMEROPA JOURNEY

Pallab Pramanick



Ameropa had always been one of my dream memories since I attended the programme for the very first time. All thanks go to Maestro Debashish Chaudhuri and Prof. Jana Chaudhuri for the scholarship to attend this festival and also many many thanks to the The Calcutta School of Music for choosing me twice to attend the festival and also supporting me with travel and VISA expenses.

Last summer, I was called by the President of The Calcutta School of Music, Jyotishka Dasgupta and he stated that I had been selected once again to attend Ameropa. That was one of my happiest and most exciting moments. As I was in touch with the director of the festival Prof. Vadim Mazo on social media, I told him about my selection. He started to prepare me for the festival by giving me lessons on Skype and also helped me with my technique so that I could be totally prepared for the festival. After some days, I got a list of pieces which I was required to perform and it was huge! I had to prepare six chamber pieces (all for the violin) and one for the piano which was supposed to be performed with the ballet. It was really exciting for me!

The festival is divided into two parts. The first week takes place in Brandys nad Labem. This is for one week and only for solo performances and the next part of the festival occurs in Prague, which is called “The Chamber Courses”.

On the very first day I met my Professor for the violin Mr. Vadim Mazo. It was really amazing to see him once again. Then I met my friends and other professors whom I had met earlier on my previous visit. The festival started with an introduction in a hall by all the professors in Brandys. On the very next day there were faculty concerts which were inspiring. In the first week in Brandys I was given solo violin and piano master classes each day and finally on the seventh day we had a concert in a very beautiful castle beside a river. There, I performed the Bartok Rhapsody, accompanied by Vaclav Macha (one of the best piano accompanists I have ever seen). According to my Professor Vadim Mazo it was the best performance of that evening. On the very next day the ballet took place on the grounds of the castle. There I played the piano as a part of the background music with two other professors. The ballet consisted of ten movements in total. I played the first three movements and the rest were shared by the other two professors. Our first week ended with a pre planned dinner party by all the participants of Ameropa.

After a week in Brandys we moved to Prague. Many participants and professors from different parts of the world joined us there. In total there were approximately 200 candidates. Just like Brandys, in Prague the course started with an introductory session by all the professors in the

chamber course. There I finally met Maestro Debashish Chaudhuri and Prof. Jana Chaudhuri. It was such a wonderful feeling to meet them. The course started with a faculty concert. I was one of the busiest participants there in the festival as I was selected to perform six chamber pieces and all of them were on the violin. My days used to start with the Brahms trio lessons, then a Shostakovich quartet followed by a Beethoven trio, a Schumann quintet, and a Janacek orchestra rehearsal and finally a Mozart quartet. The Shostakovich quartet and Janacek were orchestral works. The first one was conducted by Prof. Vadim Mazo and the second one was conducted by Maestro Debashish Chaudhuri. Each and every day it was really very tiring to attend six hours of classes. But I always got mental support from Maestro Debashish Chaudhuri, Prof. Vadim Mazo and Maestro Jana Chaudhuri. I used to practice at the School at night and each and every



day I was improving a lot. The best way to learn music is to play with the other musicians and that is the main goal of a Chamber Course. We used to have concerts on most of the days and at different venues. Prof. Jana Chaudhuri managed to give me a master class on piano even though she had a very tight schedule. The festival ended with a grand concert at Kutna Hora (80kms away from Prague). It was really painful to say good bye to all the professors and friends from different parts of the world. On the very last day, Maestro Debashish Chaudhuri and Prof. Jana Chaudhuri gave me some precious gifts along with a letter of appreciation signed by them.

All the participants had received their diplomas and the festival came to an end. Ameropa is like a family to me.

All thanks to Maestro Debashish Chaudhuri and his family and The Calcutta School of Music for making my dream a reality!