

## **Milan Rericha: Today PR is almost more important than what you know**

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Runs, trills, sound cascades... Soloclarinetist Milan Rericha belongs to the best in his profession, clarinet playing manages with virtuosity of a magician, controlling large range of instrument with obvious playfulness and ease, with neverending breath, resolute fingers skilfulness and with awesome musical temperament. That is in short a picture of one of our virtuosos, wrongly forgotten in Czech Republic, who is acclaimed more abroad than at home. How much more it is valuable for young talents blooming at Elementary Art School Česká Lípa to meet this personality. Together with Milan Rericha they will perform on stage and also will have the opportunity to visit his masterclass... Third part of „It is worth it“ project will take a place on the 3rd of November in Jirasek Theatre in Česká Lípa on the occasion of the 16th edition of Lípa Musica! And just with Milan Rericha we were talking about young talents and their support and own clarinet making.

**On Friday the 3rd you will perform in Česká Lípa together with young talents of Elementary Art School Česká Lípa. How excited are you about your Festival debut?**

I am very much looking forward. I am grateful for the invitation to this great International Music Festival!

**Since your youth you have had shown apparent musical talent as it is written in your biography. Do you come from artistic family? What made you choose the clarinet?**

I do not come from artistic family, however, both of my parents love music. Since my childhood we have listened to so called classical music, to Tchaikovsky (my mother loves him), Dvořák, Smetana, Mozart, Brahms, Bach and especially to Beethoven. My father loves him! But we were also listening to Beatles, ABBA, Barbra Streisand, Michael Jackson, simply to good quality music. Apparent talent..., i do not know. It has been expressed like that for my biography purpose. Sometimes PR is more important than what you know. But it is truth that i won „Uničov“, a national round of elementary art schools competition in Czech Republic when i was 13. At that time those schools were called „folk art schools“. Clarinet drew my attention quite early, when i was six. Like my mum says, i listened to beautiful Christmas carol *Ježíšku, panáčku* (Baby Jesus Doll) over and over again. And there in the music the clarinet was playing again and again. This carol is from LP called *Staré koledy české* (Old Czech Carols) and we still have it. And i still love this LP!

**You have reached many rewards in music competitions over the world. You yourself are even the artistic director of one competition (CCA)... Which of your success do you value the most and how do you see importance of competitions for young talents and also starting up their career?**

Competitions are very important. Even if you do not win anything... I am now often in juries of international clarinet competitions and always remember when i was competing myself. I have been to some and reached several prizes but i could do that more... My fellow student Karel Dohnal (he is also performing at Lípa Musica Festival) was when it comes to competitions far more experienced. He went to

numerous of them and won all that was possible... We were quite strong generation, we were working hard a lot. But to go back to your question, all above said is also related to it, competitions motivate you to work on yourself and to be prepared. Although you are not lucky and drop out already in first round, the work and training you had given to yourself and your instrument moves you further on. Professionally as well as humanly. That, you will realise a bit later and at the same time also the fact that you could have worked much harder! And that is the most important!

As Artistic Director of our association CCA, which i have founded together with Libor Suchý, he is being Executive Director, i have learnt to work hard also in organization. Thus i must give great compliment to Martin Prokeš your amazing chief of Lípa Musica for what he achieved with the Festival. Especially for not giving it up and that he did not let himself to be discouraged. To organize a music competition or a music festival today is not like organizing a football match. Even though we have stronger name and better success in music - not in vain they say: Each Czech is a musician! It is very hard to collect some financial support especially here in Czech Republic. But you are representing your country and all participants and their accompany - parents, teachers, piano accompaniment spend amounts on accommodation, dining etc. in place where a competition is being held. They support our state budget by paying the VAT through this. But only few people understand. Our competition CCA has been ranked among six important international contests in the world which ICA - International Clarinet Association directly supports.

**Besides joint performance with talents from Česká Lípa this year the Festival will hold a masterclass for the very first time. It is your together cooperation and it is ment for students of elementary art schools. You teach at Music Academy in Lugano, lead masterclasses around the world. What is your conception focused on the youngest talents generation on elementary level of music education like it is going to be so here in Česká Lípa?**

"I regularly teach the almost professionals but sometimes i need to give time also to younger clarinetists and beginners. And i enjoy doing it. Especially in Chine or in United States the youngest want "lesson with Milan Rericha" :-)) With them the most important is to have them feel learning is fun and to make them feel joy. Like J. A. Comenius said "Schola Ludus". So that is my conception of teaching the youngest talented players. Of course they also need to have good embouchure from the begining and i keep explaining them about correct breathing and what is diaphragm. Sometimes it is funny and often it turns into very comical situations, it intertains also their parents and the audience. I think also that is what it is about, to connect with audience and public during those kinds of events. After all without music life is not the same...

**What would you recommend to young talents who are at the beginning of their career if they would like to follow your example?**

I do not know. You see it sounds quite egoistic - to follow my example. I am still the same boy inside my soul like i was thirty years ago. Yes, i wanted to achieve something in classical music. It is not easy especially in this kind of profession. You are also rewarded less when it comes to money talk and no one wants to give. It is not much different in the rest of Europe either but in Czech Republic it is extreme!! I always work hard and give not hundred but hundred and fifty or more percent. And that is i think the essential. That is how the younger generations should take it.

Translated by Milan Rericha management team