



From left: Witold Wnuk, Tamara Granat, Cezary Owerkowicz and Anna Kass bow to the audience after the concert.

Event pays tribute to circle of 'friends of harmony'

Kuwait Chamber Philharmonia celebrates 25th anniversary

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 21: On this day (Nov 11, 1992) twenty-five years ago at the same venue – the Kuwait English School (KES) Auditorium, the Kuwait Chamber Philharmonia introduced to the music-lovers of Kuwait a major live program – classical music concerts under the title 'philharmonia' meaning circle of music friends, friends of harmony, said Cezary Owerkowicz in his welcome address with his co-founder of the KCP Witold Wnuk.

Director of The Kuwait English School, Rhoda Elisabeth Muhmood (MEB) in her summary speech said 'History rounds a circle' warmly and sincerely appreciating the outstanding effort and the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Kuwait Chamber Philharmonia.

"This day is very special in Europe, the Memory Day celebrating 'peace' after the atrocities of World War. In native Poland we celebrate the National Independence Day 'Freedom' after more than a century of divisions and occupation. Peace, Freedom and Harmony what a beautiful triad of ideas! We liked to offer our stage to them ... because 'Music is able to build bridges over boundaries', also over people these almost everywhere so often and deeply divided ...", said Cezary.

He added, 'Our aim was to bring joy, joy of music to the audience; exchange of joy between artists making music and the listeners as much as serving the cultural development of the country and its society.'

During those 25 years the KCP has brought to Kuwait hundreds of excellent artists – soloists, ensembles, even orchestras, choirs and Opera groups from many countries from all continents (except Antarctica, of course!).

Since the first concert stage was offered also to Kuwaiti musicians, and many of the well-known among them made their debut during the KCP concerts. "For every growing tree fruits are important" and among the fruits of KCP it is possible to count the yearly Gulf Jazz Festivals, the many music competitions in Kuwait and neighboring Gulf countries, the yearly Treasure of Talents youth festival, and even – somehow – the establishment of the Kuwait Music Academy. "The Kuwaiti proverb says 'You cannot clap with one hand'. Whatever was done was because of friends, supporters and partners. The list is endless and priceless. We remember, appreciate and express our warm gratitude to them," said Prof. Cezary.

Respect

"Among the first of them were the Chairman of the KES, HE Mohammed Al Saddagh with his family and Directors of the School, Mr Muhmood and Mme Rhoda E. Muhmood. It is because of them we are back to the same place from where the project started and we pay them our deep respect."

"From the stage I sincerely welcomed English and Polish guests. The Head of the Embassy of the Republic of Poland, Mme Beata Perlinska-Burchert explained the short history and deep meaning of the Independence Day in Poland. After the concert, on behalf of the Polish Embassy, Mme Beata invited the guests for dinner. Mme Beata is herself an artiste and an experienced diplomat who has spent long years at a mission in Morocco.

Co-Founder of KCP, Witold expressed his gratitude to the Embassy and head of the mission, Mme Beata as well as to Adam Mickiewicz Institute for fruitful cooperation in promoting the Polish culture abroad. He also introduced the performing artistes of the



Left: Head of the Polish Embassy Mme Beata Perlinska welcomes the audience. Right: Mme Beata Perlinska (left), Mr Muhmood (second left), and Mme Rhoda E Muhmood (third left), with Kuwaiti pianist Fajer Al-Mazidi (right), and her husband Mr Yousef (second right).



Opera singer Anna Kass (right), with piano accompanitor Tamara Granat (left).



KCP co-founders Prof Cezary Owerkowicz (left on piano) and Witold Wnuk (right), perform.

evening. Music on the stage personified Opera soprano singer Anna Kutkowska – Kass. The artiste is a young, charming blond lady with impressive tall posture but with winsome way of behavior on the stage and in life.

Anna's rare coloratura soprano voice had listeners discovering progressively during the entire evening from first simple song through arias up to brilliant virtuosic encore. Her repertoire featured a majority of arias and songs written for this kind of voice.

Her Opera debut took place at the Great Theater of the Warsaw National Opera where she was cast in top demanding role of The Queen of The Night in the premiere performance of Mozart's Magic Flute. Her success was followed immediately at the Opera Houses in Poznan and Lodz, major Polish towns and cultural centers.

On the Grand Opera Theater stage she continued her successes performing also leading role of Hanna in Opera by national composer, Stanislaw Moniuszko, The Haunted Manor as well as in recital of the same composer cycle of songs The Home Song-book.

Simplicity

On the memorable evening in Kuwait Anna started with three lovely Polish songs by Frederic Chopin – The Wish and Moniuszko's songs – The Spinner Woman and When He Will Be Back, presenting simplicity of cantilena.

After she presented several virtuosic Opera arias, starting from native Moniuszko's Opera The Countess followed by Italian Master of Opera Giacomo Puccini's Gianni Schicchi and Gioacchino Rossini's The Barber of Seville.

In the second part of the concert repertoire she offered popular hits as George Gershwin's Summertime (from his Opera Porgé & Bess), romantic Juliet's Waltz by Charles Gounod, Ernesto Curtis' Come Back to Sorrento and brilliant Frederic Loewe's 'I Could Have Danced All Night' from eternal hit My Fair Lady. Apogee of enthusiasm audience reached after encore with cascades of brave coloratura ornaments and jumps on the higher that is possible imagine notes.

The piano accompaniment was performed also by Polish lady-pianist, well known in Kuwait, in many countries (including at Kennedy or Lincoln Centers in the US among others) from several concerts and activities Tamara Granat, encrusted singer performance with solos by Mozart and Chopin.

In the middle of the memorable concert the top emotion was awakened by a performance by the co-founders of KCP. Cezary Owerkowicz performed solo Chopin Waltz as a sentimental poem-story of dancing memories and accompanied by his friend, Witold Wnuk on cello on eternally popular melody from Camille Saint-Saens – The Swan.

Prof Cezary impressed the special moment which was announced from the piano their nostalgic performance as 'a Jurassic corner'. He dedicated his Waltz to former favorite Kuwaiti student, Mme Fajer Al-Mazidi, who became with him co-founder of the Kuwait Music Academy because of her birthday.

"She celebrated it on Polish Independence Day. It's a God's finger because I celebrate mine on the Kuwaiti National Day February 25."

NB: Present during the concert there were some former students and listeners of the inaugural concert 25 years ago.

The memorable history rounded its circle with the audience to whom was addressed that special event as well as to all. The event ended with a warm applause and a standing ovation.