...z izjemnim legato petjem, brezhibnostjo in občudovanja vredno intonacijo je zbor popeljal občinstvo ne le na čustveno temveč tudi izjemno umetniško popotovanje po znanih napevih...

…ganljiv koncert VOGP pod inspirativnim dirigentskim vodstvom Karmine Šilec…

… privilegij je izkusiti zvočne barve slovenskega ženskega zbora CS…

...CS je izvajala stilistično ozaveščeno, pravilno in odgovorno...

... kakovost zvoka zbora je bila tako izjemno impresivna, da smo občasno imeli občutek, da slišimo izvirno instrumentacijo...

... Šilec je izkazala ne le dobro poznavanje glasovnih izrazov, temveč tudi dobro poznavanje izvirnih del - tako v izbiri tempov kot v raznolikosti zvočnh barv v interpreticiji vsake posamezne skladbe…

...vsaka glasovna sekcija je imela svojo lastno osebnost in te so tvorile zvočne podobe z veliko mero odgovornosti in integralnosti...

Vocal Orchestra - **a touching concert by Vokal Orchester Carmina Slovenica under the inspirational conducting of Karmina Silec**. South Tyrolean classical music lovers, and more so choral music fans had the **privilege to experience the sounds of the Slovenian Female choir Carmina Slovenica** in a unique programme of orchestral and/or piano music, but heard here vocally. The programme consisted of the arrangements of Margaret Dryburgh and Norah Chambers, both detainees in Sumatran prison camps back in 1943. These two ladies enriched the lives of fellow prisoners by creating a vocal ensemble (later dubbed Vocal Orchestra) for to sing beloved and well-known melodies from some of the orchestral or piano music which they all remembered and loved. They transcribed the music of amongst others J.S. Bach, W.A. Mozart, J. Brahms, L. van Beethoven, A. Dvořák, F. Chopin, M. Ravel and others from memory. The music was arranged for a ‘string quartet’ using 1st and 2nd sopranos and 1st and 2nd altos to ‘sing’ the notes of the conventional 1st and 2nd violins, viola and cello. Margaret Dryburgh explained: "The idea of making ourselves into a vocal orchestra came to us when songs were difficult to remember, and we longed to hear again some of the wonderful melodies and harmonies that uplifted our souls in days gone by". The project highlights the idea of hope, religion and beauty resounding through the music of the women's choir in outrageous moments of violence, in unexpected drama in the middle of a tropical forest. Thus, VOGP is a testimony of women’s capacity to survive, of their persistence, solidarity and creativity. It is a memoir of an extraordinary legacy of determination and strength in unimaginably terrifying conditions of this and all other war camps up to the present day. Music of this vocal orchestra is a reflection of the complex relationship between music and trauma, and is reminiscent of other cases when music became the universal symbol in suffering and the last resort in hopelessness. **Carmina Slovenica performed** a selection of the arrangements made by Dryburgh and Chambers **in stylish correct and responsible manner. The sound quality of the choir impressed to such an extent that one at times could imagine hearing the original instrumentation. Silec showed insight into not only the vocal genre, but also the original works in her choice of tempi and a variety of vocal colours employed to interpret each work individually.** **Each voice group had its own character and formed part of the vocal tapestry in a very responsible and integral part. With a very well executed vocal legato and flawless and admirable intonation the choir took listeners on an emotional, but also a rich artistic tour through beloved melodies.** The concert started with each chorister introducing herself by name and voice group. This created an atmosphere of intimacy, as one felt that you had a more personal contact with each singer. The choir were seated during the concert, as was the conductor, in the style of an instrumental orchestra, and as explained by the narrator beforehand, as to preserve physical energy for this vocal tour de force. All of the works, but two, were sung without text on neutral syllables creating unique vocal colours for the simulation of the original instrumentation. For me, it was a refreshing moment to have heard the lovely rendition of Rutland Boughton`s Fairy Song (from The Immortal Hour) on a text by William Sharp. The concert was concluded by the touching Captive’s Hymn, capturing the spiritual longing of not only the female prisoners, but even maybe of some of us as well: Father, as we are in captivity, We would lift our prayers to Thee, Keep us ever in Thy Love.Grant that daily we may prove those who place their trust in Thee more than conquerors may be. **In the same way that the prisoners received spiritual release from singing these arrangements, and helped them to forget about the squalor of the Barracks camp, the rendition of Carmina Slovenica also helped to give some spiritual release from every day** South Tyrolean life **and offered a moment for contemplation** and reminded us of the significance of music, i.e. art, in a society.

Johan van der Sandt