Chorale Acadienne

The Czech Republic

Accomplished musicians also give al fresco concerts all over the city.

One of the most popular venues for these events is the ancient Charles Bridge, spanning the Vltava River. It was in this critical venue that Chorale Acadienne performed. For a group of folks who are adept in English and possibly Cajun French, to perform a work like Carmina Burana with the level of professionalism they displayed is exceedingly difficult. Not only is part of the work sung in Latin, there are sections that are also sung in old German.

The medieval lyrics tell stories about spring, summer, happiness and love, about current joys as well as about found, lost and found love. Laurie Roy remembers that when Carmina Burana’s last note died down, the audience leapt to its feet and gave a five-minute, standing ovation. Roy went on to note that such adulation in a city that is as music-wise as Prague is given very seldom.

When the Smetana Hall concert was scarcely over, the group boarded buses and went to the country’s second largest city, Brno, to perform a concert featuring the music of the English composer and arranger John Rutter.

Chorale members took in performances at the city’s two opera houses as well as at the city’s myriad churches and chapels, as well as taking hundreds of rolls of film photographing the city’s thousand-plus statues standing in front of buildings that have presided over a millennia of battle on their streets.

Tenor Caon Dulae found out that when he tried to join the street musicians on the Charles Bridge by pulling out his trombone, bureaucrats are bureaucrats, regardless of the language they speak. No license, no music, so sorry.

Everyone came back with high praise for the capital city’s dedication to historic preservation. Joan Bollsch indicated that because Prague was spared from the destruction that World War II brought to so many other European cities, the city is an architecture lover’s paradise.

Patsy Bienvenue’s favorite memory are her two impromptu gigs as a pick-up singer on a Dixieland jazz cruise on the Vltava River, or, as it is more popularly known, the Moldau. In addition to performing with Chorale, Bienvenue is the lead singer for one of our area’s best jazz groups, Melting Pot. Her scat renditions captivated captain, crew, musicians and audience as the boat chugged down the river.

Maestro Haygood indicated that next season’s presentations include Bach’s Magnificat, Hayden’s Lord Nelson Mass, an a capella rendition of Russian liturgy, as well as Brahms’s German Requiem. This will give regular patrons the opportunity to renew their relationship with Chorale.

Those people who have never attended a Chorale concert will be able to see the sort of stuff that brought the house down so many times in the Czech Republic.