**Passion on the Podium at THE END OF THE WORLD**

If Latin America seems to be off the radar of global concert-goers, it is possible that Chile, the small country at the end of the world (or at the beginning of the world) is even more so. That is why violinist and the conductor of the Chamber Orchestra of the Santiago-National Opera of Chile Alejandra Urrutia is devoting part of her energy to giving young Latin Americans and the world opportunities that are often elusive for this part of the planet.

Alejandra says: "Many times we think that because we are from a family with economic challenges, or that we live very far from Europe or the United States, or that access to great teachers and orchestras is limited in this part of the world, that therefore we will have fewer opportunities. I tell you that I lived a similar experience, however I worked on aligning the passion and power of my heart with my objectives; of understanding that what I was doing could change the world, and from that moment life and opportunities opened up for me. I want the same possibilities for all the young people of the world".

Since 2019, the Portillo International Music Festival and Academy has been held in Portillo. The venue chosen is the iconic Hotel Ski Portillo, high in the Andes Mountains of Chile, right at the border of Argentina, probably one of the most beautiful places on earth and without a doubt the perfect place to focus on what you love to do.

This 2021 due to the current conditions of the world, we have decided to make this festival online because those of us who love classical music understand its power, its power to lift us to states of pure transcendence. We transcend the mundane, the problems of our lives and our world for the duration of a symphony or even a movement.

The Portillo Festival Academy was designed to provide young, aspiring super talents from the region of Latin America with the opportunity to enter an eco-system of excellence, studying with some of the finest chamber musicians in the world, such as the American String Quartet. Each year, fifty-two scholarship students from up to 10 countries in the region have found themselves and their dreams unveiled to their teachers and colleagues, patrons and audiences and, most importantly to themselves.

In addition to the music in this festival we make sure that young people can work on their dreams and leadership, because the stage is a perfect platform to serve the world. We believe that artists, and musicians in particular, have the opportunity to be agents of global transformation and even more so in these times. It is because of this that we make sure that they can have clarity the call of their heart, and that they know how to give themselves to that call.

As part of our holistic and rigorous curriculum, we include Hatha Yoga classes. We ensure that there is care and education for the whole person, safe-guarding the longevity of the artist’s talent, capacity and gift to the world.

But what makes this Festival Academy unique among its peers in the world?

That is something we can ask anyone who visits the diverse and extraordinary countries of Latin America - Chile, Brazil, Mexico, Venezuela, Argentina, Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, Uruguay, Paraguay.

Even if you don’t visit but you listen to music belonging to these cultures, you will feel the same thing.

Latin America is renown the world over for its warmth, passion, vibrancy and heart. When you visit, you are welcome and you feel an almost instant belonging even though the culture is different. As a visitor, you feel the Spirit of Latin America, and your heart opens.

This Latinx Spirit, with all its nuance, is what flavours the Portillo Festival Academy

Chamber music in a spirit of warmth and joy, together with the hospitality of the iconic Hotel Ski Portillo is second to none. All students, teachers and music lovers alike, are treated with such regard and a feeling of family, as if they are at their grandmother’s home yet at the same time in a world class ski resort cradled high in the Andes Mountains.

The students are affirmed in their cultures as part of their unique offering to world. That they carry something so valuable that transmits directly to the hearts of the audience.

Now more than ever, we need classical music. We need it to be not only note perfect, but perhaps even more important today, we need it imbued with the transformative power of the heart.

This is the wonder of the experience of the Portillo International Festival Academy of Music.