

An old instrument regained its future

Symposium/ The almost forgotten Waldzither celebrates a comeback among insiders

Suhl

This time even television resisted the temptation to present the Waldzithersymposium at Suhl as a comedian date of hicks. That's proof for Martina Rosenberger to be one step nearer her aim: to get the Waldzither out of oblivion. "I'm very content", the organizer of the Symposium told yesterday, "the quality of the participants and of the concert is constantly improving. There was an intensive exchange of knowledge. The participants joined the event with creativity, curiosity and ambition."

45 musicians, luthiers, teachers, interested ones from all over Germany and other European countries met for the weekend at Suhl, for the 3rd time after 2003 and 2005. Two years ago the short TV-reports by ZDF and MDR broadcasting still made a joke of the event, according to Rosenberger's taste.

This year the MDR reported seriously about her concern, the organizer registers satisfied.

Like the TV-journalist many people give an inner or even outer smile about the name Waldzither. But everyone who takes a closer look soon gets rid of his prejudices. First of all that the instrument should lie on a table. The Waldzither is a lute-like instrument as for example the Mandola, is also called 'Halszither' and is far older than its "name-twin".

The name Waldzither is a short form of "Thüringerwald-Zither", a name concerning a type of instrument built in this German region. Therefore the imagination of plucking the instrument somewhere in the forest is misleading. Those who fancy the instrument don't see themselves as freaks of the folk music. The concerts at the Symposium showed a great variety of styles from Folkrock and medieval songs up to the art of songwriting.

For the Waldzitherpeople all that knowledge is standard by now. They don't complain any more about the danger of oblivion until the very day, when Martina Rosenberger started to care for the task with lots of energy and enthusiasm. The participants are looking onto future prospects. There are newly constructed instrument types, newly introduced sorts of native woods, new pieces of music. Now there already is a tutor for musicteachers. A future hint is also, that there are some enthusiasts younger than 30 years. Rosenberger: "now you can see structures grow....."

Picture: Doc Rossi demonstrated at the concert the rich sound of the cittern

(Translated by Martina Rosenberger)