

Tribute concert held in Geneva for late Japan conductor Seiji Ozawa

July 10, 2024 (Mainichi Japan)



A tribute concert for the late Japanese conductor Seiji Ozawa was held in Geneva on July 9, 2024. (Kyodo)

GENEVA (Kyodo) -- Around 30 musicians from an academy founded by the late Seiji Ozawa commemorated the death of the famed Japanese conductor with a tribute concert in Geneva on Tuesday.

His daughter, Seira Ozawa, was full of emotion as she watched the group of international students including Japanese nationals, alumni and professors of the Seiji Ozawa International Academy

Switzerland, perform Arnold Schoenberg's "Transfigured Night."

"I feel his presence here," she said in an address at the packed concert, which was open to the public. "I am so happy he can attend tonight through the music. I would like to thank you on behalf of my father."

The concert was conducted by Kazuki Yamada, who is music director of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra.

Japanese violinist Aoi Saito, who participated in the concert, said the tribute held a special meaning for her as she had performed with Ozawa twice.

"I am always reflecting on my memory when I played with him in Japan," said Saito, 26.

Brigitte Schlosser, 73, who was part of the audience, said she was "impressed by the level of the musicians and their young age."

Ozawa, the iconic Japanese conductor known for his work with the Boston Symphony Orchestra and other world-famous ensembles, died in Tokyo in February at the age of 88.

In 2005, the maestro opened the academy, where he taught young musicians for free.

Seira Ozawa stressed the bridge that her father had created between Japan and Switzerland through the academy.

"While classical music started in Europe and arrived in Japan as something from Europe, this Swiss academy case is the opposite. It started in Japan and came to Switzerland," she said in an exclusive interview with Kyodo News on Monday before the concert.

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