

# PORTILLO INTERNATIONAL MUSIC FESTIVAL AND ACADEMY

## **A Time to Heal the Divides**

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.

*"I arrived too late to take my own seat and had just enough time to scurry into a spare seat at the back of the concert, wedged between two strangers - a tall, well dressed man on my right and a woman of average height and demeanour on my left. The three of us it turns out were there alone. There's was not even time to acknowledge them before the first notes of Bach's Passion of St John soared.*

*The program was sublime and for those two hours, the music, artfully conducted by the Maestra Urrutia, wove me and my silent companions as one. I could feel that we shared the experience as a journey to a shared 'land of vibration', a new territory where there were no boundaries and we all belonged. It was an unique experience, one I will never forget."*

This is perhaps the unrecognised power of music. To harmonise our brokenness, our fractured hearts and minds and dissolve distance, bringing us to a common land of experience.

Today more than ever, in a world that seems to be more and more divided by ideology and politics, race and dogma, music has a potent and important part to play in bridging these divides and bringing hope and healing to humanity.

## **Portillo Festival Preparing Artists to Lead this Healing**

The Portillo International Festival Academy of Music is held each year in the iconic Hotel Ski Portillo, high in the Andes Mountains of Chile, right at the border of Argentina.

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, their patrons and audiences and most importantly to themselves.

## **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 renowned 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.