

Master violins for the Ring Foundation - Letter of support - José Cura

I was 12 when I told my parents I wanted to seriously study guitar. I started practising as many hours a day as my school schedule would allow. I remember getting up at 5 in the morning every day to play until 8, then running to school just in time for the 8.45 bell, then back to my instrument after lunch, then back to school again, and finally back to my guitar until it was time for dinner. Yes, my school grades started to look a little shaky — given how much of my attention I was giving to learning to play my instrument—, so after my parents rightfully told me off, I eventually found a way to more or less balance things out. But there was one thing I could not quite balance, and this was that however much I practised, most of the results were not showing because my guitar was... not of the highest quality, to put it nicely.

That is until fate came to the rescue: my father, an accountant, was keeping the books of a convent of nuns —which also doubled as a care home for the elderly— free of charge, as a gesture of goodwill. One day he came home carrying a brand new guitar, or at least it seemed new to me, given how shocked I was to unexpectedly be gifted the instrument. To make a long story short, one of the residents at the care home had left that guitar with the nuns when he died because he had nobody to hand it down to, and the nuns, knowing their accountant's son was studying guitar, gave the instrument to my father saying “You work for us out of love, so it is also out of love that we want to pay you back somehow. Please, give this guitar to José”... That at a certain point I almost decided to dedicate my life to being a professional guitarist, tells a lot about the importance of having a good quality instrument in order to develop one's technique properly. Of course, back then I didn't know my destiny as a musician was going to end up looking very differently. But that's another story for another time.

Today, on the 30th of May 2022 —just three weeks after the world premiere of my Requiem Mass, held in Müpa—, a brand new organisation is also having its own “premiere”: the “Master violins for the Ring” foundation, which has come to fill the gap between talented young musicians, and their future instrument, an instrument on which all their musical dreams can have the potential to become true. God knows what would have been of my efforts as a guitarist if it wouldn't be because of my new guitar, so I very well understand the great goal of “Master violins for the Ring Foundation”, and their commitment to help the new generation of performers.

My very best wishes of success to “Master violins for the Ring”, and my heartfelt support to those who are making this great adventure possible!



José Cura
Dresden, May 14th, 2022