

Amusement in French style

*By **Klaus Trapp** Published on 03.01.2019 at 00:00 o'clock*

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DARMSTADT - It was not an everyday program with which the Darmstadt State Orchestra played in the Great House on New Year's Day. It was with a wealth of works Paris and thus a former capital of amusement in the view. On the podium stood the gifted young conductor Ruth Reinhardt, who led the orchestra, which had taken up a large cast, with a sparkling temperament and expansive gestures, but sometimes also a bit hectic. Orchestra director Gernot Wojnarowicz acted as a mischievous presenter.

The bow stretched from baroque master Jean-Philippe Rameau with a "Contredanse en Rondeau" from the opera "Les Boréades" to the German premiere of Jörg Widmann's "Au coeur de Paris", a witty orchestral fantasy about Parisian earwigs that evaporate or mask. The Staatsorchester Darmstadt presented itself in top form, and again and again fine solo performances stood out, from the clarinet to the bassoon, from the flute to the two harps.

The highlights included two movements from Berlioz's "Symphonie fantastique", with the elegant "ball" facing the creepy "corridor to the place of execution", but conveyed by the "Coppélia waltz" by Leo Delibes. That Schumann also bowed to France, was learned in the rarely played overture to "Hermann and Dorothea" with the quote of the Marseillaise.

The span of French romanticism was evident in the contrast between the delicate

Meyerbeer's opera "Le prophète" and a fiery swelling emerged in the brisk "Austrian Polka" op. 382 by Johann Strauss (Sohn).

Soprano Moran convinces with brilliant coloratura

The young soprano Elizabeth Moran, who first sang the aria of the Musetta from Puccini's opera "La Bohème" in a moving and expressive manner, was later to shine with sparkling coloratura in an aria from Donizetti's "Linda di Chamonix". At the same time, the conductor could have asked the cheerfully moving orchestra to be more reserved.

Ravel's "Alborada del Gracioso" from the piano cycle "Miroirs" in the composer's orchestral version was an inspiring finale. Here one experienced the intertwining of chamber music delicacy and dancers, coupled with temperament. No wonder that the public demanded for encores: On a cheerful Paris potpourri was followed by the drinkable champagne polka of Hans Christian Lumbye, the Danish "Ostrich of the North".