

Technique and Expressiveness

A brilliant recital by Diana Cooper at the tenth concert of the Oviedo Philharmonic Society's season

Performer: Diana Cooper (piano)

Programme: Works by W. A. Mozart, R. Schumann, and F. Chopin

While cellist Nina Rivas had already won over the Oviedo Philharmonic audience a fortnight earlier, last Wednesday Diana Cooper completely captivated listeners with the enchanting combination of her pianistic technique and expressive artistry. Born in 1997, the young performer delighted subscribers with a particularly demanding programme featuring works by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Robert Schumann, and Frédéric Chopin—a formidable challenge that the French pianist met with remarkable brilliance.

Mozart's *Sonata in C major, K. 330* immediately showcased the full extent of Cooper's talent. The two fast movements stood out for their exceptional clarity of execution, supported by a subtle, crystalline touch that further enhanced the delicate sonorities characteristic of the Salzburg-born genius. In the *Andante cantabile*, perhaps taken at a slightly restrained tempo, Cooper displayed extraordinary tenderness, shaping the work's dissonances and harmonic resolutions with exquisite delicacy.

A striking change of atmosphere followed with the heightened romanticism that permeates *Schumann's Sonata No. 2 in G minor*, a true touchstone for any pianist. Diana Cooper approached the work without ever allowing the intensity to wane, bringing to the opening movement, *So rasch wie möglich*, a fascinating balance between the exuberance intended by the German composer and the sonata's underlying lyricism. She commanded every register of the instrument while maintaining impeccable articulation throughout. In the *Andantino*, she demonstrated remarkable elegance through finely controlled dynamic shading, lending her interpretation a distinctive charm. The magnificent finale revealed a spectacular balance between the two hands and flawless control of sonority and volume, further confirming the immense potential of this young French artist, already the recipient of numerous awards.

The second half of the recital was devoted to Frédéric Chopin. While the *Ballade No. 2* was utterly enchanting under Cooper's fingers, it was especially in the *Scherzo No. 4* and the *Andante spianato and Grande Polonaise brillante* that she reached the height of her artistry. She consistently found the right nuances, thanks to an exceptionally refined understanding of the music, skillfully contrasting its various themes and creating moments of great delicacy and profound intimacy through highly evocative and expressive pianissimos.

A truly brilliant recital by Diana Cooper, whom we hope to have the pleasure of hearing again soon on the stage of the Teatro Filarmónica in future seasons.

JONATHAN MALLADA
Musicologist