**Magical moments at Casino Bernon 1 August at Casino Bern**

**Classical Music wins over numerous new fans thanks to Swiss National Orchestra**

**On August 1st, Swiss National Orchestra (SNO) gave its debut concert at the fully booked Casino Bern. The unparalleled display of talented Swiss musicians from both national and international orchestras delighted the audience.**

The room vibrated at the first note played by the Orchestra. Swiss National Orchestra performed together for the first time on August 1st in a 90-minute concert where time stood still. Guests were transported into a world of symphonies inspired by or composed in Switzerland.

**New interpretations full of tradition**

Under the guidance of the renowned conductor John Axelrod, the SNO offered a performance that captivated both connoisseurs and newcomers to classical music. The concert began with a powerful interpretation of Hans Huber's "Tell Symphony," followed by Giacomo Puccini's Intermezzo Sinfonico from Manon Lescaut and Tchaikovsky's Polonaise from the opera Eugene Onegin – all pieces composed in Switzerland. The virtuosity, melody and sound of the Swiss National Orchestra were brought out through its perfect tuning and dynamics, highlighting the timeless beauty of these masterpieces.

The Geneva soloist Sébastian Jacot enchanted the audience with the Concert Piece for Flute and Orchestra by Siegfried Wagner, followed by the "Pastorale d'été" by Swiss composer Arthur Honegger. His flute solo continued with the melodies of Rachmaninoff's "Vocalise." To conclude, the famous overture to "William Tell" thrilled the audience and reminded them of the deeds of the national hero.

Maestro John Axelrod emphasises, "Music has the power to connect people and to build bridges. It was an honour for me to conduct this orchestra of over 70 musicians at its debut." The talents impressed with their high technical skills and perfect harmonisation – especially remarkable considering they had only rehearsed together for two days.

**Music for everyone**

The director Igor Longato is very satisfied with the performance of his team: "Our goal was and still is to give Swiss musical talents the opportunity to perform together and to make music accessible at the highest level to everyone. That's exactly what we accomplished today," he summarises.

SNO made it clear today that classical music is by no means elitist and inaccessible. The Orchestra marks the beginning of a new era in the Swiss music landscape and contributes significantly to the preservation of its rich cultural heritage.

**Plans for the near future in Rome**

Another performance is already scheduled for November 17, 2024: A concert in the Vatican under the patronage of the Swiss Embassy. The rich cultural and musical tradition of Switzerland will be presented and taken forward in a global context.

The enthusiasm and positive energy of the debut concert will resonate beyond the Casino. Those who want to be enchanted by the music should definitely mark the next dates in their calendar.

**About the Swiss National Orchestra:**

The Swiss National Orchestra is a non-profit, tax-exempt, non-religious and non-political association based in Bern. Founded in 2016 by a group of Swiss musicians and administrators, the SNO represents the whole of Switzerland and stands for musical excellence and innovation. The musical celebrities will now perform together for the very first time on 1 August 2024.

More information is available at: [www.sno.ch](http://www.sno.ch)