

Going nuts for maracas

It seemed a stroke of luck that the Summer Proms were on in Munich during our brief stay. What could be better than a balmy evening within the courtyard of the Residenz Palace, rubbing bare shoulders with the local music aficionados? Patrons enjoyed a glass of beer or wine from stalls just within the arched gateways before taking their seats facing a canopied stage. Banks of different coloured lights looked a bit incongruous but then we knew this wouldn't be your standard type of classical concert. *Los Dos y Compañeros* didn't exactly sound the most German of entertainments either, hardly Beethoven or Bach – presumably we'd be in for pan pipes and ponchos, perhaps?

What we got was Che Guevara meets the Chuckle Brothers. It was quite tricky to work out quite which were the *Compañeros* and which were *Los Dos*, as there seemed to be a choice of four front men rather than two. The overweight Che Guevara seemed to be in charge though, making lots of introductions as various colourful elements were gradually added to the stage: aged lookalikes of Elton John on piano, Robin Gibb on drums and Barry Manilow on bass guitar, plus a posse of brass players in vibrant pink blouses. Che's speciality, apart from off-key vocals, was to bring out – thank goodness – a pair of maracas from his trouser pockets.

Our dumbfounded reaction to this mixture of Latino-Germanic 70s and 80s schmaltz was topped by the apparently genuine affection and enthusiasm of the rest of the audience. Before long they were dancing in the aisles and whooping with delight as the sun gradually sank along with our expectations of any true musical entertainment. We eventually gave up trying to suppress our mirth and gave in to fits of giggles ... 70 Euros' worth of giggles.

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September 2014

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