

日本からヴィシュネフスカヤ・ロストロポーヴィッチ財団に 2万ドルの支援

2000年8月28日(月)、明治記念館において、「マエストロ・ロストロポーヴィッチを囲む夕食会」が開催された。「ヴィシュネフスカヤ・ロストロポーヴィッチ財団」の理事を務める弊社社長佐多が篤志家の皆様へ呼びかけ、ロシアの子供たちを支援するために開いたチャリティ夕食会である。この財団は世界的チェリストであるマエストロ・ロストロポーヴィッチ氏が、ロシアの子供たちへの医療援助を目的として1992年に夫人と共同で設立したもの。爾来世界中の企業や慈善団体等から幅広い支持を得て、ロシアの小児病院とそのスタッフに医療教育や機器類を提供してきた。

佐多は本年5月1日に財団理事に就任した直後にロストロポーヴィッチ氏の招きにに応じ初めてロシアを5日間ほど訪れ、マエストロはじめ、カナダのトロント小児病院のICUチーフであるDr.パーカー(現、世界小児集中治療学会会長)等とともに医療援助の現場を視察した。これに先立ち、本誌を通じて篤志家の皆様方にご援助を呼びかけていたが、現地視察により財団支援の意を佐多は更に強くし、ロストロポーヴィッチ氏の来日の機会を利用してチャリティ夕食会を企画した。

夕食会ではマエストロからキスや握手の歓迎を受けたお客様はテーブルに進み、テーブル上の3枚の写真をあしらったメニューとマエストロ自筆の似顔絵とショスタコーヴィッチ自筆の楽譜をかたどったランチョンマットに迎えられた。写真は前述のロシアの小児病院を訪れたときのもの。着席が済むと会場は暗転、「21世紀への証言・ロストロポーヴィッチ」と題されてNHKで放映されたものを10分間に編集したビデオが映しだされた。

オープニングスピーチを兼ね佐多が、来賓のパノフ駐日ロシア大使ご夫妻、そして改めてロストロポーヴィッチ氏を紹介。マエストロが来場の皆様の幸せと健康を祈って「日出づる国」に対して乾杯の音頭をとった。メニューは明治記念館の荒川料理長がフレンチをベースに工夫を凝らしたロシア料理。キャビアをふんだんに添えたオードヴル盛り合わせやボルシチ、サーモンのクリビヤック等々。もちろんウオッカも供された。

外山勝志明治神宮宮司(元明治記念館館長)がスピーチ。マエストロが5年前、明治記念館で毎年授賞式が行われる「世界文化賞」を丹下健三氏と一緒に受賞されたことを披露。続いて前出番組の



左から、小林氏、佐多、マエストロ

キャスターNHK解説主幹小林和男氏のスピーチ。小林氏はマエストロを始めロシアで出会った人々のことを書いた近著『1ブードの塩』を紹介。(後日、出席者80人全員に同著を贈呈して戴いた。)

元国立大蔵病院院長開原成允先生や小児治療にかかわる諸先生方、個人レベルで300人以上のロシア人孤児に支援を続けてこられた旧ソ連学生奨学援助日本基金代表横須賀寿子氏、ブルゴーニュワインの騎士団日本支部会長伊藤恒氏、マエストロの旧友ヤマハ音楽振興会理事長江口秀人氏と続いたゲストスピーチは、決まってウオッカの乾杯で締め括られた。「今日のスピーチは、私の兄弟である佐多さんの演出でスピーチと乾杯を交互にするロシア式です」とマエストロが説明。

マエストロの来日目的は、9月1日の小澤征爾65歳誕生日記念コンサートへの出演。大親友の小澤氏に話が及ぶとマエストロの饒舌は止まるところを知らず、小澤氏がペラ夫人のコサックの血を引く父親とウオッカの飲み比べをしようやく結婚の許可を取り付けたという秘話まで披露された。更に、マエストロから「佐多さんは日本代表として財団を支えていくという大変な重みを背負って下さった」と感謝の気持ちが表われ、これに添えて佐多は集まった寄付金が¥1,995,400であることをパネル仕立ての「小切手」で披露。(この寄付金は追加のご厚志を受け2万ドルちょうどに達し、篤志家の皆様への新たな謝意を表しつつ、9月1日ワシントンの本部へ送金)

夕食会の締め括りとして、1ブードの塩(=16.38kg)がお客様全員80人に小分けして配られた。「人を理解するには1ブードの塩を共に食べなければならない」というロシアの故事にちなんだものである。和気あいあいとした雰囲気の中、お客様がランチョンマットに引きも切らずマエストロのサインを求め、別れを惜しむ中、夕食会は予定時間を大幅に過ぎて盛会の内に散会した。

皆様のご厚志をお待ち申し上げております。

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US\$ 20,000 Donated to Vishnevskaya-Rostropovich Foundation from Japanese Well-Wishers

On August 26 2000, Mr. Yasuhiko Sata, the President of Tokibo Co., Ltd. gave a charity dinner party in honour of Maestro Mstislav Rostropovich at Meiji Kinenkan. He is a member of the board of the Vishnevskaya-Rostropovich Foundation, a volunteer organisation formed in 1992 by the world-renowned cellist, Mstislav Rostropovich and his wife, Galina Vishnevskaya, with the aim of improving the health care of children in Russia. Gaining support from various parties worldwide, including private companies and charitable organisations, the foundation has been providing Russian paediatric hospitals and their staff with medical equipment and training opportunities since its creation.

Soon after being appointed as Board Director on May 1 2000, Mr. Sata visited Russia for the first time, at the invitation of Maestro Rostropovich. During his five-day stay, he accompanied Dr. Barker, who is the Chief Physician of ICU, the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto, as well as presiding the World Congress of Paediatric Intensive Care. With a group of other paediatric specialists, they inspected the facilities to which the organisation has been offering support. Although he had been calling for the contributions to the foundation through Vitalité, the experiences of this trip made him realise the need for further assistance. For this reason, he planned the dinner to coincide with Maestro Rostropovich's visit to Japan.

The guests were given a hearty welcome, with the Maestro warmly embracing them and shaking hands all round. On their tables there awaited them three photographs, taken in a paediatric hospital Mr. Sata visited in Russia and printed on the menu, along with a specially-made place mat decorated with the Maestro's self-portrait and a copy of Shostakovich's autographed music score. After all the guests were seated, a shortened version of the NHK programme entitled "Testimony to the 21st century: Rostropovich" was shown on video.

Mr. Sata made the opening address, introducing His Excellency the Russian Ambassador, Mr. Panov, his wife, Mrs. Panov, and Maestro Mstislav Rostropovich. The Maestro announced toasts to the good health and happiness of the guests and the Land of the Rising Sun: Japan. Mr. Arakawa, the head chef of Meiji Kinenkan exercised his ingenuity in the sumptuous Franco-Russian cuisine: an assortment of appetisers lavishly garnished with caviar, followed by borscht, Koulibiac de Saumon and so on, all served with vodka, naturally.

The Reverend Katsushi Toyama, Chief Priest of Meiji Jingu Shrine and former Executive Director of Meiji Kinenkan, gave a speech in which he reminded the guests that the Maestro had been awarded the Praemium Imperiale in 1995, an awards ceremony which takes place annually at Meiji Kinenkan. The next speech was made by Mr. Kazuo Kobayashi, Executive Commentator of the NHK and the presenter of



From left: Mr. Kobayashi, Maestro, His Excellency Panov.

the above-mentioned video. In his speech he introduced his recent book "Ichi Poodo no Shio" ("One Pood of Salt"), in which he depicts his various encounters with people in Russia, including Maestro Rostropovich. He subsequently presented a copy of the book to each guest.

A number of guest speeches then followed. Dr. Shigekoto Kaihara, former Director of the National Okura Hospital; Ms. Toshiko Yokosuka, General Secretary of Ex-Soviet Union Student Scholarship Japan Fund, who has personally given her assistance to over 300 Russian orphans; Mr. Hisashi Ito, Director of the Japanese Branch of La Confrerie des Chevaliers du Tastevin and Mr. Hideto Eguchi, President of the Yamaha Music Foundation and an old friend of Maestro Rostropovich's. Each speech finished with a toast with vodka. "It is my brother Mr. Sata's idea to have speeches and toasts by turns. It is a Russian custom." Maestro commented.

The purpose of Maestro's visit on this occasion was to play at the concert for his best friend Mr. Seiji Ozawa's 65th birthday. Once he started to talk about Mr. Ozawa, there was no stopping the Maestro. He even revealed a previously unknown episode about this established conductor's courtship with his wife, Mrs. Vera Ozawa. He finally won her hand after a drinking bout with her father, who has Cossack blood.

Finally, as Founder of the Foundation, the Maestro expressed his appreciation to Mr. Sata, admiring "his eagerness to bear a burden to support the Foundation". In his response, Mr. Sata presented a framed cheque for 1,995,400 yen, the total donation. This donation eventually reached US\$20,000 and was sent to the Foundation's headquarters in Washington.

At the end of the party, one pood (=16.38kg) of salt was shared amongst all the guests. As the Russian proverb goes: "If you want to understand people, you ought to share one pood of salt with them." The guests cheerfully queued up, place mats in hand, to ask for the Maestro's signature. The party closed with fond farewells far beyond the arranged time.

Your contributions to the Vishnevskaya-Rostropovich Foundation will be most welcomed and appreciated at any time.

Please transfer your contribution to:
Account. Number. 9112398 (Savings Account)
at Tokyo Eigyo-bu, Sakura Bank

Account Holder: Yasuhiko Sata, Japanese representative of
Vishnevskaya-Rostropovich Foundation