

## **Interview with Ingemar Ohlsson**

Question: Why did you start studying music?

**I: To be honest, I really don't know. I just wanted to start. I asked my father to buy me a clarinet, but he bought a wooden flute instead, which I thought at the time, it was a clarinet.**

Question: Is there anybody in your family who plays an instrument?

**I: No, I just know that my parents were both very musical, but when they were young it wasn't that easy to start playing an instrument like it is today. They were living in the countryside, and it was difficult for them to find a teacher.**

Question: Do you still play the saxophone?

**I: Not so often.**

Question: Too bad. The saxophone has such a wonderful sound.

**I: Yes I know, but I simply don't have the time for it anymore. But when I do, I love it.**

Question: Why did you start to playing the cello?

**I: To be honest. I was more or less forced to do so.**

Question: You had to! How come?

**I: I was thinking of becoming a military musician at the time, and I would have a better chance to get the position if I learned to play some kind of string instrument.**

Question: So why cello?

**I: Because I preferred to sit down!**

Question: So that was the reason why you picked up the cello?

**I: I'm afraid so.**

Question: But then you continued to play the cello after all.

**I: At first I wasn't sure I would continue to play the cello after I'd been accepted for the military band, but I changed my mind.**

Question: How was it to become a classical musician?

**I: At the beginning it was very difficult. I didn't have any experience at all.**

Question: What was the most difficult?

**I: It was a completely new experience for me. Everything was different. I had to watch the conductor all the time and I had no experience of the classical repertoire either.**

Question: Did you enjoy it?

**I: At the beginning no! I missed to playing in the band and I missed the laughs when we were on tour.. But at the same time I knew this was a great chance for me to learn something new.**

Question: Didn't you play as a soloist with the symphony orchestras from time to time?

**I: Yes I did but it was a very tough thing to do.**

Question: How come?

**I: To know that my colleagues were listening to every single note I played with very critical ears, as professional musicians do.**

Question: Wasn't it fun?

***I: Sometimes I was nervous and I couldn't remember anything after the concert but with time I got more used to it and I really enjoyed it when my colleagues came up to me after the concert and said something nice to me. Or when I walked down the street and somebody from the audience made a nice comment about my performance.***

Question: You have studied in Prague in the Czech Republic. How was that?

***I: It would take me long time to tell you all about those three years in Prague when the communists were running the country. The only thing I can say now is how great it was to study music in Prague during my three "GOLDEN" years and the rest I'll explain in my book.***

Question: When is your book coming out?

***I: I'm working on it.***

Question: After Prague you returned to the Norrköping Symphony Orchestra and then later on you left for the Malmö Symphony Orchestra. What were the differences between those two orchestras?

***I: The Malmö Symphony Orchestra was at that time bigger, so the repertoire was different and harder to play. Then we also played operas, musicals and ballets. Besides I had a more demanding position as a co-principal cellist, which means more responsibility.***

Question: I understand that holding a position as a co-principal cellist, is to be a kind of boss?

***I: That's right.***

Question: Which are your best memories as a classical musician?

***I: Without any doubts, it was all the touring with the EPOS TRIO and with the Brandon University Trio. The touring as a soloist with my pianist was also fun.***

Question: How was it to live and work in Canada?

***I: There are only good things to say about Canada. People are so friendly and positive. I stayed there for nine years, so I was lucky to see most of the country when I toured from coast to coast playing concerts. I'm writing more about Canada in my book.***

Question: How then was it to come back to Sweden again?

***I: Scary!***

Question: Why scary? You were in fact returning back home again.

***I: Well, for the first time in my life I didn't know what to do. I had no steady job waiting for me. So it was like to jumping into cold water. During the first couple of years I played at the Malmö Opera House, but this was only a temporary job, which I knew.***

Question: What did you do after playing at the Opera house?

***I: I started to play more concerts on my cello and I wrote my first musical which I toured with in Sweden. I also started to produce and conduct operas and musicals.***

Question: But that must have been fun!

***I: Yes it was, but it's a very tough world.***

Question: How tough?

***I: Time to time it was like to walking into a dark tunnel and hoping to see the light at the end of the tunnel, hopefully.***

Question: How come?

***I: It was always a question about money. If you don't have any you have to take risks. I did that.***

Question: But didn't you have some fun with your productions?

***I: Yes, when the hall was crowded and the ensemble played well and were happy. Then it was fun. Once again there's more to tell but you'll have to wait until my book is ready!***

Question: I'm really getting curious about your book! Why did you begin to compose music?

***I: It might sound stupid, but it just was happened.***

Question: Just happened – what, without any purpose?

***I: Yes it really did. I was sitting by the piano and fooling around on the keyboard and all of a sudden some melodies came out and I wrote them down.***

Question: What about the lyrics?

***I: I wrote them later when the songs were finished.***

Question: Do you always write the music first?

***I: Not anymore. My wife and I are write the lyrics together, then I compose the music.***

Question: Do you get inspired about something before you compose the music?

***I: Sometimes yes, but when I start to compose I never know what's coming out before hand. Even if I have an idea before starting I'm very often surprised to hear the result later on.***

***It's like somebody else wrote it.***

Question: Of all the experiences you have had in your life, which one is your happiest?

***I: Without any doubt the making of this recording.***

Question: Why?

***I: Of course I've been thinking about the result and I want it to be the best and the whole process has been fun thanks to all the good musicians, technician and singers.***

Question: What reaction do you expect from the listeners of your music?

***I: Well, because there are so many different styles of music, I hope at least some songs will make them happy.***

Question: Why did you start your own record label?

***I: I always wanted to be independent and decide everything in my life by myself. To be dependent on somebody or something is totally against my nature. We live our life for the purpose of being creative and that's what I'm always trying to do.***