



Indonesian Spirit in Opening of Asian Para Games

(ATR) The Opening Ceremony of the III Asian Para Games will send a message of encouragement and posthumous tribute in the wake of the recent tragedy caused by the natural disasters of a week ago in Indonesia.

Balich Worldwide Shows has been chosen to create and produce the Opening and Closing Ceremonies, together with the Indonesian company Royalindo Convention International.

The award-winning Italian artistic director Marco Balich is responsible for the ceremonies. His first Olympic experience was the Flag Handover of Salt Lake City 2002 for Torino 2006.

"There I understood that being an artistic and executive producer of Olympic ceremonies is the best job in the world," he tells Around The Rings. And from Torino, for which he won a Grammy Award, his resume extended grew with a long list of Olympic and Paralympic experiences to the present.

After his beginnings in the world of live music and the commitment, during the '90s, in the production of television programs and music videos, Marco Balich is today recognized in the sector of large live entertainment events, specifically for his outstanding work on the Olympic stage.

After the Indonesia 2018 Asian Para Games Ceremonies in Jakarta, he will be handling the Pan and Parapan American Games in Lima 2019.

He talked with Around the Rings about his latest project in Indonesia.

Around The Rings: Has the assembly of the opening ceremony of the Asian Para Games been complicated by the recent tragedy caused by the earthquake and tsunami in Indonesia?

Marco Balich: The population of Indonesia are special and graceful people, so despite this tragedy having occurred, they respect the Paralympic athletes and they will deliver wonderful and soulful games despite this huge tragedy.

ATR: Has there been an opening ceremony that you have organized that included a minute of silence?

MB: In Pescara 2009 Mediterranean Games we dedicated a tribute to the victims of the Aquila earthquake. The Ceremonies also honored the values of sports using the traditional culture and iconography of Abruzzo, the Italian region that hosted the games, with a powerful sense of humanity demonstrated by all the participants. In 2011 the Juventus Stadium Opening celebrated the football club history paying tribute to the team's heroes and icons and to share the grief of tragic memories such as the Heysel tragedy which happened in 1985.



Marco Balich (BWS)

ATR: The tragedy forced you has some modification in the original project of the opening?

MB: After the official speeches one minute of silence will be called by the President of the Republic of Indonesia to remember the victims of the earthquake and tsunami before the opening of the games.

ATR: What messages do you hope to convey in this ceremony?

MB: The aim of this Ceremony is to celebrate the “Spirit of One Country”. “We Are One” is the claim representing the spirit of the Indonesia 2018 Asian Para Games. The whole ceremony will be a metaphor on how Indonesia is able to accept diversity as a value and disability as an ability: this is their powerful modus vivendi.

ATR: Of course, the opening ceremonies are more complex than the closing?

MB: The Opening Ceremony is complex because it is the test of the whole venue with the related techniques. The Closing is also complex because it cannot be rehearsal in the venue, usually used for sport activities until the day before the end of the games. In Rio we had the last football match in the Maracanã Stadium just 24 hours before the Closing Ceremony and the rehearsal was made in another structure.

ATR: What is the moment for you of the most tension during an inauguration?

MB: When the cauldron has to light up. It is also the most exciting moment for the public. Another thrilling moment is when the security team ask you to change the rules agreed for the Dignitaries many months ago at the last minute.

Reported by Miguel Hernandez.

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