

UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY

THE LITTLE SINGERS OF PARIS

Bernard Houduy, Music Director and Conductor

Thursday Evening, December 13, 1990, at 7:00
Hill Auditorium, Ann Arbor, Michigan

PROGRAM

Selections will be chosen from the following works:

Cantate Domino	. . . . .	Léo Hasler
O Memoriale	. . . . .	Giovanni Pierluigi Palestrina
Ave Verum	. . . . .	Francis Poulenc
Ave Verum	. . . . .	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Tantum Ergo	. . . . .	Gabriel Fauré
O Sacrum Convivium	. . . . .	Lodovico da Viadana
Ave Maria	. . . . .	Franz Schubert
Ave Maria	. . . . .	Gregorian
Laudate Dominum	. . . . .	Marc-Antoine Charpentier
Mountain Nights	. . . . .	Zoltán Kodály
O bone Jesu	. . . . .	Johannes Brahms
Adoramus Te	. . . . .	Brahms
Regina Coeli	. . . . .	Brahms

Songs of the Holiday Season

Entre le boeuf et l'âne gris	. . . . .	François Auguste Gevaert
C'est Noël, joie sur la terre	. . . . .	J. Rolland
Chantons Noël (Quebec)	. . . . .	Cocagnac-P. Houduy
Es ist ein' Ros (Germany)	. . . . .	Michael Praetorius
Joy to the World	. . . . .	George Frideric Handel
Madre en la puerta	. . . . .	Spanish Folk
Les anges dans nos campagnes	. . . . .	Gevaert
O Little Town of Bethlehem	. . . . .	Lewis Redner
O Come All Ye Faithful	. . . . .	John Francis Wade
Jingle Bells	. . . . .	J. S. Pierpont
White Christmas	. . . . .	Irving Berlin
Stille Nacht	. . . . .	Franz Gruber

INTERMISSION

Recordings: Auvidis, Tempo

The Little Singers of Paris are represented by Herbert Barrett Management, New York City.

For the convenience of our patrons, the box office in the outer lobby is open during intermission for purchase of tickets to upcoming Musical Society concerts.

Waldecho	Bogenhardt
La berceuse du petit zebu	Jacques Ibert
Le petit garçon malade	Francis Poulenc
Petit fleur fanée	<i>French Folk</i>
So Ra O A Ruite	<i>Japanese Folk, arr. Pierrepont</i>
Técé voda, técé (Czechoslovakia)	Franz Xaver Pokorny
Le clocher de Saint-Malo	Rolland-White
Les temps viendront	Amade-Sigrist
Alphabet	Mozart
Jardin de France	P. Bonneau
La nuit	Jean-Philippe Rameau
Mes jeunes années	Charles Trenet
Kalinka	<i>Russian Folk</i>
Berceuse	Mozart

The Little Singers of Paris

The Little Singers of Paris are known throughout the world for their technical perfection and purity of sound. Under the leadership of music director and conductor Bernard Houdy, this celebrated choir is a shining example of the youth and culture of France. Since its formation in 1907, the choir has performed in more than 100 countries and is now making its 12th visit to North America. They have made 14 tours of Japan, and in 1986 they were the first Western children's choir ever to visit the People's Republic of China. After concluding their current concerts in the United States, the boys will travel to Rome for their traditional annual performance at the Vatican.

It all started more than 80 years ago, in 1907, when a few Parisian students felt the desire to revive the medieval tradition of religious boys choirs, which had been somewhat forgotten in the course of the centuries.

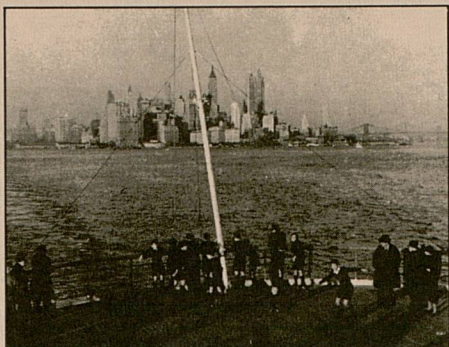


1908: *The first Little Singers*

The basis for their inspiration was the “Moto Proprio” of Pope Pius X, who strongly advocated the revival of true liturgical music. Gathering a group of boys in the popular section of Vaugirard in Paris, the students formed a first choir, which they named “Manécanterie des Petits Chanteurs a la Croix de Bois,” after the small wooden cross that the boys wore over a choir vestment known as “alb.” “Manécanterie” was a word of medieval French used to designate a choir school.

At first, the choir sang exclusively in Parisian churches, its repertoire limited to Gregorian chant and polyphonic music of the Renaissance. Later, some secular pieces were added, and the choir began to give a few concerts. Primarily, though, it participated in religious services in Paris and in nearby towns and villages. In 1923, after having been associated for a few years with the activities of the choir school, Father Fernand Maillet became the director and conductor of the choir. Father Maillet was a tall, dynamic man for whom the word “impossible” just didn’t exist. Under his inspiring leadership, The Little Singers were to become, in just a few years, a famed boys choir. His ability to train a boy’s voice to obtain a clear, limpid sound is a characteristic of the choir that has been carefully preserved to this day.

Concert tours were, at first, limited to the Parisian area and then extended to the French Provinces. Foreign countries were



1935: Second voyage to the United States

next, and after touring in Europe came the big venture: a trip to the United States and Canada in 1931. At the end of the initial period of three weeks, the success of this tour was so great that 60 more days had to be added to the schedule. This marked the beginning of a series of North American tours that now number 12. The "Manécanterie" also traveled several times to South America, to Central Africa, and other countries. The first trip to the Pacific dates back to 1957 and included Japan, Vietnam, and the Philippines. In 1963, in the course of a trip around the world, the choir visited Thailand, Vietnam, Australia, New Zealand, and New Caledonia. It went back to Japan and to Thailand in 1967, and from then on, the visits to countries in the Far East became more and more frequent.

While World War II brought the choir's touring activities to a virtual halt, these activities were resumed on an ever-increasing scale after the war. But other significant events were soon to take place. As early as 1944, the choir's growing popularity was confirmed in French-speaking countries by its participation in the motion picture *La Cage aux Rossignols*, which, in effect, described a choir school very similar to the "Manécanterie." In later years, the choir appeared in several other pictures, as well as on many television shows.

In 1945, Father Maillet realized a long-cherished dream by founding a French Federation of boys' choirs, which would later become an International Federation. It was joined not only by existing choirs, but also by the many choirs that were founded by following the example of The Little Singers. The first National Congress of Little Singers took place in 1947. Two years later, 3,000 children attended the first International Congress of the Federation and were welcomed in Rome by Pope Pius XII, who celebrated a Mass for them in St. Peter's Basilica.

The choir school found a new home in 1943 in Rue Eugene Flachet in Paris, where it remained for nearly 20 years. In this white mansion, the school finally found such needed facilities as classrooms, rehearsal



areas, playgrounds, and bedrooms (replacing former dormitories). By this time, the staff was comprised almost entirely of former Little Singers, still headed by Father (soon to become Monsignor) Maillet. After 40 fruitful years as director of The Little Singers, Monsignor Maillet died in 1963 and was succeeded by Father Roger Delsinne. For many years, Father Delsinne had been associated with activities of the choir, and within a few months after taking over, he was conducting a choir of 4,500 children at an International Congress in Madrid. The performing and touring activities continued under Father Delsinne's leadership until 1978, when he died suddenly of a heart attack soon after the choir's 1978 tour of North America.

Bernard Houdy, music director and conductor of The Little Singers since 1978, was a former solo soprano singer with The Little Singers of Paris. After finishing his years with them, he continued his training at the French Radio and Television School of Music and then went on to graduate from the Paris Conservatory of Music, where he studied opera. Under Mr. Houdy's leadership,

a second Little Singers choir was created in 1989, thereby helping to increase the influence of this exemplary musical organization around the world. Gérard Sedru, also a former Little Singer, had been in charge of all touring activities at the time of Mr. Houdy's appointment, and he continues to serve as manager and tour director.

Today's Little Singers are enjoying their present home, a castle-like mansion surrounded by the lovely countryside in Gligines, near Crépy-en-Valois. The boarding school offers classes from the primary school level to the age of 14. With facilities for 110 children, the school provides general education in compliance with official programs, as well as musical education. Appropriately, it is named "Residence Monseigneur Maillet," where all of the choir's long lasting traditions are carefully preserved.

This evening's concert marks the Ann Arbor debut of The Little Singers of Paris.

The Little Singers of Paris

Bernard Houdy, Music Director and Conductor

Gaetan Back	Vianney Fournel	Eric Puzzuoli
Walter Belli	Robin Guiovanopoulos	Thomas Religieux
Herve Cabuzel	Adrien Hardy	David Richard
François Carlot	Julien Le Corre	Louis Rose
Nicolas Chaumier	Gregoire Mathieu	Thierry Taffin
Benoit D'Onofrio	Emmanuel Millecamp	Romuald Urvoas
Gerome De Fraville	Romeo Pedro Guerreiro	Thomas Vandebossche
Gregory Depieme	Guillaume Perrichon	
Olivier Fenaille	Sebastien Pontillo	

The Little Singers of Paris are supported by the French Ministry of Culture (Music Section).

To Better Serve Our Patrons

Visit the UMS/Encore Information Table in the lobby, where volunteers and staff members are on hand to provide a myriad of details about events, restaurants, etc., and register any concerns or suggestions. Open thirty minutes before each concert and during intermission.

METROPOLITAN OPERA
ORCHESTRA

JAMES LEVINE

JESSEY NORMAN

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University Musical Society of The University of Michigan
Burton Memorial Tower • Ann Arbor • Michigan 48109-1270
(313) 764-2538 • reservations by phone or mail

PROGRAM

Ludwig van Beethoven — "Ah Perfido", Op. 65
Alban Berg — Three Pieces for Orchestra, Op. 6

Intermission

Richard Strauss — *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* Suite, Op. 60
Richard Wagner — "Immolation" Scene from *Götterdämmerung*

BENEFIT CONCERT TICKET PRICES

Tax-deductible contributions listed in parentheses.

MAIN FLOOR

_____ @ \$1000 (\$885) = _____
*Includes Pre-concert dinner at Escoffier and
Post-concert Champagne Reception*

_____ @ \$200 (\$144) = _____
Includes Post-concert Champagne Reception

_____ @ \$150 (\$114) = _____

_____ @ \$75 (\$46) = _____

_____ @ \$50 (\$21) = _____

FIRST BALCONY

_____ @ \$125 (\$90) = _____

_____ @ \$50 (\$22) = _____

SECOND BALCONY

_____ @ \$75 (\$50) = _____

_____ @ \$25 (\$5) = _____

TOTAL

_____ Tickets \$ _____

RESERVATIONS

Reservations will be taken by phone — (313) 764-2538 — by mail, and in person at the Burton Memorial Tower Box Office.

Reservations will be filled in the order received and tickets sent in late March.

Priority will be given to Encore Members of the University Musical Society.

Name _____

Street _____

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Enclosed is my check made payable to: **UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY** \$ _____

Please charge my VISA MASTERCARD \$ _____

Expiration Date _____ Account Number _____

Signature _____

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