

VIENNA BOYS CHOIR

Wiener Sängerknaben

Jimmy Chiang, choirmaster

Wednesday, March 18, 2015 • 8:00 p.m.
Fisher Auditorium, IUP Performing Arts Center

Program

500 Years of Spiritual Music

Gregorian Chant of the 10th century

Veni creator spiritus (Come, creator spirit)

Text ascribed to Hrabanus Maurus (780
- 856)

Jacobus Gallus (~1550 - 1591)

Haec Dies (This is the day)

A cappella motet for four-part double choir

Giovanni Croce (1557 – 1609)

O sacrum convivium (How holy is this feast)

Motet for four-part choir a cappella

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756 – 1791)

Dir, Seele des Weltalls (To you, soul of the Universe); cantata KV 429 (468a)

Text: Lorenz Leopold Haschka (1749 – 1827)

Michael Haydn (1737 - 1806)

Anima nostra (Our souls)

from the offertory for the Feast of the Holy Innocents MH 452

Giuseppe Verdi (1813 - 1901)

Laudi alla vergine Maria (In praise of the Virgin Mary), from: Quattro pezzi sacri

Text: Dante Alighieri (1265 – 1321)

Hugo Distler (1908 - 1942)

Verleih uns Frieden gnädiglich (God grant us peace), opus 5/51

Text: Martin Luther (1483 - 1546)

Nurit Hirsh (*1942)

Oseh Shalom bi-mromav (He who makes peace in high places)

Text: Qaddish prayer

Gerald Wirth (*1965)

Leave this Chanting and Singing

Text: Rabindranath Tagore (1861 - 1941)

Three Gospel Songs

Amazing Grace

Music: Early American tune

Text: John Newton (1725 - 1807)

Oh, What a Beautiful City (Twelve Gates to the City)

Traditional spiritual

O Happy Day (1704, 1967)

Johann Anastasius Freylinghausen (1670 – 1739) / Edward Francis Rimbault (1816 – 1876) / Edwin Hawkins (*1943)

Text: Edward Francis Rimbault

• INTERMISSION •

From Vienna to Hollywood: a musical journey through the world

Johann Strauss son (1825 - 1899)

Bitte schön (If you please), French polka opus 372 (1875)

Arr. Helmuth Froschauer

Johann Strauss son (1825 – 1899)
Wiener Blut (Viennese Spirits), waltz opus 354 (1873)
Arr. Gerald Wirth

Franz Schubert (1797 – 1828)
Die Forelle (The Trout), opus 32, D 550
Text: Christian Friedrich Daniel Schubarth (1739 – 1791)

Johannes Brahms (1833 – 1897)
Two pieces from: Liebeslieder-Walzer, opus 52
Wenn so lind dein Auge mir (Your loving eye), opus 52/8
Text: Georg Friedrich Daumer (1800 - 1875)
Nein, es ist nicht auszukommen (People are impossible), opus 52/11
Text: Georg Friedrich Daumer (1800 - 1875)

Giuseppe Verdi (1813 - 1901)
Witches' chorus, from the opera Macbeth (1847)
Text: Francesco Maria Piave (1810 - 1876), Andrea Maffei (1798 - 1885)

Jacques Offenbach (1819 - 1880)
Barcarole, from the opera: Les Contes d'Hoffmann
Text: Jules Barbier (1825 - 1901), after E.T.A. Hoffmann

International Folk Songs
Juchhe Tirolerbua (Hey, Tyrolean lad)
Song from the Tyrol; about the alpine cattle drive in spring.
Arr. Gerald Wirth

Üsküdar'a gider iken (On the way to Üsküdar). Turkish folk song
Text: Nuri Halil Poyraz (1885 – 1950) and Muzaffer Sarisozen (1899 – 1963);
Arr. Gerald Wirth
Un poquito cantas (A little bit of dancing).
Latin American folk song
Arr. Gerald Wirth

Aaron Copland (1900 – 1990)
I Bought Me a Cat, from: Old American Songs, Set I / V (1950)

Hollywood
Richard Rodgers (1902 - 1979)
Three songs from *The Sound of Music*
Text: Oscar Hammerstein (1895 – 1960)

The Hills are Alive with the Sound of Music
Do-Re-Mi
Edelweiss

Nacio Herb Brown (1896 - 1964)
Singin' in the Rain (1929)
Lyrics: Arthur Freed (1894 - 1973)

Program subject to change

Hotel Residenz Palais Coburg is the Vienna Boys Choir general sponsor.

www.wsk.at
www.viennaboyschoir.net

Exclusive Tour Management:
Opus 3 Artists
470 Park Avenue South, 9th Floor North
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www.opus3artists.com



Program copy has been provided, unedited, by the touring production.

Jimmy CHIANG

Conductor

The Hong Kong born conductor and pianist has started his musical career already at the age of 13 with his first public appearance as concert pianist. Born to a musical family, Chiang began piano lessons when he was four. He also studied violoncello and composition. He received the Fellows Diploma from the Trinity College of Music in London at the age of 16, graduated with the Bachelor of Music Degree at Baylor University (USA), finished his education with “Magister Artium” at the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna. His major breakthrough as a conductor came with the winning of the renowned “Lovro von Matacic” international competition for Young Conductors in Zagreb in 2007. His versatility as a well-rounded musician has been proven by his convincing interpretation of a wide-ranging operatic, symphonic, choral, solo piano, chamber music and

song recital repertoires, whether in opera pits or on concert stages.

While serving as principal conductor of the Hong Kong Pan Asia Symphony since 2008, he has worked as assistant music director of the Wagner’s “Ring” cycle at Theater Lübeck from 2007 to 2009, as well as Kapellmeister at Theater Freiburg, where he led from 2009 to 2011 numerous premiere productions. In September 2013, Chiang took on the position as choirmaster of the Vienna Boys’ Choir.

In addition, he has appeared as guest conductor with the Komischen Oper Berlin, Orquesta Sinfonica de Castilla y Leon, Zagreb Philharmonic, Hong Kong Philharmonic, etc., likewise at festivals such as Eutin Opera Festival (Germany), FACYL (Spain), Macau International Music Festival, and the Rohm Music Festival in Kyoto, Japan, where he was chosen by invitation to study and work side by side with Maestro Seiji Ozawa in summer 2004.

Vienna Boys Choir

Gerald Wirth

Artistic Director and President

Boys have been singing at the court in Vienna since the 14th century. In 1498, more than half a millennium ago, Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I moved his court and his court musicians to Vienna. He gave instructions that there were to be six singing boys among his musicians; the boys came from different parts of the Holy Roman Empire, from the Netherlands, Italy, Germany, and Austria. Historians have settled on 1498 as the foundation date of the Vienna Chapel Imperial (Hofmusikkapelle) and in consequence, the Vienna Boys’ Choir. Until 1918, the choir sang exclusively for the imperial

court, at mass, concerts and private functions, and on state occasions.

Musicians like Heinrich Isaac, Heinrich Ignaz Franz Biber, Johann Joseph Fux, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Antonio Caldara, Antonio Salieri, Christoph Willibald Gluck, and Anton Bruckner worked with the choir. Composers Jacobus Gallus, and Franz Schubert were themselves choristers. Brothers Joseph Haydn and Michael Haydn were members of the choir of St. Stephen’s Cathedral and frequently sang with the imperial boys’ choir.

In 1918, after the breakdown of the Habsburg Empire, the Austrian government took over the court opera, its orchestra and the adult singers, but not the boys’ choir.



Josef Schnitt, who became Dean of the Imperial Chapel in 1921, turned the Vienna Boys' Choir into a private institution. The former court choir boys became the Wiener Sängerknaben (Vienna Boys' Choir); the imperial uniform was replaced by the sailor suit, then the height of boys' fashion. There was not enough money to pay for the boys' upkeep, and the choir started to give concerts outside of the chapel in 1926, performing motets, secular works, and - at the boys' request - children's operas. The impact was amazing. Within a year, the choir performed in Berlin (where Erich Kleiber conducted them), Prague and Zurich. Athens and Riga (1928) followed, then Spain, France, Denmark, Norway and Sweden

(1929), the United States (1932), Australia (1934) and South America (1936). Since 1926, the choir has clocked close to 1000 tours in 100 different countries.

Present

Today there are 100 choristers from 30 different nations between the ages of ten and fourteen, divided into four touring choirs. Between them, the four choirs give around 300 concerts and performances each year in front of almost half a million people. Each group spends nine to eleven weeks of the school year on tour. They visit virtually all European countries, and they are frequent guests in Asia, Australia and the Americas.

Together with members of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra and the men of the Vienna State Opera Chorus, the Vienna Boys' Choir maintains the tradition of the imperial musicians: as Hofmusikkapelle (Chapel Imperial) they provide the music for the Sunday Mass in Vienna's Imperial Chapel, as they have done since 1498. In 2012, the choir participated for the fifth time in the New Year's Concert of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Mariss Jansons.

Repertoire

The choir's repertoire includes everything from medieval to contemporary and experimental music. Motets and lieder for boys' choir form the core of the touring repertoire, as do the choir's own arrangements of quintessentially Viennese music, waltzes and polkas by Lanner and Strauss.

Both the choir and the Chapel Imperial have a long tradition of commissioning new works, going back to Imperial times, when composers like Mozart, Haydn, or Bruckner wrote for the ensemble. Austrian composers Heinz Kratochwil, Balduin Sulzer, Wolfram Wagner, and Gerald Wirth have written works for today's boys. Benjamin Britten composed a vaudeville which could be performed on tours, and Australian composer Elena Kats-Chernin wrote her 'Land of Sweeping Plains' for them. The Vienna Boys' Choir performs major choral and symphonic works, sometimes as part of the Hofmusikkapelle, sometimes with other orchestras and men's choirs. They are regularly asked to supply soloists for large choral and orchestral works, such as Bernstein's Chichester Psalms. In recent years, they have performed with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, the Vienna Symphony Orchestra, the London Philharmonic, Staats-

kapelle Berlin, the Oslo Philharmonic and the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. Over the last decade, the choir has worked with, among others, Pierre Boulez, Nikolaus Harnoncourt, Mariss Jansons, Zubin Mehta, Riccardo Muti, Kent Nagano, Seiji Ozawa, Christian Thielemann, Franz Welser-Möst, and Simone Young. The choir also takes part in opera performances at the Vienna State Opera, the Vienna Volksoper, and the Salzburg Festival. Choristers appear as three boys in Mozart's *The Magic Flute*. Recently, a soloist sang the part of Oberto in Handel's opera *Alcina* at the Vienna State Opera, conducted by Marc Minkowski.

Children's Operas

The boys love to act, and children's operas are an important part of the repertoire. The choir started performing operas in the 1920s, beginning with classics such as Mozart's *Bastien und Bastienne*, Weber's *Abu Hassan* or Haydn's *Lo Speciale*, later branching out to contemporary works. Benjamin Britten rehearsed his *The Golden Vanity* with the boys, and conducted the premiere at the Aldeburgh Festival in 1967.

Over the last decade, the choir has produced a number of new operas. Gerald Wirth's *The Journey of the Little Prince* and *The Tablet of Destinies*, an opera based on the Babylonian myth of Anzu, and Raoul Gehringer's *Moby-Dick*, based on the novel by Herman Melville, were all shown at Vienna's Musikverein. Gerald Wirth's *1398 – Der Bettelknabe (1398 - The begging boy)*, a story set in medieval Palestine and Europe, premiered in 2010, with a new production planned for May 2015. A new opera set in the 4th century AD and featuring Goths, Romans, and Anglo-Saxons is currently being developed.

Continued on page 17...

World Music and Cross Over Projects

One of the choir's goals is to introduce the boys to as many different styles of music as possible: since the 1920s, the choir has collected music from around the world. In the past years, the choir has commissioned and produced a number of world music projects, "Silk Road", "Between Worlds", "Inspiration", and "Pirates!". As Gerald Wirth explains, 'We do not claim to play 'authentic' world music; instead, we create something from the original sources that is our own. We want to be faithful to the source in the sense that we treat it with respect.'

Films: Silk Road and Bridging the Gap

The choir's Silk Road project inspired film director Curt Faudon to make a film about the globetrotting choristers. For over a year, Faudon followed the boys' life in Vienna and on the road, filming the boys at work and at

play, on and off stage, meeting and working with artists from Central Asia, China and India. The resulting 90-minute film is a clever blend of fly-on-the wall documentary, road movie, costume drama and music, with stunning footage from all across the world and through time, with an unusual, off-beat soundtrack which has the boys singing in Arabic, Chinese, Farsi, French, Japanese, Latin, Marathi, Maori, Savo Finnish, Tajik, Uyghur, Urdu, Uzbek and German.

Faudon's second film on the choir will be released in 2014; Bridging the Gap focuses on the enormous power of singing. In it, the boys sing with an Apache medicine man, perform with an entire Indian village, ham it up in an Peruvian train. And in New Zealand they are adopted into a Maori tribe, via song.

The Choir School

The choir maintains its own schools. Almost 400 children and teenagers between the ag-





es of 3 and 18 study and rehearse in the Augartenpalais, a baroque palace and former imperial hunting lodge in Vienna. Beginning with kindergarten, run in cooperation with the city of Vienna, boys and girls are provided with an all-round education. At age ten, the most talented boys are selected to join the choir and enter the choir's grammar school. All boys are assigned to one of the touring choirs. Academic lessons are taught in small groups. The school offers extracurricular activities ranging from all kinds of sports to attending a wide range of concerts, operas, plays, musicals and movies. The choristers are also encouraged to create their own projects; some form their own bands, others create short skits or films. All choir boys live in the choir's well-appointed boarding school, with two to three boys sharing a room.

In 2010, the choir launched its new senior high school for boys and girls. The unique curriculum for years 8 to 12 was developed in conjunction with the Universities of Music in Vienna and in Salzburg; it is designed to help young singers find their voice and discover and develop their talents, and to prepare young singers for university and for a career in music.

Most students retain a lifelong commitment to the Arts. Roughly a quarter of the school's alumni go on to become professional musicians, conductors, singers or instrumental-

ists. Almost all continue to sing. There are two male voice ensembles made up entirely of former choristers, the Chorus Viennensis and the Imperial Chapel's Schola Cantorum, who specialises in Gregorian chant.

Development and Funding

The Vienna Boys' Choir is a private, non-for-profit organisation, which finances itself largely through concerts, recordings and royalties. The Ministry of Education and the State's Art Department help fund special projects, such as the production of new children's operas. Further development and projects depend on additional support.

The POK Pühringer Privatstiftung, based in Vienna's Palais Coburg is the choir's general sponsor. With its backing, the choir was able to build its own on-campus concert hall to facilitate opera productions in particular. The hall, which was built to include the baroque gatehouse and the old park wall, opened in December of 2012, with a joint gala concert by the Vienna Boys' Choir and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. Its name, MuTh, stands for "Music and Theatre". MuTh serves the entire community of Vienna with a wide range of acts, and there is special focus on giving a platform to young performers.

Program Notes

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