

20th Anniversary Season

Performing Arts Series

Opus 3 Artists

presents

Vienna Boys Choir

Wiener Sängerknaben

Kerem Sezen, Choirmaster

Saturday, February 26, 2011

Yardley Hall

Johnson County Community College

*Underwritten in part by the
Arthur and Alma Yardley Endowment
Johnson County Community College Foundation*

Vienna Boys Choir
Wiener Sängerknaben
Kerem Sezen, Choirmaster

Program

Text and translations provided in a separate book.

O Fortuna / Fortuna Imperatrix Mundi (Fortune, Empress of the world)

from Carmina Burana
Carl Orff (1895–1982)

Ave verum corpus (Hail, true body), Op. 65, No. 1

motet for two equal voices and organ
Gabriel Fauré (1845–1924)

Wer Gott bekennt aus wahren Herzensgrund

(Who acknowledges God wholeheartedly)

from the cantata Es ist dir gesagt, Mensch, was gut ist, BWV. 45
Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

Adoramus te Christe (We praise you, Christ)

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (1525–1594)

Virga Jesse (The Rod of Jesse), WAB 52

Anton Bruckner (1824–1896)

Prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi, F. 47

Arthur Bliss (1891–1975)

Ave Maria (Hail Mary)

Anton Heiller (1923–1979)

Four pieces from *Stabat mater*

Giovanni Battista Pergolesi (1710–1736)

– Intermission –

Mr. Double Bass (2010)

Wolfram Wagner (1710–1736)
Text: Hahnrei Wold Käfer (b. 1948)

Ének Szent István királyhoz (Hymn to King Saint Stephen)

*from *Bozóky Songbook**
Zoltán Kodály (1882–1967)

Und gehst du über den Kirchhof (And if you cross the church yard), Op. 44, No. 10

from Jungbrunnen (Fountain of Youth)

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897)

Text: Paul Heyse (1830–1914)

Abendsegen (Evening prayer)

from the opera Hänsel und Gretel, EHWV 93

Englebert Humperdinck (1854–1921)

Arr. Friedrich Zipp (1914–1997)

Text: Adelheid Wette (1858–1916) and Hermann Wette (1857–1919)

Im Abendrot (At sunset), D. 799

Franz Schubert (1797–1828)

Arr. Jakob Christ (1895–1974)

Text: Karl Gottlieb Lappe (1773–1843)

Two selections from the motion picture *Les choristes* (2004)

Caresse sur l’océan (Sea breeze)

Cerf-volant (Kite)

Bruno Coulais (b. 1954)

The Earth We Share

from the musical Footrot Flats (1983)

Philip Norman (b. 1953)

Lyrics: Alan Keith Grant (1941–2000)

Vocal Descant: Robert Auburn

We Are the World

Michael Jackson (1958–2009) and Lionel Richie (b. 1949)

Der Mai ist gekommen (May has arrived)

Justus Wilhelm Lyra (1822–1882)

Text: Emanuel Geibel (1815–1884)

Yodelling song from Austria

Traditional

Pizzicato Polka, Op. 234

Johann Strauss II (1825–1899)

Dorfschwalben aus Österreich (Village swallows from Austria), Op. 164

Josef Strauss (1827–1870)

Arr. Victor Keldorfer (1873–1959)

Text: Klemens Dorn (1874–1948)

All programs subject to change.

Vienna Boys Choir

Boys have been singing at the court of the Holy Roman Emperor since the early 15th century. In 1498, more than half a millennium ago, 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. Historians have settled on 1498 as the foundation date of the Vienna Hofmusikkapelle and - in consequence - the Vienna Boys Choir. Until 1918, the choir sang exclusively for the imperial court, at mass, at private concerts and functions, and on state occasions.

Musicians like Heinrich Isaac, Paul Hofhaimer, Heinrich Ignaz Franz Biber, Johann Joseph Fux, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Antonio Caldara, Antonio Salieri and Anton Bruckner worked with the choir. Composers Jacobus Gallus and Franz Schubert and conductors Hans Richter, Felix Mottl and Clemens Krauss were themselves choristers. Brothers Joseph 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. The Vienna Boys Choir owes its survival to the initiative of Josef Schnitt, who became Dean of the Imperial Chapel in 1921. Schnitt established the boys' choir as 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. Funding was not enough to pay for the boys' upkeep, and in 1926 the choir started to give concerts outside of the chapel, 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).

Kerem Sezen, Choirmaster

Kerem Sezen took over as choirmaster of the Vienna Boys Choir in 2003. He has led "his" boys on tours of Europe, Asia, Australia, New Zealand, and the USA. He prepares the boys for the Sunday masses in the Imperial Chapel and for the Chapel's annual concert at Vienna's Musikverein. Through these annual concerts, he has worked with conductors such as Riccardo Muti, Helmut Rilling and Peter Schreier. He regularly conducts the boys' choir and the Vienna Chamber Orchestra in the choir's Friday afternoon concerts.

Sezen seeks a sound that is both natural and homogenous for the choir, but he also places a particular emphasis on the boys' individual voices. He has even begun a tradition of solo recitals at the choir school. To keep their vocal cords in good shape, he developed a series of vocal gymnastic techniques for them. Sezen provides vocal training for a number of other Viennese choirs as well. As he says, "Each boy needs to find his own voice."

In recent years, he has also worked on the choir's CDs and Curt Faudon's two films on the choir, *Silk Road* and *Bridging the Gap*.

Kerem Sezen was born in Istanbul in 1978. He took flute and piano lessons as a child, and went on to study flute, piano, choral conducting and voice at the Music University of Vienna. He appears primarily as a singer, performing both as a soloist and as a choir member. He was a member of the Vienna State Opera Chorus, the prestigious Arnold Schönberg Choir and has appeared at the Salzburg Festival. As a choir member, he had the opportunity to perform with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra and the Berlin Philharmonic under the baton of Claudio Abbado, Daniel Barenboim, Nikolaus Harnoncourt and Sir Simon Rattle. As a bass soloist, Sezen sings oratorios, operas and musicals.

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

Exclusive Tour Management:
Opus 3 Artists
470 Park Avenue South
9th Floor North
New York NY 10016
www.opus3artists.com