



Le Don du Chœur

Chœur d'Enfants des Écoles Privées Genevoises



HIGHLIGHTS

2016 Concert

- 13 private Geneva schools
- Four professional musicians
- Strong involvement by the Malagasy community
- Funds raised: CHF 90,500

Madagascar

- Andohasatra-Betioky school to open on 24 October
- Sponsored dictation in Geneva schools
- Wave of solidarity from Geneva schoolkids

Cambodia

- Deputy director appointed
- A third school building nears completion
- Geneva English teacher spends 9 months in Ta Pen
- School takes 2nd place in reading competition

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Events

The 2016 concert at Geneva's Victoria Hall

A packed house for the Madagascar fund-raiser

For this 7th Don du Chœur concert, on 28 April 2016, 400 children from 13 private schools put on a magnificent performance for a wildly enthusiastic audience of 1,400 people.

The evening, dedicated to funding a school in the south of Madagascar, began with the projection of a film*

about the children at Andohasatra village. The audience reaction showed how much the public was affected by the plight of these children, who soon would have their first opportunity to attend school.

* www.don-du-choeur.ch/fr/nos-actions/madagascar



Bravo and thanks to the three conductors: Daniel Darbellay, Sue Power and Benjamin Lubrano

Renowned Malagasy artists on stage

The concert had a special feel to it, thanks to the presence of internationally renowned Malagasy artists Taliké and Hanta, who came from Paris and Brussels to sing for their homeland. It was moving beyond words to hear

them interpret songs from the south of Madagascar. The audience was spellbound by their performance given free of charge for Don du Chœur and by the grace of the traditional dancers from the Geneva-based group Soga.



Hanta (left) and Taliké in Geneva

All working together for a great result

The Hall was in party mode by the time the children's choir began the programme of French, English and Malagasy songs devised by Sue Power, Artistic Director. For the first time, four professional musicians, working pro bono, accompanied the choir. Conducted by Sue Power, Daniel Darbellay and Benjamin Lubrano, they gave the choir a solid foundation, working with them to create a real fusion between the 400 youngsters, their teachers and the musicians.

The audience was delighted by the sense of fun but also determination of the choristers, who gave a faultless performance and gave way to their joy only at the end, when they were showered with confetti and streamers.

The event was honoured by the presence of the Minister-Delegate of the Malagasy Embassy in Switzerland, the President of the Geneva Association of Private Schools, the Heads of the 13 participating private schools and the Chairwoman of Brolliet SA, the evening's main sponsor. All were

impressed by the outstanding performance of the children and by the work carried out by the 60 or so volunteers, teachers and organisers.

A lot of emphasis was placed on staging and lighting this year. Another innovation was a buffet of food specialities prepared by Malagasy women, available at the nearby Grütli arts centre.

The concert, the costs 100 per cent covered by sponsors, raised the magnificent sum of CHF 90,500, which will go entirely to the Madagascar school project.



Top marks: 360 children at Andohasatra-Betioky will get their school!

Thanks to the concert, Don du Chœur, in partnership with SOS Villages d'Enfants Madagascar, has been able to build a primary school with six classrooms and a canteen. The challenge to be met, with the Malagasy Ministry of National Education, is to place 360 children from Andohasatra into school and also provide them with a nourishing daily meal. The village is located in the south of Madagascar, in Betioky District, a semi-arid region stalked by famine four months of the year.

The foundation stone was laid in March. Since then, work has progressed steadily and this new state school should open its doors on 24 October 2016.

SOS Villages d'Enfants Madagascar have been working in Madagascar for 27 years; they ensure that the work is carried out, that the project moves forward and that the teachers are trained. The latter will be paid by the State, which, it is

hoped, will encourage them to settle in the village.

Funds raised at the concert will go towards building the school and canteen. However, we still count on donors' generosity to help us finance the building of the kitchen and water tower and, over time, the schooling and food costs for the 360 children over a year.

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THE MADAGASCAR PROJECT

A solid foundation for learning arises from the dust



Andohasatra

Seven hours down the track from Tulear, the main town in the south, lies Andohasatra, a hamlet of small, windowless mud huts, home to some 50 families. In this dirt-poor, semi-arid region, one single well helps the villagers resist the drought and the risk of famine

that recurs between harvests of maize and manioc.

In the midst of these difficult conditions, a firm in Tulear has built – in just four months – a schoolhouse in solid concrete. Constructions like this are rare in the south, where 60 per cent of children learn to read under a tree or in makeshift schools made of dried mud. 360 children will soon be taught and fed in this new school of six classrooms with its own kitchen, canteen and water tower.

The kitchen and water tower still need financing, in order to repay funds advanced by our partners, SOS Villages d'Enfants Madagascar.

Sponsored dictation for the new school year

Goodbye to the beaches, the holidays are over. Now sharpen your pencils and open your dictionaries! Some Geneva private schools are organising a «Dictée du Choeur», a sponsored dictation test for a good cause. Aimed at all school levels, on the theme of Madagascar, the event will be a spelling test, not too hard. The money raised will enable the provision of a uniform, a daily meal and school supplies, value CHF 10 per month, to each child at Andohasatra. Please join in!

THE CAMBODIA PROJECT

Final preparations for the 7th school year

The 517 pupils at Ta Pen are overjoyed at the support they have received from Geneva. After finishing their end-of-year exams they set off to work in the fields during the summer break.

In six years the school has expanded – the number of pupils has doubled and the campus offers schooling at infants, primary and secondary levels (similar to the Swiss Cycle d'Orientalion). Altogether there will be 550



The third building nears completion; in all, 550 pupils will attend the school

children enrolled for the new school year, of whom 100 at secondary level.

The director of Don du Choeur Cambodia, Chamrong LO, has recruited a deputy to help ensure the smooth running of the establishment and provide guidance for the first class of secondary students, due to graduate next year. Sokmean PUT has held similar posts elsewhere and has been our advisor since the school opened.



Sokmean meeting with the heads of the primary and secondary schools

Your donation will help us help these communities

Don du Chœur

Swiss non-profit association, tax-deductible since 2008

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Everyone has a stake in this school!

Many of our supporters have launched initiatives to help the children of Andohasatra. The Geneva Amateur Operatic Society gave the proceeds of a musical evening; the Steiner school filled 17 suitcases with donated clothes and took them to the village; Mosaic school organised a

flower sale; Lycée Toepffer held a sale of Malagasy objects; cake sales were held by the Geneva English School and the Institut International de Lancy, the Geneva Girl Scouts joined in, too... Our thanks, from the heart – the new school is there thanks to you!

 www.don-du-choeur.ch



Two months to go and the school is already a huge attraction! From l-r: school, kitchen, canteen.

Ta Pen School, still up there with the best

The exam results are in; the children are progressing at their own pace, according to their age and abilities. Ta Pen remains one of the top state primary schools in Banteay Srei district.

One young pupil from primary level 2 won 2nd place in a reading competition organised by our partners Bandos Komar.

Magali Castro Gyr, an English teacher at La Découverte school in Geneva, worked as a volunteer for nine months, giving the children the basics of the English language, using songs, films, books, games and drawings, anything to initiate discussions with both pupils and teachers. Not content with that, Magali also put in place the framework of some profes-

sional training for next year's school leavers. Our heartfelt thanks to her for her untiring efforts that left such warm memories in the minds and hearts of people at Ta Pen. A new English teacher will be recruited to continue the work she began.



Magali giving an English lesson, observed by the Director of Don du Choeur Cambodia

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Ellen Misuri, composer of "Les Enfants du Monde"

Ellen Misuri, one of the founding figures of Don du Choeur, passed away on 29 June 2016. Music teacher in Geneva, author and composer, Ellen was artistic director for our 2004 concert for Russia. Her legacy is the wonderful, haunting song "Les Enfants du Monde", which has been the association's anthem for 12 years. Our thoughts are with her and her family.

PARTNERS

Geneva Association of Private Schools, Brolliet SA, Fondation Coromandel, Fondation Covalence, Fondation Lombard Odier, Services Industriels de Genève, SOS Villages d'Enfants Madagascar, Vaovy La Fondation.