**Organ construction project • Basilica of Paray-le-Monial**

The town of Paray-le-Monial has undertaken the creation of a large organ in the Basilique du Sacré-Cœur, the most visited building in the Saône-et-Loire department and located at the heart of the Paray sanctuary.

The parish and the Association Diocésaine d'Autun are supporting our town in setting up a cultural sponsorship scheme to part-finance this fine project: over one million euros.

Saint John Paul II, who visited the Basilica in 1986 and appreciated its beauty, said: “Beauty is the expression of the Good”.

The Basilica restored by the town and its organ form a harmonious whole. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

**Jean-Marc NESME Maire de Paray-le-Monial**

**Membre honoraire du Parlement**

**Président du Pays Charolais-Brionnais**

The creation of the Basilica's Great Organ has been long awaited and desired. I'm delighted that the parish is supporting the town of Paray-le-Monial in this wonderful project, which is now taking shape.

The Grand Orgue will be a new link between the parish, for which it will contribute to the beauty of the liturgies, and all those who love music in the town and beyond.

It will provide what the Basilica lacks in terms of cultural influence. It will bear witness to each and every one of us' attachment to beauty for generations to come.

Thank you for your participation and your generosity.

**Père Christophe LAGRANGE**

**Curé de al Paroisse du Sacré-Cœur en Val d'Or**

**A source of inspiration: Olivier Messiaen's Catalogue d'oiseaux, 13 visual and aural landscapes.**

The new organ will be inspired by Olivier Messiaen. The composer's musical and poetic universe offers an open source of inspiration. In particular, Olivier Messiaen was a great contemplative of Creation, sensitive in particular to the identity of landscapes, the moving richness of colors, and the musical presence of birds. One of his works for organ, “Les oiseaux et les sources”, is introduced by the composer's words: “oiseaux du ciel, bénissez le Seigneur; sources d'eaux, bénissez le Seigneur”. Creative exultation is first and foremost an expression of gratitude and praise. In this same spirit, the organ plays a central role in the liturgy as a medium for expressing praise, and its architecture has always played a part in this, with the munificence of the decor responding visually to the rich sound of the timbres. We therefore propose a decorative and poetic identity for the Paray-le-Monial instrument, inspired by Messiaen's creative universe, but open to other interpretations.

Olivier Messiaen's Catalogue d'oiseaux, a work for piano, composed between 1956 and 1958, is made up of 13 tableaux, each bearing the title of a bird, and whose musical writing is based in particular on the transcription of birdsong. Each painting actually presents a complete landscape, which Messiaen immersed himself in during his long sessions of recording birdsong. Messiaen carefully noted the places, the elements of the landscape, the times of day and night, the colors and visual impressions. The title bird is accompanied by other birds living in the same biotope, who populate this visual and aural landscape with him. By evoking the landscapes, birds, lights and colors of each of these environments, Messiaen's music and texts exalt creation as a whole. We have chosen this guide because of the expression of praise and poetry we wish to give to the instrument's cabinet.

The structure of the work's 13 paintings was organized around the geometry of the organ case, with a cyclical distribution of the moments of the day, and an even distribution of the paintings as landscapes on the different panels of the organ. Finally, each bird appearing in each of the paintings has been catalogued and appears with its singular silhouette. (see plan)

**Paray-le Monial – a brief history**

With a population of 9500, Paray-le-Monial is located in Saône-et-Loire, in southern Burgundy, 1h30 from Paris by TGV, close to the Paris-Lyon-Marseille rail and motorway network. An architectural pearl in the heart of the Charolais-Brionnais bocage, a territory that has been a pivotal point since the earliest centuries, the town lies on the line of turbulence running between major geopolitical: between the Burgundians and the Gauls, the Armagnacs and the Burgundians, the Germanic Kingdom of France, Protestants and Catholics, royalists and republicans, the occupied zone and the free zone, those who believe in heaven and those who don't, the philosophy of enlightenment and mystical fervour. In this way, geography has shaped the town's destiny and spawned a rich history that continues to this day. Since the 18th century

Paray-le-Monial has been a world-renowned city of pilgrimage and religious tourism. Every year, tens of thousands of pilgrims and tourists flock here to visit the Basilica and the buildings of the sanctuary.

**La Basilique du Sacré-Cœur de Paray-le-Monial**

In 971, Lambert, Count of Chalon-sur-Saône, decided to build a monastery and its priorale on the outskirts of his county.

In 973, he travelled with Mayeul, abbot of Cluny, to decide on the precise location for the construction.

In 976, the monastery was built, along with a modest church called Paray I. These buildings brought the surrounding population together and gave birth to Paray-le-Monial.

In 977, this small church, dedicated to Saint Sauveur and Saint Jean Baptiste, was consecrated by three bishops: Rodolphe de Chalon, Jean de Mâcon and Ysart d'Autun, accompanied by numerous monks from Cluny and surrounding priories.

In 999, son Lambert (heir to the founding Count) donated the monastery to Cluny. Abbot Odilon de Mercoeur decided to demolish the Paray church and rebuild a larger, more beautiful one, which was consecrated on December 9, 1004.

In 1075, the monks added the entrance porch. Between 1100 and 1150, Saint HUGUES, successor to Odilon de Mercoeur, rebuilt the church for the third time (Paray III) and enlarged it. In 1470, the Damas family began rebuilding the Gothic chapel adjoining the north transept.

Paray II was built at the same time as Cluny Ill, under the aegis of the monk Hézelon, with the same workers; this is why, in Cluny, it is said that the construction of the church of Paray I benefited from the architectural advances of Cluny and conversely that Paray I served as a model for Cluny III.

**Genesis of the project to rebuild the Basilica's Great Organ**

The project to rebuild the organ at the Basilique du Sacré-Coeur in Paray-le-Monial is an important one for the parish, the municipality and all the inhabitants of Paray-le-Monial. It's a project that goes beyond mere local influence, since Paray-le-Monial, a sanctuary city, is a spiritual Mecca known far beyond national and European borders.

The Basilique du Sacré-Coeur is a masterpiece of 11th-century Romanesque art. As the church of a Cluniac priory, built at the same time as the great abbey church of Cluny, it is the closest thing to what the latter might have looked like before its destruction. Having happily survived the centuries, the Basilica of Paray-le-Monial is also a lively place of spirituality.

A major restoration campaign has been undertaken inside the building. Begun in 1995, the restoration was inaugurated in 2007 by Mr. Renaud Donnedieu de Vabres, Minister of Culture and Communication, in the presence of the Greek and Portuguese Ministers of Culture.

During the restoration work, the 1945 organ was dismantled, confirming its technical obsolescence. Its musical capabilities were no longer adequate.

The town of Paray-le-Monial, in collaboration with the parish, therefore decided to build a contemporary Grand Orgue in the French style, with the intention of placing it at the service of the liturgy, but also at the service of an educational and cultural project.

The implementation of this high-quality educational and cultural project could extend far beyond the borders of the département. Paray-le-Monial's geographical location, both nationally (close to major conurbations) and Europe-wide (close to Italy and Switzerland), and its TGV links (Le Creusot TGV, Mâcon TGV), mean that Paray-le-Monial is easily accessible and can accommodate large numbers of visitors.

The great organ will bring a cultural enrichment to the Basilica, in harmony with the restoration carried out in 2007. Thanks to the architectural quality of the Romanesque Basilica, and its acoustic qualities as intended by its builders. This instrument will find a precious setting here, restoring its symbolic dimension.

The current project, led by the town of Paray-le-Monial, includes consolidation of the organ loft, organ building and installation.

The principle the town wishes to implement is that of a contemporary French organ. It is an instrument, with the personality of **Olivier Messiaen** in the background, endowed with 43 stops to offer optimum performance of the work of this figure of twentieth-century organ music and his successors.

On the technical side, the town of Paray-le-Monial called on Mr. Christian LUTZ as assistant project manager.

The project cost of 1.2 million euros will be advanced in full by the commune.

The town, the parish of Sacré-Cœur en Val dO' r and the Association Diocésaine d'Autun are working closely together. This takes the form of a commission that sets up a cultural patronage scheme aimed at reducing the remaining costs for the commune.

**History of the basilica organs**

An instrument was built in the south transept

between 1847 and 1859 by Abbé Gabriel-Adolphe Vial

d'Alais, born 1805 in Paray-le-Monial, archpriest of the Basilica from 1846 to 1880. The instrument betrays the hand of an amateur organ builder.

Around 1890, due to the dilapidated condition of the ®1 instrument, the Rambervilliers-based manufacturer Jacquot-Jeanpierre et compagnie built a new instrument with some twenty stops.

A second 10-stop instrument was added in 1878 by Aristide Cavaillé-Coll

and placed at the entrance to the choir on the right.

In 1943, Canon Jean Combier (archpriest of the basilica between 1938 and 1970), and Paul Perrot (breeder, pork merchant and organ enthusiast) approached the Lyon firm of Michel-Merklin et Khun. After many ups and downs, a 2-manual, 40-stop instrument was inaugurated on September 25, 1949. A third keyboard was added in 1959. Harmonization was carried out by Jean Perroux, who had worked on the

organ at Notre Dame de Paris.

**The Blumenroeder organ-building workshop**

In October 2007, the company moved into a former tithe barn (foyer Saint-Georges) dating back to 1527. Located in Haguenau, Alsace's fourth-largest city, the premises provide a pleasant, spacious and spectacular living space.

The company specializes in the in the construction of new instruments, historical or typical instruments (continuo organ of the Italian 17th and 18th-century and 17th-century German organ cabinet), copy instruments (Renaissance Régale, 16th-century Claviorga- num) in collaboration with Émile Jobin, and the restoration, rebuilding and lifting of historic organs (Silbermann, Stumm, Stiehr, Merklin, Rickenbach, Walker, Roethinger). The company builds medieval and Renaissance table organs, organetti, case organs and study organs with removable case.

The business is dedicated to all aspects of organ building. The Blumenroeder factory has produced more than twenty salon, study and continuo organs (from 2 to 9 stops), six new church organs (from 10 to 30 stops), restored some forty organs (from 7 to 60 stops), including ten instruments built by the Silbermann dynasty. To date, this represents a total of ninety organs.

The company's approach is to work closely with musicians, fellow organ builders, scientists and researchers specializing in the history of science or the arts. The company aims to create works dedicated to musicians and the repertoire, with great importance attached to the organological and musical context of each project.

The work is carried out with respect for the traditions of organ building: all pieces are hand-crafted, glues are organic (bone, skin, fish), and assemblies are traditional.

**Le Grand Orgue**

**Its identity**

In the setting of its basilica, the great organ's vocation is to offer harmony between Romanesque and contemporary art, and contemporary art with a highly symbolic vision. Its decorative, poetic identity, inspired by the creative universe of **Messiaen**, is open to any other repertoire. First gently enveloped by the peace of the setting, then discovering the great organ, visitors will be mysteriously swept away by the silent musicality emanating from the boldness of its conception.

**Its composition**

The great organ will have 43 stops, with a mobile console in the nave with electric transmission, including 3 manuals, a pedalboard and 3 expression pedals.

**Its realisation**

The organ builder (Blumenroeder in Haguenau) will dismantle and sort the reusable elements of the old organ.

**Its influence**

In the Paray-le-Monial region, the Basilica's great organ complements the existing musical heritage.

First of all, there's the Charolles organ, dedicated in particular to the French 17th-century repertoire and to the European repertoire of early music.

The Aubertin organ at Saint Louis church in Vichy is dedicated to the Germanic repertoire of the 17th and 18th centuries.

The Riepp et Jurine organ at Dijon's Saint Bénigne cathedral is dedicated to 17th-century French repertoire.

In addition, there are several instruments in the region which, when restored, will be well suited to the symphonic repertoire. It's up to us to make a real stylistic contribution to the region, through cultural complementarity with the Charolles organ, so that the two instruments can be a source of mutual emulation of the region's rich musical heritage and mutual emulation of regional culture, so that it becomes the essence of an important organizational centre.

The great organ will enable interpretation of the repertoire of the great French symphonists. It will also be a source of future inspiration for composers, providing a space for the creation and performance of their works.

and performance space for their works.

Most of the colours requested by **Olivier Messiaen**, but also by the European school of the 19th and 20th centuries, will be translated, as well as older repertoires such as that of Johann Sebastian Bach.

The great organ will then meet liturgical, cultural and pedagogical musical objectives, in particular accessibility for the youngest apprentices and beginner musicians.

**Financing**

The town of Paray-le-Monial is the initiator of the project to create a great organ in the Basilica and provides the necessary cash advance. The cost of this magnificent project amounts to

1.2 million euros. The parish and the Diocesan Association are working with the town to set up a cultural sponsorship scheme to mitigate the cost.

Please use the PDF coupon to make a donation to this very worthwhile cause in support of the Messiaen inspired Basilica organ in Paray-le-Monial.