

Music Monday: Inspiring selections from “Les Misérables” in honor of Bastille Day



Fireworks at the Eiffel Tower for July 14 Bastille Day celebrations

(Photo: AFP/Getty Images)

Bastille Day, celebrated annually on July 14, is French National Day. On this date in 1789, troops stormed the Bastille marking the start of the French Revolution.

Bastille Day became a national holiday on July 14, 1880 and is celebrated throughout France, as well as in French communities and major cities all over the world with parades, festivities, and fireworks.

The musical “***Les Misérables***,” based on Victor Hugo novel, tells the story of Jean Valjean, a French peasant seeking redemption after serving nineteen years of hard labor for stealing a loaf of bread to feed his sister’s starving family. In a grace-filled moment, Valjean was inspired by a kind and merciful local bishop to start living a virtuous life in the service of others. The revolutionary backdrop to Jean Valjean’s story includes a group of courageous students who make their last stand for freedom at a street barricade. The song “Do You Hear the People Sing?” illustrates their hopes and dreams for the people of France.

The tenth anniversary concert for “Les Misérables” was filmed in October of 1995 at the Royal Albert Hall in London. Produced by Cameron Mackintosh and directed by Gavin Taylor, theatre superstar Colm Wilkinson performed the role of Jean Valjean.

“Do You Hear the People Sing/One Day More!”

Joining Wilkinson for the encore were seventeen former Jean Valjeans from seventeen different nations, each singing “Do You Hear the People Sing?” in native

language. The entire anniversary cast joined in at the end with the last verse of “One Day More!”

This video will have you singing and humming all day: