

# *Les Enfants du Morvan*

Press-book

Art and Popular Traditions Group from Dijon  
BURGUNDY  
FRANCE



Shows

Folkloric entertainment

Traditional concerts

Dances courses

Folk balls

*Dance group labeled by CIOFF® France*



Groupe d'Arts et Traditions Populaires  
*Les Enfants du Morvan*



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# General Presentation

The Morvan is situated right in the middle of **Burgundy**, at the extreme North East of the Massif Central. It is reputed to be a bleak region because there are many mountains and forests. Nowadays, the Morvan's touristic activity is widely developed but at the end of the XIX<sup>th</sup> century many of its inhabitants had to find a job in the capital of Burgundy.

This is why, in 1899 an association with a very evocative name was created in **Dijon**:

« **The Morvan's natives' fraternal support group** ».

These people were at that time considered as exiles: they had to be welcomed, accommodated and helped to be asked to integrate into the city where they were to live from then on. But in 1946, very soon after the end of the Second World War, the families from the Morvan felt they needed to promote the traditions and arts they were still faithfully attached to. So, they created a folkloric group in order to honour and make known the popular culture of their geographical area:

« **Les Enfants du Morvan** » were born!



## **Affiliations:**

- The Departmental Federation of Burgundy Folkloric Groups (in Côte d'Or)
- The Union of Groups and Fiddlers of the Morvan (UGMM)
- The Popular Traditions National Union Groups (UNGTP)
- Associated members of Dijon's "Fêtes de la Vigne" Festival.

# Dances

The strenuous work of many of “Les Enfants du Morvan”'s members has enabled to collect **nearly 80 dances**.



Our repertoire consists of collected dances from the XIX<sup>th</sup> century as well as more recently choreographed dances.

Some dances have a precise meaning which we try to transmit through their presentation. Others are choreographed in order to reinforce the message we want to convey in our shows.

As concerns the collected dances we present on stage, we try to alter the original choreography as little as possible.



There are many “bourrées” in our repertoire : this lively dance can be considered as the most typical dance from the Morvan. Moreover, the “bourrée” is the most popular dance at balls. We also dance “branles”, polkas, scottishes, mazurkas and waltzes.

Our work on the dances consists not only in staging our repertoire but also in handing the Morvan traditions down to future generations through dance lessons, balls and in schools too

# Music

Les Enfants du Morvan's orchestra is composed of traditional instruments only: hurdy-gurdies, bagpipes, diatonic accordions and violins.



Thanks to a rich and diverse collection of scores, our musicians can interpret a repertoire of **nearly 500 pieces of traditional music from the Morvan.**

The orchestra of "Les Enfants du Morvan" can adapt their talents to all types of events, such as leading a dance, performing at a concert or playing at a folk ball. They are always eager to share the music so dear to their hearts.



Two CDs have been created and the musicians go on working in the "traditional" way. This means that when they perform they often introduce pieces in "modal" with only the most ancient instruments performing like the bagpipes and the hurdy-gurdies. They are always careful to stick to the traditions of the past when musicians used to play alone or in pairs, in keys people are not used to listening to nowadays.

# Shows

The group offers several types of shows:

- **Outdoor shows** (parades, village festivals,...) : the values of the group can be shared not only thanks to the dances and music but also thanks to each member's knowledge of the costumes and the traditions from the Morvan... The group is keen to share the customs and traditions of their region with as many people as possible.



- **Indoor shows:** characteristics moments of the Morvan people's everyday life in the XIX<sup>th</sup> century are recreated, such as a wedding, a carnival or conscription.



These indoor shows are composed of short plays and tales with a real scenario: *Les Sabots Endiables* (a Christmas night tale), *Le Hussard Noir* (the life of a primary school teacher when he arrived in a Morvan village), *Le Taicot* (the upheaval caused by the arrival of the railway in the XIX<sup>th</sup> century to a Morvan village), *Maudit Grimoire* (a tale showing the evolution of dance in the Morvan).

**Thanks to an original scenario, these shows allow us to illustrate many customs not only through songs, dances and music, but also through the scenic expression of the dancers and the words of a storyteller.**

- **Stage shows:** special care is given to the choreography, and in order to deliver our message, the dances appear the one after the other in a constant flow of music and movement only (no spoken word).

This type of show was rewarded by the prize for the Valorisation of Folkloric Heritage at the *Fêtes de la Vigne* Festival in 2007, thanks to a sequence on the theme of the *bourrée* (the video can be viewed on our internet site).

Our latest creations are the *Devil Suite* and the *Betrothal Suite*. We successfully performed them at the Folkmoot International Festival in the USA in July 2010.



**The strength of the group is to be able to adapt both to the stage and to public entertainment with always the same intention: sharing with the audience the happiness of dancing and playing their music so that people go home with the feeling they have had a good time while getting to know the long-gone traditions of the Morvan.**

## Costumes

For a folkloric group, the regard for authenticity is directly linked to the care given to the reconstitution of the costumes and the way they are worn.

Thanks to long research, the group has been able to reconstitute the costumes of three XIX<sup>th</sup> century periods.



**Around 1800**

Boys wear a gaiter costume and the girls a short skirt). Traces of the boys' costume, however, can be found as soon as the first half of the XVIIIth century.



**In the 1840's**

A stripped pattern for the men's waistcoat and the whole of the girls' costume.



**Around 1900**

A smock or flannel belt for men, a long skirt or dress for women (called long costume).

Research is still going on and the group's heritage is getting richer and richer: a nurse's costume and several costumes of *flotteurs* (men leading the wood on rivers) have been recently reconstituted, and the work continues.

A headdress workshop has been created to enable girls to make their own headdresses, so that they can have several models from different periods at their disposal.

## *Lai Piranvôle*

Research on dances, music and costumes has led the group to rediscover many things about the everyday life in the Morvan, such as children's games.

The group, then, decided to enlarge its activity by creating a children's section names *Lai Piranvôle*. It means "ladybird" in Morvan provincial dialect.



*Lai Piranvôle* performs songs, dances, rhymes and games dating right back to the XIX<sup>th</sup> century. The children's costume is not a miniature reproduction of the adults' one but the exact clothes the children used to wear in the XIX<sup>th</sup> century.



## Folk Ball

The aim of a folkloric group is not only to help people discover the folklore of their region but also the way its inhabitants used to entertain themselves with music and dances. This is why the group decided to give folk ball: they play tunes from Morvan and other regions, but this time without any costume or show. The aim is that anybody can share the dancing with members of the group.



Moreover, it is a way to show musical evolution of folkloric music: even if the musical repertoire of the Morvan is wide, we do not limit ourselves to it as we also play music from other areas, like the *Bourbonnais* for the duple time bourree, or music from other countries (these pieces of music are brought back from international festivals).

In the same way, our musicians are keen to compose new pieces, in the traditional mode. This enhances even more our message: transmitting traditions is something alive and modern.



# References

*Les Enfants du Morvan* have participated in numerous festivals in France and abroad.

- 1971 - **Hungary**: Balaton Lake- 1<sup>st</sup> prize of honour – Parade: 3<sup>rd</sup> prize
- 1972 - **Austria**: Salzburg
- 1972 - **Bulgaria**: Gold medal, 1<sup>st</sup> prize at the Burgas International Festival
- 1973 - **Germany**: Lorrach
- 1973 - **Switzerland**: Martigny
- 1973 - **Yugoslavia**: Skopje International Festival
- 1973 - **Italy**: Montagnana: Silver medal
- 1976 - **Greece**: Lefkas
- 1978 - **Germany**: Schwabenheim - Berlin (international festivals)
- 1978 - **Switzerland**: Fribourg
- 1979 - **Switzerland**: Rhône Lausanne, Martigny and Bâle Festivals
- 1979 - **Italie** : Montagnana : Médaille d'or - Gorizia : Médaille d'argent
- 1980 - **Yugoslavia**: Sarajevo - Mostar
- 1981- **Finland**: Mantsala - Vantaa - Turku - Lohja - Tampere - Helsinki
- 1982 – **Belgium**: Saint Hubert - Bruges
- 1986 - **U.S.A.**: North Carolina – Folkmoot Festival
- 1987 - **Spain**: Jaca
- 1988 - **Israel**: Natania - Asqelon - Tel Aviv - Naharriya - Jerusalem
- 1990 - **Turkey**: Istanbul - Corum
- 1991 - **Italy**: Collina – Sabaudia Festival
- 1994 - **Canada**: Drummondville - Montréal
- 1997 - **Portugal**: Barcelinhos
- 1999 - **Poland**: Zapopan: Silver axe
- 2000 - **Greece**: Lefkas
- 2004 - **Canada**: Drummondville - Montréal - <http://www.mondialdescultures.com>
- 2005 - **Spain**: Jaca - <http://www.jaca.es/festival>
- 2009 - **Syria**: Bosra
- 2010 - **U.S.A.**: North Carolina – Folkmoot Festival - <http://www.folkmootusa.org>
- 2011 – **Spain** : Segovia - Burgos - <http://www.bicomunicacion.com/folclore>
- 2012 – **Poland** : Zamość - <http://zamojszczyzna.com.pl/eurofolk.html>
- 2013 – **Indonesia**: Bornéo - <http://www.indonesie-voyage.com/erau-le-festival-international-du-folklore-et-de-lart-en-indonesie/>

# CIOFF® Label

CIOFF® - *International Council of Organizations of Folklore Festivals and Folk Arts* – is an international cultural non-governmental and maintains formal consultative relationships with UNESCO. Since 1970, CIOFF® works for **safeguarding, promotion and diffusion of traditional culture and folklore**.

Pressing requests of foreign festivals for greeting high quality groups has led French section of CIOFF® to propose the creation of an entity inside French CIOFF®, gathering renowned quality groups.



Created in 2005, CIOFF® label guarantees its groups a **high artistic level, a capacity to represent traditions of its region, and a capacity to share values of tolerance that promote friendship and peace**. At present, about fifteen groups are labeled.

In april 2011, *les Enfants du Morvan* became a « **CIOFF® labeled group** ».

Getting CIOFF® labeled for *les Enfants du Morvan* certainly proves **the quality of their shows, and that the group is open-minded and friendly**.







## Dijon's Festival

1946: **Dijon's International "Fêtes de la Vigne" Festival**, festival accredited CIOFF, is the same age as our group.

*Les Enfants du Morvan* have always participated in this festival by the individual involvement of its members in the organization as well as by the collective one during the festivities.

Every year, from the end of August till the beginning of September, *les Enfants du Morvan* have the pleasure of sharing the same passion for folklore with groups coming from all over the world.

New acquaintances, new exchanges, new contacts can once more be made so that *les Enfants du Morvan* can take their turn to travel and export their dear Morvan culture throughout the world.



# Partners

## Financial Partners :

- Ville de Dijon
- Conseil Général de Côte d'Or
- Conseil Régional de Bourgogne
- Crédit Mutuel Enseignant



## Cultural Partners :



- Tradzone
- Musictrad
- Mémoires Vives

# Contacts

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For further information, please consult our web-site :

[www.enfants-du-morvan.net](http://www.enfants-du-morvan.net)

