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Putin Serenaded by Children's Choir in Sochi Dress Rehearsal

By The Moscow Times

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President Vladimir Putin having his photo taken with the choir.

A children's choir selected to perform at the Winter Olympic Games in Sochi presented a dress rehearsal to President Vladimir Putin during his visit to St. Petersburg's Mariinsky Theater, the Kremlin said on its website.

The choir, composed of 1,000 boys and girls from across the country, on Tuesday sang a number of Soviet-era favorites, such as "Let There Always Be Sun," and "Baby Eagles Are Learning to Fly," RIA Novosti reported. The choir also performed a song it is scheduled to sing at the Olympics' closing ceremony, the report added, without disclosing its name.

"I am very much surprised to see such a huge number of young people perform in such a great way the compositions that are familiar to all of us," Putin said. Your 1,000-strong "choir sounds like a single instrument. I congratulate you."

Mariinsky artistic director and renowned conductor Valery Gergiev said the choir will continue to perform after the Olympics, though he attached particular importance to its appearance at the Games.

"If Russia is represented at the Sochi Olympics by a 1,000-strong children's choir from all regions of Russia, I think that both for the Olympics and for the world community it would be a valuable opportunity to become acquainted with Russia, because the face of Russia is its children," Gergiev said.

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