

Reception and presentation to Madame G. Bingguely-Lejeune

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RECEPTION AND PRESENTATION TO MADAME G. BINGGUELY-LEJEUNE.



We have great pleasure in reproducing side by side the Cross of Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur which Madame Ginette Bingguely-Lejeune received in Paris, in recognition of her distinguished work as a Sculptress, when she was invested in the presence of Monsieur M. Naegelen, Ministre des Beaux Arts, and the small replica of the Insignia set in diamonds which her numerous friends in England presented to her as a token of affectionate admiration.

The Reception took place in London, at the Allies Club, on March 17th, and Monsieur Louis Chapuis, a former President of the City Swiss Club, spoke on behalf of the Friends who were associated with the Presentation. He said:

"Madame Bingguely-Lejeune has exhibited works for many years at the Paris Salon and the Royal Academy. Famous busts like Rudyard Kipling, Francis de Croisset, General de Gaulle, Professeur Rene Cassin, Prince Edward of Kent, Lord Athlone, Lord Nuffield, Heilie Selassie, John Winant, etc., etc., and delightful compositions like *l'Enfant au coquillage*, *la Brise*, *Majores pennas nido* or powerful statues like *Forward to Freedom* and *La Flamme Immortelle*. To all her Friends, said Mr. Chapuis, she is *la Flamme Immortelle* and we all came here to-night to pay homage to the most gracious talented and affectionate Friend one could wish to have."

Then he referred to another side of the Artist's activities during the war and said what a great work of mercy she had done when day after day she visited military hospitals, helping and comforting so many wounded soldiers. "And the great honour conferred upon you, my dear Ginette, is richly deserved and we are all so thrilled about it and so proud to be *Your Friends* and we would like you to accept this small diamond replica of the Cross of Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur. I am going to ask Mlle Michaut, your Senior in the Order, to pin the little cross on your breast, as a permanent token of our profound affection and admiration."

This was duly performed amongst great applause.

Madame Bingguely then stepped forward to reply, she was deeply moved but found the right words to convey her appreciation to Mlle Michaut, MM. Louis Chapuis and Gilbert Carr, and to her husband for organising this lovely Party. She thanked the Members of the French Embassy and the Swiss Legation and the distinguished Royal Academicians who were present, and she also thanked Mr. Willy Deutsch for the delightful poem he had dedicated to her on the occasion of her Knighthood, and said how much she appreciated that the Members of the City Swiss Club had put back their Dinner at the Dorchester that night, and that others should have cancelled their meeting altogether to be with her. Then, with great emotion she addressed everybody and said: "And now my Friends, I come to the lovely flowers and the exquisite jewelled Cross which you have given me to-night. It is beautiful and it is rightly placed on the "*Côte du Cœur*." C'est la Croix du Merite mais c'est aussi la Croix de l'Amitié. I think that you have spoilt me — terribly — but it is good to be spoilt like that and I thank you very much indeed for your lovely present. And I would like to thank you also for something else which you have given me to-night: You have given me the warmth of your affection, we are intensely sharing the same great joy and believe me, this is something that no money in the world could buy. Every time I shall wear the little Cross, I shall think of you, I shall remember this happy gathering, I shall see you looking at me, smiling at me . . . et ce sera le plus beau, le plus precieux des souvenirs. Thank you, my Friends, with all my heart and God bless you!"

This was a great moment and the Artist's emotion was shared by the whole assembly. The applause which burst was the longest and warmest which I had heard for a long time.

I must congratulate our Friend Henry B. on the floral decorations and the outstanding arrangements which he made with the Allies Club. The Buffet and the refreshments were first rate and were immensely enjoyed.

It was a brilliant gathering. The Swiss Minister and Madame Ruegger, who had accepted to be present, were unfortunately prevented from attending due to the Minister being delayed abroad; their absence was greatly regretted. Amongst the notable guests at the Reception were Monsieur Rene Varin, Attaché Culturel près l'Ambassade de France, M. de Malglaive, President de l'Association de la Croix de Lorraine, Sir William Reid Dick, K.C.V.O., R.A. Sculptor in Ordinary to the King; M. Charles Wheeler, R.A., President of the Royal Society of British Sculptors, Mr. J. H. C. Brooking, President of the Kipling Society, etc., etc.

It was a very happy and very successful Party which those who had the pleasure to attend will remember for a long time.

Once more, our warmest congratulations to our charming Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur.

ST.

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