

HERMITAGE ENSEMBLE PROGRAMME

Items will be introduced in English and selected from the following Russian Orthodox Church Music works, (a cappella Slavonic).

The concert includes an interval during which the CDs, which Ensemble recorded just before leaving St Petersburg for this UK tour, will be for sale.

We represent an extraordinarily high degree of "choral culture"--outstanding voices, flawless ensemble, led by a sensitive master-conductor, who knows the measure of good taste. The result? Some of the favorite and best-loved Russian sacred music and Russian folk songs, Ukrainian carols sung with a finesse and quality that have seldom been heard before, while maintaining that inimitable Russian spirit that never fails to conquer audiences world-wide. Whether your love is Russian Orthodox Church music and Russian folk music or the male chorus sound or simply fine choral singing, you will find this CD to be highly satisfying.

This is a disc that all lovers of fine choral singing will not want to miss!

Russian Orthodox Church Music and Famous Russian choral works (a capella old Church Slavonic)

1. **Christ is today (Dnes Christos)** - music by **Stepan Anikievich Degtiarev** (1766–1813) was a renowned composer, a much talented musician and the author of a number of operas and choral works of the late 18th century. He was most famous for his nationalistic *Russian Choral Music*.

The extremely wealthy and influential Sheremetev family, who by the 19th Century were most famous as patrons of the arts, with a household of talented serf musicians and actors. Stepan Degtyarev, one of the most prolific and talented early Russian composers, whose work included the first Russian oratorio, was the conductor of the Sheremetev's serf orchestra and the choirmaster of their theatre.

2. **Praise The Lord, O My Soul (Blagoslovi, dusha moja, Gospoda)** - music by Michael Ippolitov-Ivanov

Bless the Lord, O my Soul

Bless the Lord, O my Soul .O my God thou art very great .Blessed art thou, Lord ,who hast clothed thyself with beauty .The waters stood above the mountain.

Lord, how manifold are thy works. The springs run among the hills. All the earth is full of the riches. Glory to thee, Lord, who in wisdom hast made them all.

Glory he to the Father, and to the Son, to the Holy Ghost. Amen.

3. **In your Kingdom (Vo zarstvii tvoem)**- music by **Dobri Xristov**, Bulgarian composer of Orthodox music. Mainly based in Sofia.

4. **The Angel Exclaimed (Angel vopijashe)**- music by **M.Musorgskij**

5. **From above the prophets foretold of You** (Svyshe prorocy) – music by **M.A.Balakirev**

6. **Blessed is the Man(Blazhen muzh)**- composer **Pavel Grigor'yevich Chesnokov** (1877-1944)

(1877 – 1944), one of the most exemplary composers from the School of Moscow, adapted this traditional melody called "from Kiev," taking pains to conserve the antiphonal style of the Psalm as required by the Ordo, the liturgical canon. P. Chesnokov was also one of the most accomplished specialists in choral direction in Russia. His work on combining differing vocal timbres and on intonation still carries weight.

Chesnokov studied at the Moscow Synodal School and at the Moscow Conservatory. He gained early recognition as a choral conductor through his teaching in schools, his conducting of church choirs, and as chief conductor of the Russian Choral Society. He also served as professor of choral conducting at the Moscow Conservatory, as chief conductor of the Moscow State Choir, and as choir director of the Bol'shoi Theatre. He composed more than 400 choral works, mostly sacred works for church performance. These are recognized for their clarity of harmony. His other work includes 20 songs, several stage works, and a book on the theory of choral performance, *Khor i upravleniye im* (1940).

From 1920, Chesnokov headed a choral conducting program at the Moscow Conservatory. He also remained busy regularly conducting the choirs of the Bolshoi Theater and Moscow Academy. In addition, Chesnokov became the choirmaster at Christ the Savior Cathedral. In 1933, however, on orders from Stalin, the Cathedral was demolished to make way for construction of a skyscraper that would never be built. Chesnokov became so distraught over the Cathedral's destruction that he stopped

composing altogether. He continued teaching and conducting various choirs in Moscow until his death there on March 14, 1944.

Blessed is the man that hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly.

Alleluia.

For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, and the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Alleluia. Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice in Him with trembling.

Alleluia .

Blessed are all that have put their trust in Him. Alleluia. Arise,
o Lord, save me, o my God.

Alleluia. Salvation belong unto the Lord, and Thy blessing is upon Thy people. Alleluia.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost,
now and ever to the ages of ages.

Amen. Alleluia. Glory to Thee, Lord.

7. The Lord's Prayer (Otche nash)- music by Piotr Tchaikovsky

Our Father, Which art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name;

Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, in Earth as it is in Heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive them that trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the Evil One. Amen

Our Father. In His "Sermon on the Mount" (Mat. 5-7) Jesus Christ explained how one should pray to God, by saying for the first time the prayer "Our Father" (Mat. 6:9-13). This prayer is best known and most loved by all Christians. From that time it was repeated by millions of believers during their whole life, during nearly 2000 years. In the textbooks of God's Law (Religion) it is analyzed as a prototype of the Christian prayer.

8. Exsultet (likujt Angeli, stihira na litiy rozdestva Xristova)

9. Magnification of Epiphany, Serbian chant(serbskoe velichanie)

10. **God's Own Son** (Edinorodnij Sine)- music by **Alexandr Grechaninov**(1864 – 1956) born in Moscow, he became a pupil of Rimsky- Korsakov at the St Petersburg Conservatory. His works are in the traditional Russian idiom although from his residency later in France and the USA he also wrote for the Roman Catholic Church, endeavouring to embrace, musically, Christianity of both East and West.

The only begotten song

Glory to the Father , and to the Son ,and to the Holy Spirit ,now and ever and unto ages of age s.Amen.

Only-begotten Son and immortal Word of God ,Who for our salvation willed to be incarnate of the holy Mother of God and ever -virgin Mary.Who without change became man and wast crucified , Who is one of the Holy Trinity , glorified with Father and the Holy Spirit: o Christ our God , trampling down death by death , save us.

11. **Ave Maria - Giulio Caccini** (8 October 1551 – 10 December 1618) was an Italian composer, teacher, singer, instrumentalist and writer of the very late Renaissance and early Baroque eras. He was one of the founders of the genre of opera, and one of the single most influential creators of the new Baroque style. He was also the father of the composer Francesca Caccini

The Latvian soprano Inessa Galante recorded in 1994 an *Ave Maria by Caccini*. Despite the title, the aria was not composed by Caccini but by Vladimir Vavilov in 1972: the reason leading to this false attribution is still unclear. Since 1994, numerous artists including Andrea Bocelli and Charlotte Church covered the composition, and the attribution of the work is often misunderstood by the public, due to the misleading title.

12. "Lord save the Faithful" and the Trisagion music by Pyotr Tchaikovsky

Words of the Prayer:

"Holy God, Holy mighty, Holy immortal, have mercy on us!" (thrice)

13. Cherubic hymn- music by Victor Volna

14. **Hail Mary \ Rejoice, O virgin from " All- Night Vigil"**, op. - 37 (Bogoroditse, Devo, raduisya) - music by **Sergey Rahmaninov**(1873- 1943)

15. **Many years**

Each office in the Orthodox rite concludes by wishing long life to the local deacon. This chant by an anonymous composer from the period of Peter the Great is based on the same principle as the previous one: the deacon recites the names and titles of those dedicated followed by the choir wishing Many years.

Russian Folk Songs (a cappella Russian)

Russian folk songs have always played an essential part in Russian life, culture, and music. They have played an important part in the work of many great Russian composers including Glinka, Rimsky-Korsakov, Borodin, Tchaikovsky, Prokofiev, and Stravinsky. It provides a historical survey and a description of the musical and poetic characteristics of Russian folk song, the songs themselves are classified into several categories: calendar songs, lyric songs, work songs, epic songs, historical songs, and the urban songs that emerged in the 18th and 19th centuries.

1. **Fellows, Unharness Your Horses** (Rospryadaite, xlopchi, konei) (**repertoire of Red Army Choir**)

This song has been composed by Ukrainian anarchist Ivan Negrebitsky during the Russia-Ukraine and Civil war (1918-1921) especially for Nestor Makhno. This song became almost an anthem for the Ukrainian anarchists, despite its rather bucolic lyrics. A famous song of the famous warriors, fighting for freedom until their death and after their death, no matter they were wrong or right.

2. The Night (NOCHEN'KA)

Dark night -

Rainy night -

Lonely night...

3. **Ah, You are my Inner Porch**(Ah, vi Seni, Seni...)

4. I Walk Out Alone Upon My Way (Lermontov) (Vihozhu odin ja na dorogu)

I walk out alone upon my way

Through the gloom the cobble-stone path glimmers.

Night is silent while the desert prays

But a pair of stars exchanges faint murmurs.

In the awesome heavens all is peaceful

And the earth dreams, bathed in blue resplendence.

Why is this, my path, so hard and painful?

Why do I wait? Must I feel repentance?

No, the past has nothing worth my pity

There is nothing to expect from living.

I seek only freedom and serenity

And to drift off toward eternal dreaming.

My desire is not the grave's cold sleeping,

But I wish to spend forever drowsing

So life's forces in my breast are dreaming

And that filled with my breath, my breast is rising.

And a sweet voice singing love songs o'er me,

Day and night enchantingly serenading.

And a dark oak arches high above me

With its everlasting green leaves rustling.

5. Heaven and Earth(Nebo i Zemlya).Russian carols (kolyadka) Popular and widely known traditional Ukrainian song.

Heaven and Earth triumph today,
angels and humans happily celebrate.
Christ is born. God incarnated.
Angels sing, kings greet, give bow.
Shepherds play, "Wonder! Wonder!" say.

6. In The wild steppes of Transbaikalia (A man escapes from a prison. And his thoughts are of his family)

In The wild steppes of Transbaikalia,
Where to dig gold in the mountains
Tramp, cursing fate,
Trailed with shoulder pack on his back.
He escaped from prison in a dark night,
Where he had long suffered For the truth.
He ran until he had no more strength, but Baikal already was before him.
Rogue went across Lake Baikal,
In a Fishing boat he took
And sang the sad song about his homeland.
When he was on the other side of the Lake Baikal
He saw his mother.
"Oh, hello, oh hello mamma,
How is my father and my brother? "
"Your father had long been in the grave buried with wet earth And your brother is away in Siberia rings with his chains.

7. **The march of Pavlovsk Military School**

March of Life-Guards Horse-Grenadier Regiment (Christoph Willibald Gluck)

8. **A lonely bell's ringing** (Odnozvuchno gremit kolokol'chik)

You can here a lonely bell's ringing. The coach driver is singing a sad song. This sad song reminded me my homeland fields and woods, and made my heart burn and tears run down my cheeks. The driver fell silent, and there is a long way ahead.

Comment:

The monotonous bell belongs to a troika – three horses side by side in front of a light coach – which is usually dashing along the far Russian roads at such a speed that clouds of dust are stirred up. The little bell which is tinkling all the way keeps the horses running, and the coachman has time enough to sing one of these soulful Russian folksongs.

9. **Along the Piterskaia Street**

A jovial song (maybe during people's Easter holiday when everybody is out in the snowed up streets, enjoying sunny winter day - eating, drinking, playing snow balls, building snow fortresses.). Several characters: one a young man dashing in a troika to meet his sweet heart, another - a young tipsy God-father is trying to kiss a God-mother.

The song of the Russian snow storm.

The blizzard is winding along the street. A young man is walking and is saying to his fiance: "Wait, please, my beloved! Let me have a look at your beauty, at your flourishing face! I am getting crazy from your beauty, and am losing my mind. Wait, please, my beloved! Let me have a look at your beauty!"

10. **Midnight in Moscow** - music by V.Solovjov-Sedoj

11. **Kalinka**

A sweet Russian girl is walking in a garden and sees a berry, its name is "Kalinka". She is so happy to see it that begins to dance around this berry and softly sings "Kalinka-Malinka, Kalinka maya" and so on.
Comment:

"Kalinka" (juniper) and "malinka" (raspberry) obviously were the traditional offerings to an old-slavic goddess of the earth, and of spring, love, and fertility, named "Lyuli" - as the traditional heavenly ally of the Russian agricultural population,

but also of the young people in love, Lyuli survived the christianization and is still alive in quite a lot of folksongs. Since the most of these songs begin with a similar melody, they all might be derived from a common origin, maybe a very old hymn or a pagan ritual in honour of the goddess Lyuli.

The song "Kalinka" could be this original, or at least resemble it largely. It still has the antiphonic form of a liturgy: The chorus, repeated by the community until ecstasy, recalls the offerings to the goddess's mind again and again, and the verses, sung by the priest alone, address Lyuli directly and articulate what the people want to get from her in return: Maybe a rich harvest, or a large family, or the rescue from famine, from epidemics, from aridity or from inundations ...

In the modern form of this song, only one request is left which is not less important: The wish for love!

12. **A little cuckoo-bird** (Kukushechka)

While walking in the woods, a young girl hears a cuckoo crying, which makes her start guessing who she would marry.

13. **Those Evening Bells** (Vecherny zvon)-words by Thomas Moore

The youth comes to the end and then life comes to the end. Only bells can be heard as before.

The song is so popular in Russia. That we think it to be a Russian folk song.

Comment:

Since Serge Yaroff and his Don Cossack Choir has introduced the "Evening bells" into the western world about fifty years ago, this song is – next to "Kalinka", the "Volga Boat Men" and "Stenka Razin" – one of our most popular Russian folksongs.

14. ***Now the day is over.***

**Thank you for your support. The programme can be changed.
We apologise if tonight's programme varies from the above list.
All items will be introduced in English.**