

## **“The Optina Pustyn” male choir. St.-Petersburg.**

(The artistic director Alexander Semjonov)

The male choir of the Optina Pustyn Monastery department in St.Petersburg was established 1996 by the blessing of its Father-Superior, hieromonk Rostislav. The choir is consisted of professional singers (7 men), who graduated from the St.Petersburg Rimsky-Korsakov Conservatory.

The main goal of the choir formation was applying to heredity of the old Russian Church singing, to its sources and different styles, such as: Znameniy, Bulgarian, Greek, Byzantine chants, to different types of the early Russian polyphony, and introduction them to the modern Church practice. For the most precise decipher of the various types of ancient Russian scriptures the choir members are being in contact with the scientists, who involved in research of medieval Patterns of Russian singing.

The repertoire of the choir is not limited by the ancient Russian repertoire. In its creative activity the choir tries reflecting the great reaches and variety of the Russian choir art. Therefore, it is quite expedient an appearance of such programs as: «A millennium of the Russian Church singing» (2002) and «Saintly Love»(2003) where represented the best patterns of the Russian Churchly and secular (as the folk so the professional composers’) musical traditions.

During the time of its existence the choir has issued 5 CDs, and at the same time it permanently bring about an intensive concert activity as in Russia so abroad.

In May of 2002 the choir participated in «The Moscow Easter Festival», which was took place under the patronage of president V.Putin, by the Blessing of Patriarch of Moscow Alexis II, and with the participation of Maestro V.Gergiev.

In February of 2003 the choir was invited to Sweden by the local «State concert department» (Rikskonsorter), where it had a very successful tour in this country. The main event of the tour was a concert in the Musical Academy in Stockholm.

In May of 2003 there took place concert in Padua and Verona (Italy) together with the world famous chamber orchestra «I Solisti Veneti» under the direction of Claudio Scimone.

In the native St.Petersburg, except the regular service singing in the Optina Pustyn Monastery department, the choir gives the public concerts. Such concerts took place, for example in «The Pushkin House», in the State Russian Museum, in the White Hall of the Marble Palace, in the Peter and Paul Cathedral in the Peter and Paul Fortress, in the palace of Counts Sheremetyevs’. Also there took place the concerts in Vyborg and an the jubilee of the ancient town of Old Ladoga.

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