



**Five Centuries of
Russian Choral Music**
VLADIMIR CHAMBER CHOIR

Eduard Markin, Director

UNITED STATES TOUR • September, 1989

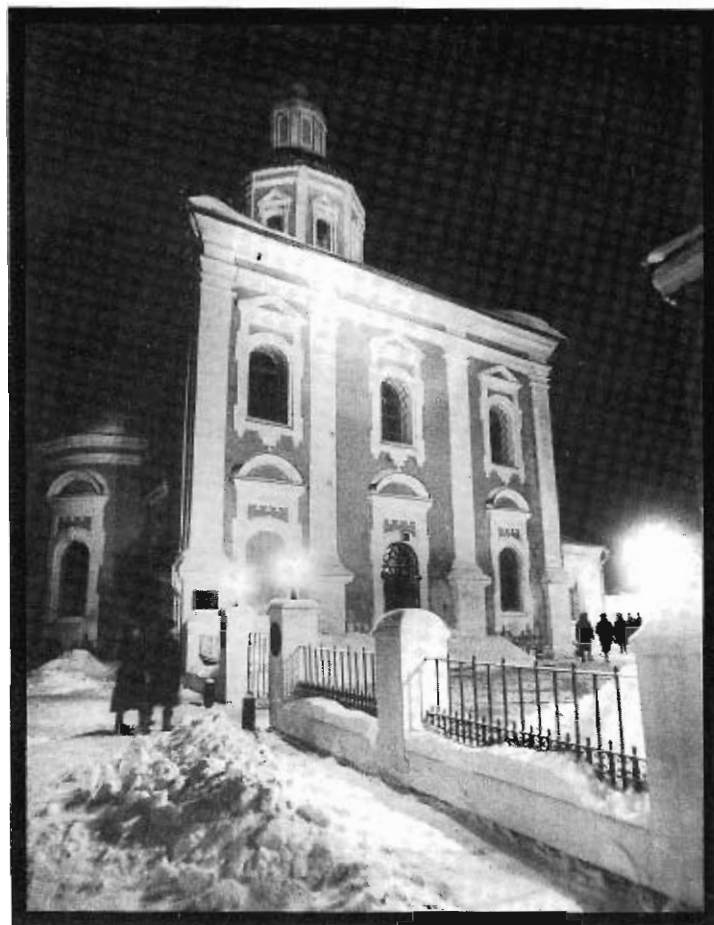
The City of Vladimir

The ancient city of Vladimir stands on the banks of the Klyasma River, 190 kilometers northeast of Moscow. Home to around 250,000 people, it is today an industrial city producing tractors, electrical machinery and chemicals. There are also food and light industries. Vladimir, along with the neighboring town of Suzdal, is the site of many of Soviet Russia's oldest and most beautiful architectural monuments and attracts tourists from all over the world.

According to the chronicles, the city of Vladimir was founded in 1108 by Prince Vladimir Monamakh who later became Grand-Prince of Kiev. It was designed to serve as a frontier fortress guarding the northeast of his domain.

The city flourished under Monamakh's grandson, Prince Andrei Bogoliubsky, who moved the seat of his government from Kiev to Vladimir in 1158 and began there a struggle to unify Northwestern Rus in opposition to Kievan Rus, which was at that time torn by internecine strife. During Andrei's reign, Vladimir became a powerful and very beautiful city, with fortifications, towers, monasteries and cathedrals created by the best builders and artists from Rus, Europe and Byzantium. The city's strength grew until 1138 when its defenders were unable to turn back the invading Tatars.

Under Tatar rule, Vladimir held a lesser but still significant position. It was here that the Metropolitan See of All Rus was located at the end of the 13th and beginning of the 14th centuries, and in its Cathedral of the Dormition the corona-



THE VLADIMIR THEATRE OF CHORAL MUSIC.

tion of the Great-Prince took place. But by the 16th century, the Princes of Moscow had risen to power, and Moscow became the new political center of the Russia lands.

Today the city of Vladimir is highly esteemed by the people of Russia as a place where they may enjoy treasures of their rich and ancient culture.

Vladimir Chamber Choir



The Vladimir Chamber Choir is a professional ensemble comprising the first Theater of Choral Music in the Soviet Union. It began 15 years ago as an amateur group under the auspices of the Vladimir-Suzdal Historical Museum. During its years as the museum's "singing exhibit" the Choir developed a tradition of performing exclusively Russian and Soviet music. Now an independent choral group still under the direction of founder Eduard Markin, recipient of the Russian Soviet Republic's Meritorius Artist award, the Choir continues this tradition. Its current repertoire numbers over 100 works ranging from the songs of 15th century Russia to music by contemporary Soviet composers.

Surrounded by the beauty of Vladimir and Suzdal's carefully preserved old Russian architecture, it is not surprising that a primary objective of the Vladimir Chamber Choir is the revival and restoration of early music. Specialists from the Moscow Conservatory have transcribed for the Choir several 17th and 18th century choral works only recently discovered in the archives of Vladimir and Suzdal. These works include a 12-voice "kontsert" for three choruses, and a liturgy and "nuptial kontsert" for 8-voice choir.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

Notes on Russian Choral Music

The history of Russia up to the 17th century is largely the history of the Orthodox Church in Russia. When Prince Vladimir converted to Christianity in 988 he set the direction his fledgling country would take for centuries to come. His conversion brought the people of Rus the written language developed by missionaries Cyril and Methodius in their travels to Bulgaria 100 years earlier. And it turned the face of Russia toward the East and away from the West, a fact which has affected the whole history and culture of that country.

From Greece came the liturgy, and with it music intended to express the spiritual aspects of the text. Since instruments would interfere with the pure expression of the words, all liturgical music was performed by unaccompanied voices. Instruments were also deemed not suitable for use in the church because of their association with the pagan past.

An early example of liturgical music is the *stichira*, an elaborate chant with many notes per syllable of text.

With the rise of Moscow in the 15th century and the fall of Constantinople in 1453, Russia gained stability and greater cultural and political autonomy. New musical forms and new styles of notation flourished, influenced by contacts with Renaissance Italy. One result of this coming together of East and West was the liturgical drama called *dyeistvo*. Sometimes compared to the Western *miracle play*, these dramas combined Byzantine austerity with Western theatricality. They were performed in the church to tell Biblical stories or depict the lives of saints.

Following liturgical reforms in the 16th and 17th centuries, church leaders looked to the Ukraine for new directions. Many Ukrainian singers came to Moscow in the 17th century bringing with them new Western styles and notation. Among the new innovations were polyphony and part singing. By

the end of the 17th century, one of these new forms, the *kontsert* had become an elaborate, large scale form for 8, 12, or even 24 parts, divided among several choirs. The *kontsert* involved a continuous alternation of solo and chorus, duple and triple meter, contrasting dynamics and tempi. In the hands of composers like Bortnianski, trained in late 18th-century Italy, the *kontsert* became more sophisticated, more dramatic and quite Italianate in sound.

The 19th century was a time of profound musical development in Russia. Inspired by visits of French and Italian opera companies in the 18th and 19th centuries and influenced by renewed interest in Russia's own folk music, a great Russian national opera was created. Russian instrumental music, of which little is known before 1800, flowered into exquisite chamber music, dazzling concerti, powerful symphonies and ballets. After the turn of the 20th century this remarkable movement gave birth to composers whose works helped shape the musical language of our modern era.

Although we in the West are most familiar with the instrumental music of this period, Russian composers continued to write works for the church up until the October Revolution of 1917. After that time, religious music was performed rarely, until recently when ensembles such as the Vladimir Chamber Choir have begun to restore to Russia its rich tradition of religious choral music.

Of the religious influence on Russian culture, Suzanne Massie writes in *The Land of the Firebird*:

This power of perceiving the beauty of the spiritual world and of expressing this beauty in worship has been a particular gift of Russia. . . . Throughout the centuries, the Russians, even in their secular art, were to preserve their view that art is above all a divine gift whose essential purpose is to serve God and to uplift humanity.

Vladimir Chamber Choir

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

As a choral music theater, the Vladimir Chamber Choir pursues novel forms of choral music presentation. By combining the classical function of a chorus with participation as a dramatic persona, the Choir has produced an unusual blend of singing



and acting that has excited the interest of both professional musicians and the public. Two choral works featuring this performance style have been written for the Chamber Choir. Both "The Golden Gates" by V. Kalistratov and "The Plaint of Andrei Bogoliubsky, Great Prince of Vladimir" by V. Genin, depict historical events in the Vladimir-Suzdal region.

The Vladimir Chamber Choir also serves its community as an educational resource, providing a center of musical culture whose main goal is to promote interest in the rich Russian musical heritage. To this end the Choir founded the S. I. Taneyev Choral Music Festival which now attracts choruses from many parts of the Soviet Union. In addition, the Choir sponsors a music school for boys; the students perform as the Vladimir Boys' Choir under director Eduard Markin.

Although not principally a touring company, the Vladimir Chamber Choir has performed in many parts of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, as well as in Cuba and West Germany.

PROGRAM

September 8, 11, 14, 16, 17, 19, 20

PART ONE

THE PLAINT OF ANDREI BOGOLIUBSKY, GREAT PRINCE OF VLADIMIR (1987)

A MIRACLE PLAY FOR SOLOISTS AND CHOIR

Music by VLADIMIR GENIN (b. 1958)
Text by V. GENIN & I. ISTRATOVA,
based on historical writings and folklore.

Written for the Vladimir Chamber Choir.
Dedicated to the city of Vladimir,
the ancient capital of the Vladimir-Suzdal Rus.

I PRAISE TO THE RUSSIAN LAND

A hymn to the Russian land in praise of its many beauties.

II PRINCE ANDREI, CALLED BOGOLIUBY ("BELOVED OF GOD")

Tells of the beginnings of Prince Andrei's reign and his move to the poor Vladimir land from the rich capital city of Kiev. He fortifies and beautifies the city of Vladimir and strives to unify the lands under his rule. Vladimir becomes the capital of Russia.

III THERE'S A STABLE LAD WHISTLING IN THE FIELD (folk text)

IV IN THE WOODS, THE DEEP WOODS (folk text)

V "OH PRINCE, MY MASTER"

A beggar appeals to the prince for remembrance in his misery.

VI NEAR THE WELL (folk text)

There is a warning in the repeated words, "It's smoky in the field, smoky."

VII THE KILLING OF PRINCE ANDREI

The enemies of the prince plot to kill him. The prince decides not to save himself but to suffer martyrdom. Before dying he appeals to the Lord. Only the beggar, in his grief, admonishes the citizens to not forget the kindnesses of their master. They repent and bury the prince with prayers.

VIII PRAISE TO THE RUSSIAN LAND (reprise)

Intermission

PART TWO

RUSSIAN CHORAL MUSIC, 16th - 19th CENTURY

Selections To Be Announced

THE PLAINT OF ANDREI BOGOLIUBSKY, GREAT-PRINCE OF VLADIMIR

Libretto

I PRAISE TO THE RUSSIAN LAND

O Russian Land, you are made beautiful by many divine things. You surprise us with many lakes and springs which are revered by the local people; with rivers, steep mountains, high hills, oak groves and big fields; with all kinds of animals and countless birds; with great roads and divine villages. You surprise us with wonderful church buildings; with honest nobles and awesome princes. Gather together brothers and friends. Let's join our voices and celebrate the Russian land.

II PRINCE ANDREI, CALLED BOGOLIUBY ("BELOVED OF GOD")

The head of the lands is Kiev. People come from all the principdoms bringing tribute... Prince Andrei, son of Yuri and grandson of Vladimir Monomakh, without his father's consent, with his wife, children and all his court, left for the wooded part of the country far away - the poor land of Suzdal. He was sad because the land of Kiev was torn by love of power, greed and bloodletting. Many courageous people were dying for their princes but not for their country.

In the town of Vladimir, Prince Andrei built a stone church to the Holy Mother of God, and called from all the lands master builders and craftsmen. He built gates of silver and other gates of gold. He fed the poor and for the sick was as a beloved father. Enhanced by wisdom and kindness, he became the sole ruler... He developed the new Great-Principdom of Vladimir, and it became the heart of the Russian land.

O Skylark, summer bird, joy of beautiful days, fly high under the clouds and look on the mighty city of Vladimir and sing glory to Great-Prince Andrei.

III THERE'S A STABLE LAD WHISTLING IN THE FIELD (folk text)

He is looking for his three horses. The first, his mane is like a wheel. The second has a star on his forehead. The third has a long tail.

IV IN THE WOODS, THE DEEP WOODS (folk text)

In the deep woods there sings a nightingale. There sounds the sad cuckoo. But the only one who listens is the young servant girl. She says: "Dear Mother, take me away from serving in the master's house. My feet are tired. My arms are tired from rocking the master's baby." The mother says: "Persevere. Don't talk about your misery. If you persevere, then you can talk about."

V "OH PRINCE, MY MASTER"

"Brothers, let's proclaim with golden trumpets, with all our strength. Let's play the silver organs, with all our wisdom. Let there cry out in us all the thoughts that are good for our souls."

Baritone: (The beggar speaks.) "Think of me, oh Prince, in your great power. We are all warmed by your goodness as by the sun. Only I alone am like a weed in the shadow. The sun does not touch me... Some are loved by God, but for me there is only deep misery. Oh Prince, my master, when you are feasting, think of me who eats only dry bread. When you sleep in your soft bed, think of me stiff from cold, soaked by rain."

VI NEAR THE WELL (folk text)

Near the well it is smoky. It is smoky in the field, smoky. And in the village all the farmers are poor. They grind chaff and bake pies.

VII THE KILLING OF PRINCE ANDREI

Bass: In the year 1075 Great-Prince Andrei was killed, on Saturday,

June 28th, in the town called Bogoliuby. Whoever is good-minded and kind cannot live without enemies. Prince Andrei heard about the plot and said:

"The people will kill me because they are evil. But if they draw my blood, I will be martyred before the Lord." He didn't want to save himself, because true love can bear anything. It takes everything on faith and does not avenge itself.

Choir: This was on Friday. His servant Joachim had heard that the prince was going to execute his brother. He listened to the whisper of the devil and appealed to his co-workers and the evil advisors. "Today he'll execute my brother; tomorrow he'll execute us." So they decided to kill the prince in the night. They went to the wine cellar and drank. Then they took up weapons, went to the room where the prince was sleeping and broke down the door.

Bass & Choir: "Woe to you.

What evil have I done you? You will make my blood to flow upon the earth and God will avenge you for my bread." They fought with him fiercely and, thinking him dead, left trembling. The prince crawled to the entry way, moaning loudly from his broken heart.

Choir: Hearing his voice, they returned, fearful for their lives; and following the trail of blood, they found him. When the prince saw them he said, "Oh God, look upon my helplessness. Take care of my misery and the sorrow I am now experiencing. I can bear it because I have hope for You." And thus was killed Great-Prince Andrei. In the morning the citizens of Bogoliuby robbed the prince's house and the city of Vladimir also.

Alto: And no one held them back.

Baritone: The beggar came and began to ask where the master was killed. They told him: "He has been dragged out into the city. We want to throw him to the dogs."

Choir: (words of John Damascene) What is the sweetness in this life which is not mixed with crying and misery? What fame is there on earth which cannot be broken and shaken? Dreams are more helpless than shadows. You cannot rely only on dreams. One moment, and they are chased by death.

Baritone: The beggar said, "Oh Prince, my master, why did you not identify and conquer your enemies, you who have conquered armies of infidels. Now they won't even allow your body to be brought to the church."

Choir: Oh what fears must the soul suffer, the soul that is being torn from the body. In what sorrow will it cry out and not find consolation.

Baritone: On the sixth day they carried Prince Andrei to Vladimir, with much wailing and lamenting. (Spoken) And they buried him with great honor and songs praising God in the wonderful church which he himself had built.

Choir: Even if he lifts his eyes to the holy angels, his prayers will be of no avail. If he stretches his hand to the good people, no one will help his soul.

What is the sweetness in this life, etc.

Lord, grant your departed servant your undying mercy. Comfort him in eternal peace and joy.

Eduard Markin, Director

Eduard M. Markin was born in Voronezh, Russian S.F.S.R., in 1941 and was educated in Odessa and Novosibirsk. After graduating from the Novosibirsk Conservatory in 1967, he worked in Siberia as the head of the choral conducting section of the school of music in Barnaul (Altai region). In 1972 he joined the music teaching faculty of the Vladimir Pedagogical Institute.

In 1974 he founded the Vladimir Chamber Choir and has gradually developed it into the unique Theater of Choral Music.

In 1986 Eduard Markin received the title of Honored Artist of the Russian Republic.

An article in the November 1988 journal of the Com-



EDUARD MARKIN

poser's Union of the USSR, SOVIETSKAYA MUSIKA, described E. Markin as a "prime mover of the tremendous reconstruction of this very important national tradition [of choral singing].

Beginning his activity in Vladimir 15 years ago, he did not put in front of himself grandiose problems. He had a simple idea, but the idea was pure and deep:

- To bring back to life the monuments of national musical culture;

- To bring back to people the riches that were hidden there, the great achievements of the human spirit;

- To resurrect for the people of Vladimir the famous and also the tragic past of their people;

- And to bring back to them pride and historical remembrance."

It is fitting that Eduard Markin also chose to accomplish these goals in one of the most beautiful Russian cities in the very center of ancient Russia -- famous for its churches which were erected under the great Prince Andrei Bogoliubsky in the 12th century and painted by Andrei Rublev and Daniel the Black.

Vladimir Chamber Choir

Andronova	Moreva, Galina
Bilnova, Uliana	Flechotnikova, Tatiana
Brodski, Vladimir	Simonovski, Felix
Chiboava, Tatiana	Smortchkova, Natalia
Chilova, Galina	Snejina, Irina
Chmonin, Vladimir	Solovieva, Irina
Denisov, Viktor	Solovieva, Lubov
Grigorieva, Natalia	Stojarov, Igor
Gromov, Mikhail	Tchaadaeva, Irina
Gurtovoi, Yuri	Vodiankina, Elena
Jukova, Lidia	Yangereva, Olga
Koniukh, Alexandr	Yachkin, Alexei
Krasnov, Alexei	Zavazalski, Vladimir
Krasnova, Elena	Zaitsev, Viktor
Krikova, Ekaterina	
Lapina, Elena	TRANSLATOR
Molev, Alexandr	Istratova, Irina
Mokhova, Lidia	



VLADIMIR GENIN

Vladimir Genin, Composer

Vladimir Mikhailovich Genin was born in Moscow in 1958. He graduated with distinction in piano from the Moscow Tchaikovsky State Conservatory of Music and in 1983 with distinction in composition under Professor Roman Ledenev of the Moscow Conservatory.

Since 1985 he has been a member of the USSR Union of Composers. Among his principal compositions are a symphony for violin, viola and orchestra, a concerto for piano and orchestra, several song cycles and chamber works, and "The Complaint of Andrei Bogoliubsky, Great-Prince of Vladimir" for soloists and chorus.

"The Complaint of Andrei Bogoliubsky"

was written in 1987 for the Vladimir Chamber Choir and has been performed over 40 times. On June 16, 1988, it was performed in Vladimir at the celebration of the 1000th anniversary of the conversion of Russia to Christianity.

Regarding the composition of that work, the author has said:

"I saw my goal not as stylizing or creating the scenery of a distant epoch, but in the living approach of the depicted events to my spectator and listener. Making a connection between today and our past, returning to our historical memory is vital. For the problems of belief and non-belief, of sin and sanctity are eternal for the Russian soul."

Seattle Peace Chorus

In 1983, a group of Seattle-area residents joined together in a choral group united by a desire to foster a climate of peace. Directed by Helen Lauritzen, they quickly became known in the Northwest, performing for church, business and professional groups, at EXPO '86, at the Conference of American-Soviet Sister Cities in 1987, and at the 1988 International Kiwanis Convention.

The Seattle Peace Chorus believes that music is an international language which bridges differences in language, nationality, religion and ideology. By incorporating music from many different lands in their repertoire, the Peace Chorus hopes to improve understanding of other cultures and promote acceptance of diversity.

When the Peace Chorus began, relations between the United States and the Soviet Union were very tense and seemed to be moving in a dangerously hostile direction. The Chorus decided to focus on establishing the type of person-to-person diplomacy that can help reduce tensions. In 1985, 49 members of the group visited seven Soviet cities, reaching out to the people with a message of peace and goodwill. They returned home to share the experience with thousands of Americans through a highly-acclaimed audio-visual production.

In 1988, the Chorus was invited to return to the Soviet Union to sing with Soviet choruses in several cities and take part in a friendship festival arranged by the director of the State Radio Children's Chorus in Moscow. The festival took place in the city of Vladimir and included the Peace Chorus, the Children's Chorus and the Vladimir Chamber Choir. The Peace Chorus was deeply impressed by the music and spirit of the Vladimir Choir and determined to bring them to the United States to share their talent and tradition with American audiences.

Concert Schedule for the Vladimir Chamber Choir

BREMERTON

Wednesday, September 6, 8 p.m., Bremerton High School Performing Arts Center
*Joint Concert with Bremerton Symphony & Symphony Chorus,
Bainbridge Chorale, Puget Soundsters, Olympic Chamber Singers*

SEATTLE

Friday, September 8, 8 p.m., St. Mark's Cathedral

Saturday, September 9, 7:30 p.m., Gethsemane Lutheran Church

*Friendship Concert with Seattle Peace Chorus
& The Sound of the Northwest*

WHIDBEY ISLAND

Sunday, September 10, 3 p.m., Coupeville Town Park

OLYMPIA

Monday, September 11, 7:30 p.m., Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd

PORTLAND

Tuesday, September 12, 8 p.m., First Methodist Church

*Joint Concert with Concord Choir
& Martin Luther King Jr. Children's Choir*

Thursday, September 14, 8 p.m., Lewis & Clark College, Agnes Flanagan Chapel

SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

Saturday, September 16, 8 p.m., San Francisco, St. Ignatius Cathedral

Sunday, September 17, 8 p.m., Moraga (East Bay), St. Mary's College Chapel

Joint Concert with Slavyanka Men's Choir

Tuesday, September 19, Palo Alto, 8 p.m., Stanford University Memorial Church

SANTA ROSA

Wednesday, September 20, 8 p.m., Luther Burbank Center

Acknowledgements

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The Boeing Company
Printing Control
KING-FM
The Weekly
U.S. West Foundation
Alex Hubbard & Associates
Trade Litho
Wescan Color Corporation
Typography, Ltd.
Image Ink Studio
Paul Natkin
Gray Line of Seattle
Charles Royer, Mayor, Seattle
Rosanne Royer
The Goodwill Exchange Program
of the 1990 Goodwill Games

Concord Choir (Portland)
David York, Director
Richard Brown
Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon
Rodney Page
Slavyanka Mens Choir (San Francisco)
Paul Andrews, Director
Masterworks Choral Ensemble (Olympia)
The Bremerton Symphony Association
Matt Jacobs
The Town of Coupeville
Concerts on the Cove (Coupeville)
Friends of Concerts on the Cove
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