



Russian Musical Arts Society of America
731 West 183rd Street, Suite 3I
New York, NY 10033
<http://www.rccny.org>

For Immediate Release: Friday, November 18, 2005
Contact: Laura Schlachtmeyer 212-928-1402

WINTER CELEBRATION OF SACRED AND FOLK MUSIC

Russian Chamber Chorus of New York

New York City - **The Russian Chamber Chorus of New York**, under Nikolai Kachanov, Artistic Director and Conductor, will perform a program of timeless sacred and folk music from three centuries on **Saturday, December 10 at 8 PM, at the Church of the Good Shepherd at 240 East 31st Street, between 2nd and 3rd Ave.** The performance will be repeated on **Sunday, December 11 at 4 PM at Broadway Presbyterian Church at West 114th Street.** Ticket price at the door is \$25, \$15 for students and seniors (65+). Advance tickets are \$20; for details, see <http://www.rccny.org>. For more information, call 212 928-1402.

Russian sacred music has its roots in Byzantine chant. This concert program celebrates the continuous and ever-evolving vitality of this connection. The concert program begins with two examples of the unique, rarely heard 17th century Russian linear polyphony, "Christ is Born, Extol Him", and a composition "Hymn to the Mother of God" written in the style of znamenny chant by Tsar Feodor Alexeyevich. These works are followed by contemporary British composer John Tavener's, "God is With Us" (A Christmas Proclamation). Tavener's composition recreates the sound of the early Byzantine chant, but with inflections of our present age.

The program continues with "The Theotokos, Ever-Vigilant in Prayer" (Kontakion for the Dormition), an early composition by Sergei Rachmaninoff. Originally written for a composition competition, Rachmaninoff's work made such a favorable impression on the judges that the young composer was offered a job teaching composition in a synodal school. "Sing Him a New Song" by the Serbian composer Marko Tajcevic (1900-1984) and "Glory to the Father and the Son" by Lesya Dichko, a contemporary Ukrainian composer (born in 1939), conclude the sacred music portion of our concert. This trio of works illustrates the diversity and flexibility of the great tradition of Slavic sacred music.

The program will end with the "Russian Concerto", a six-part choral cycle by contemporary Moscow composer Valery Kalistratov (born in 1942). In this choral cycle the composer masterfully captures the Russian spirit through his skillful interpretations of regional folk songs. The music is permeated with the inimitable charisma and beauty of the Slavic folk intonations. The concert concludes with an evergreen favorite of the holiday season, "Shedrik" (O Goodly Spirit), a Ukrainian carol, otherwise known as "The Carol of the Bells".

THE RUSSIAN CHAMBER CHORUS OF NEW YORK was founded in 1984 by Artistic Director and Conductor Nikolai Kachanov. Over the course of its twenty-year history, the chorus has become an important musical presence in the greater New York City region. Known for its stylistic versatility and heartfelt singing, RCCNY commands a repertoire spanning many centuries and styles, from ancient liturgical chants, through Russian Baroque, classical and folk music, to world premieres by leading contemporary composers.

Among other venues, the chorus has become a regular presence in Carnegie Hall. In June 2004, RCCNY performed there in the American premiere of Sergei Taneyev's opera Agamemnon (concert performance), with the Manhattan Philharmonic under Peter Tiboris and the Aquila Theatre Company featuring Olympia Dukakis. In April 2005, RCCNY returned to Carnegie Hall to perform in Mahler's Symphony No. 2 with the Kirov Orchestra under Valery Gergiev. New York Times reviewer Allan Kozinn described the choral sound in this performance as "glorious". In its more standard guise as a chamber chorus, RCCNY frequently performs at Carnegie's Weill Recital Hall, where it has presented liturgical masterworks and a capella or lightly-accompanied jewels of the concert repertoire. The group has also performed at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine; the New York Festival of Sacred Music; with the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra's "Re-Encountering Rachmaninoff"; and as part of Bard College's "Tchaikovsky Rediscoveries" festival.

In addition to its concert performances, the Russian Chamber Chorus of New York has garnered critical acclaim for its growing catalog of recordings. RCCNY's recording of Tchaikovsky's Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom was chosen by New York Times critic James Oestreich as number four on his list of the top ten classical CDs of 2001. The chorus has also recorded Yuri

Yukechev's two cantatas "My Heart Is Ready" and "By Candlelight" (Helicon).

Please call 212-928-1402 to reserve your tickets, or to schedule an interview with Artistic Director Nikolai Kachanov.