With deep insight and in great detail, this book reveals how to achieve the ideal a cappella choir sound through:

- ensemble, intonation, and nuance;
- and how true choral artistry is attained by:
  - thorough analysis and mastery of the score
  - a systematic approach to rehearsal technique
  - meaningful conducting gestures
  - inspired communication and leadership

Pavel Chesnokov, composer, choirmaster, and professor of conducting, offers a unique view into the famed Russian a cappella style. Conceived in the 1910s, completed in 1930, and first published in Russian in 1940, Chesnokov’s pioneering treatise sold out within a matter of hours. The book’s popularity later led to two subsequent Russian editions in 1952 and 1960. Now you can read the master’s own sage advice in English.

For performance and further analysis... Six of the choral works discussed in Chesnokov’s book

ARENSKY, Anton
The Tree of Poison (Anchar)
V1-38 Church Slavonic satb(div) $2.90
An evocative re-telling famous poem by Alexander Pushkin, which speaks of evil in the world and the manner in which people use it to wield power over others.

BEREZOVSKY, Maksim
Do Not Reject Me in My Old Age
(Vo otverzhï mene vo vremia starosti)
$3.95
Berezovsky was a fellow-student of Mozart’s at the Accademia Filarmonica in Bologna. This, the most famous work of his short life (1745–1777), is a dramatic multi-movement sacred concerto for unaccompanied chorus. Chesnokov used the last movement (with the sacred text removed by the Soviet censors) as an illustration of how to interpret a fugue.

CHESNOKOV, Pavel
It’s Not a Flower Wilting in the Field
(Ne tsvetochek f pole vianet)
$1.85
A peasant lad has fallen in love with a girl who is above him in social class. Chesnokov uses Russian folk motifs and countervoces to express the mournful longing of unrequited love in this soulful choral miniature.

CHESNOKOV, Pavel
Daybreak Glimmers (Teplitsia zor’ka)
V1-38 Russian satb(div) $2.40
This is Chesnokov at his most Romantic—bordering on the Impressionistic—as he uses rich, lush harmonies to evoke images of nature capable of giving solace and inspiration to the weary soul.

CHESNOKOV, Pavel
In Winter (Zimoy)
V1-38 Russian satb(div) $1.85
In the spiritual wasteland of the Soviet Union, Chesnokov used this Romantic setting of an inspirational poem by Grand Duke Konstantine Romanov (who wrote under the pseudonym K.R.), which uses images of winter as metaphors for the purity of the soul, to present his detailed analysis of nuance and interpretation.

TANEYEV, Sergei
Sunrise (Vos’hod solntsa)
PS037 Russian satb(div) $2.90
Taneyev, the Russian master of counterpoint, paints one of the most vivid and dramatic musical depictions of a glorious sunrise. Chesnokov uses a passage from this work to illustrate his “registro-timbral” system in which 27 sub-sections of an 81-voice choir are deployed in a quasi-orchestral manner.
SVIRIDOV, Georgy

Inexpressible Wonder (Neizrechennoye chudo)

CMR009 Church Slavonic satb (div), s and b soli $9.95

A beautiful sacred cycle from the premier Russian choral composer of the late 20th century. Conceived in the years 1988–1992, this cycle was first performed in Moscow in 1992. It comprises various, unconnected liturgical texts—from the Divine Liturgy (1, 2, and 3), from the feast of Christmas (4), and Holy Saturday (6), which the composer is known to have studied over the years. The principle of loosely associating various poetic (in this instance, liturgical-poetic) texts is one of Sviridov’s characteristic creative principles.

1. Lord, Save the Pious (Ghospodi, spasi blagochestiv)iye
2. Holy God (Sviatiy Bozhe)
3. It Is Truly Fitting (Dostoyno yest’)
4. Christmas Troparion (Rozhdestvenskaya pesn’)
5. Glory and Alleluia (Slava i Allilia)
6. Inexpressible Wonder (Neizrechennoye chudo)

Movements 2, 3, 4 and 6 are also available individually:

2. Holy God (Sviatiy Bozhe)
CMR009-2 $1.85

3. It Is Truly Fitting (Dostoyno yest’)
CMR009-3 $1.85

4. Christmas Troparion (Rozhdestvenskaya pesn’)
CMR009-4 $1.85

6. Inexpressible Miracle (Neizrechennoye chudo)
CMR009-6 $1.85

Two Choruses from the cycle A Wondrous Birth (Strannoye Rozhdestvo videvshre)

2. Come, Let Us Worship
(Pridite, poklonimся)
CMR010-2 satb (div) $1.85

7. A Wondrous Birth
(Strannoye Rozhdestvo videvshre)
CMR010-7 satb (div) $2.90

Two of the most inspired movements from the cycle, these works are “pure Sviridov,” yet they show him to be a worthy heir of Rachmaninoff and other composers of the “new Russian Choral School” of the early 20th century. The title movement, “A Wondrous Birth,” is a magnificent hymn to the Incarnation of Christ, which praises “God Most High, who came to earth as a humble man.”

GRETCHANINOFF, Alexandre

Blessed Are They Whom Thou Hast Chosen
(Blazheni, yazhe izbral)
Gr043 Church Slavonic satb(div), t solo $2.40

This setting of the Communion Hymn for the Departed (sung at a Memorial Liturgy) is one of Gretchaninoff’s most somber and introspective short sacred works. In it he finds inspiration and thematic material from a melodiically rich Bulgarian chant, one of the few examples of his use of pre-existing chant.

GRETCHANINOFF, Alexandre

Litany of Fervent Supplication
(Sugubaya yekteniya)
Gr076 Church Slavonic satb(div), b solo/organ $2.40

This powerful excerpt from Gretchaninoff’s ground-breaking Liturgia Domestica (the first Russian Liturgy written for voices and instruments), op. 79, was made famous by the great Russian basso, Feodor Chaliapin.

SHVEDOV, Constantine

Our Father
(Otche nash)
Sh027 Church Slavonic satb $1.85

Shvedov was one of the youngest members of the “new Russian Choral School.” His works are marked by two characteristics: 1) a fascination with chants, both actual borrowed melodies and those of his own invention, as in this work; and 2) the use of these chants for contrapuntal development. Both devices are used in this setting of the “Lord’s Prayer.”

KALINNIKOV, Victor

Skylark
(Zhavoronok)
PS038 Russian satb $1.85

A delightful part song about the skylark welcoming in the spring, as he soars aloft, praising God’s creation. Kalinnikov, who was a composer par excellence of lovely choral miniatures, demonstrates yet again why he must be regarded as one of the great choral craftsmen of the “new Russian Choral School.”
NEW AND RECENT

ORTHODOX MUSIC WITH ENGLISH TEXT

APRAHAMIAN, Maia
An Offering Carol
OMP-Ma001E satb $1.85
This delightful new Christmas carol, in lilting 6/8 time, uses a text from the Orthodox Vespers of the Nativity, in alternation with a "Gloria" refrain.

BORTNIANSKY, Dmitry
Let God Arise
OMP-Bo109E satb $2.90
One of the most widely performed Easter sacred concertos in the Orthodox Church, this work can also be sung at other times throughout the year. Cast in typical Classical-era multi-movement form, the work ends with a spirited mini-fugue on the words "God is wondrous in His holy place, the God of Israel."

CHESNOKOV, Pavel
Praise the Name of the Lord
OMP-Cn059E saattbb $1.85
Also available for Treble Voices:
OMP-Cn059E(wc) ssaa $1.85
Majestic and triumphant, this work is a fusion of an ancient znamenny chant with the brilliant and colorful choral writing of the "new Russian choral school."

CHESNOKOV, Pavel
Cherubic Hymn (Sofroniev Hermitage Melody)
OMP-Cn186E satb $2.90
The Cherubic Hymn accompanies the solemn “Great Entrance” of the clergy with the Communion Gifts at the Orthodox Divine Liturgy. Chesnokov’s polyphonic arrangement of an ancient monastery melody creates a setting of spiritual otherworldliness appropriate for the liturgical moment.

CHESNOKOV, Pavel
Oh, Praise the Lord from the Heavens
OMP-Cn249E ssaaattbb $1.85
This setting of the Sunday Communion Hymn (Psalm 148:1) is exuberant and joyful within a satisfyingly balanced musical form. The psalm verse is presented first homophonically, then as an imitative fugato in the middle section, and a reprise of the opening theme on the word "Alleluia."

GRECHANINOFF, Alexandre
Joyful Light
OMP-Gr021E ssaaattbb $2.40
One of Gretchaninoff’s best-known and most richly-scored individual hymn settings from the Vesper service, this version is a new English adaptation that most closely embodies the correct Orthodox liturgical translation of the ancient "Fos hilaron," a Christian text dating back to the fourth century.

KASTALSKY, Alexander
Christ is Risen
OMP-Ks156mxE satb $1.85
Kastalsky originally composed this setting of the Orthodox Paschal Troparion for treble voices. This arrangement for mixed chorus will brighten any Easter service.

RACHMANINOFF, Sergei
Glory Be To God On High
(No. 7 from All-Night Vigil, op. 37)
OMP-Ra029E ssaattbb $1.85
Rachmaninoff’s setting stems from the Russian practice of singing this angelic salutation at the Orthodox Christmas Eve Vigil. This new English adaptation can be sung both at Christmas and throughout the entire year.

RACHMANINOFF, Sergei
Praise Ye the Name of the Lord
(No. 8 from All-Night Vigil, op. 37)
OMP-Ra030E ssaattbb $2.40
One of the most spectacular movements from the All-Night Vigil in a new English adaptation.

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV, Nikolai
Behold, the Bridegroom Comes
OMP-Ri012E ssatbb $1.85
Referencing the Gospel parable of the wise and foolish virgins, this hymn from Orthodox Holy Week services, is one of Rimsky-Korsakov’s most artful chant arrangements.

ZES, Tikey
Receive the Body of Christ
OMP-Tz001E satb $1.25
This Communion Hymn, by one of the most highly respected Greek Orthodox composers in America, has become a repertoire staple in its original Greek form. The present English adaptation is the only one that has been authorized and approved by the composer himself.
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