

**Winter 2013**

# The MUSICA RUSSICA **CD** BUYING GUIDE

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**Vol. 19, No. 2**

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## Outstanding New Arrivals

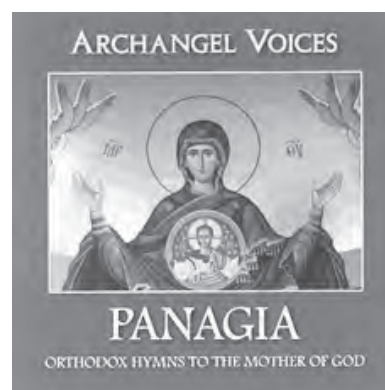
**C122**



FIVE  
STARS

**The Sacred Spirit of Russia**  
*Conspirare*  
Craig Hella Johnson, cond.  
(See page 6)

**I-112**



**Panagia: Orthodox Hymns**  
to the Mother of God  
*Archangel Voices*  
Vladimir Morosan, cond.  
(See page 10)

**D186**



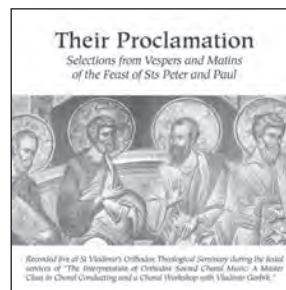
**The Don Cossack Choir**  
(1921–2013)  
Serge Jaroff, Michael Minsky,  
and Wanja Hlibka, conds.  
3 CD Set  
(See page 8)

**I-111**



**Hymns of Holy Russia**  
in the New World  
St. Tikhon, St. Vladimir &  
Holy Trinity Seminary Choirs  
Vladimir Gorbik, cond.  
(See page 10)

**I-113**



**Their Proclamation**  
Vladimir Gorbik  
Master Class Chorus  
Vladimir Gorbik, cond.  
(See page 10)

**K085**



**Tikey Zes**  
The Divine Liturgy of  
St. John Chrysostom  
Cappella Romana  
Alexander Lingas, cond.  
(See page 11)

**Vladimir Morosan, editor**

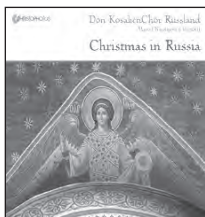
# Special Holiday Section

## B043b



**Russian Christmas:  
Vigil of the Nativity of Christ**  
Russain Patriarchate Choir; Grindenko  
\$20.98  
*Russian chant in  
all its austere splendor.*

## D155



**Christmas in Russia**  
Don Cossacks Choir of Russia  
\$21.98  
*Beautiful vocal display and drama  
for which Serge Jaroff's Don Cossacks  
were famous*

## E023



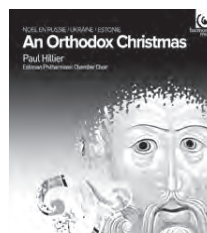
**The Bright Star Arose**  
St. John Damascene Children's and Youth Choir  
of St. Petersburg  
\$19.98  
*Young voices delve into the rich repertoire of  
traditional Slavic (Ukrainian, Belarussian,  
Slovak, and Russian) songs*

## H053



**Ukrainian Christmas Carols**  
The "Boyan" Ensemble  
\$21.98  
*This is, quite simply, THE BEST CD  
of Ukrainian Christmas carols  
released in recent years.*

## H060b



**An Orthodox Christmas: A New Joy**  
Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir  
\$15.98  
*A lovely mix of liturgical hymns  
and carols, performed by an  
outstanding world-renowned  
choral ensemble. FIVE STARS!*

## H062



**Carol of the Bells; Shchedrik**  
"Pavana" Women's Choir  
\$21.98  
*One of the leading chamber choirs in Ukraine  
offers some of the most exquisite singing by a  
women's choir found in our entire catalog.*

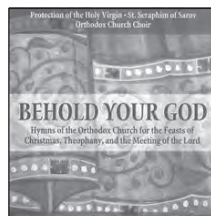
## H067



**And On Earth Peace**  
Heruwymy Ukrainian Female Quartet  
\$21.98  
*Four wonderfully blended women's voices  
sing a perfect mix between "East" and  
"West"—popular Ukrainian carols and  
some of the best selections from the  
Western carol repertoire.*

# Special Holiday Section

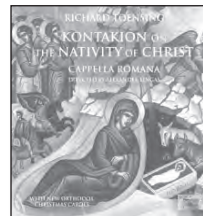
**I-079**



**Behold Your God**  
Protection of the Holy Virgin Choir  
\$17.98

*A veritable panoply of "Orthodox sounds"—bell-ringing, Scripture readings, and a variety of chants sung by choirs of men's, women's, and mixed voices.*

**I-085**



**Kontakion of the Nativity of Christ**  
and New Orthodox Christmas Carols  
Cappella Romana  
\$16.98

*The transcendent character of this music will appeal to all those interested in newly created sacred music inspired by the Orthodox tradition.*

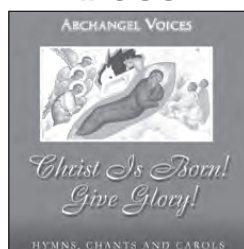
**I-088**



**Byzantine Christmas**  
Romeiko Ensemble  
\$26.98

*Beautifully produced CD and accompanying book—a major addition to the recorded repertoire of Byzantine chant in English.*

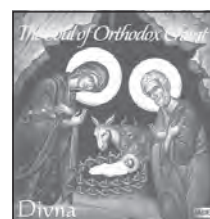
**I-068**



**Best Seller!**  
**Christ is Born - Give Glory!**  
Hymns, Chants, and Carols  
Archangel Voices  
\$17.98

*Sung in English, this CD offers a variety of compositions and chant arrangements by some of North America's leading composers as well as traditional hymns and carols.*

**K075**



**Soul of Orthodox chant (Christ is Born!)**  
Divna Ljubojevic & Melodi  
\$15.98

*A variety of Byzantine, Serbian, and Russian chants and a carols for the Nativity of Christ.*

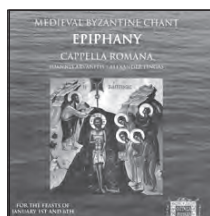
**J016**



**When Augustus Reigned**  
Cappella Romana  
\$16.98

*An attractive program of Byzantine selections for the Christmas and Theophany season, ranging from early chants to choral arrangements by modern-day Greek-American composers.*

**J021b**



**Hymns of Theophany**  
Medieval Byzantine Chant  
Cappella Romana  
\$16.98

*Medieval Byzantine treasures from Constantinople and Palestine.*

**N087**



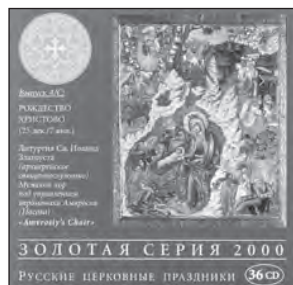
**God Sees All**  
Kazka Ensemble  
\$15.98

*Delightful Ukrainian fusion folk-rock for the Christmas season.*

# Special Holiday Section

## ❄ ❄ ❄ New Holiday Arrivals ❄ ❄ ❄

**B138**



**Russian Church Feasts: The Nativity of Christ** / Amvrosiy's Choir / Hieromonk Amvrosiy (Nosov), cond. / Zolotaya Seria, vol. 4C / 1994, 2000 / 66:03

**Price: \$18.98**

Suave, velvety smooth, and refined are the words that come to mind about the singing of Hieromonk Amvrosiy's Choir, established under the aegis of the Moscow Patriarchate Publishing Department in 1987. This reissue of a recording originally made in 1994 presents hymns for the Hierarchal Liturgy for the Feast of the Nativity, and contains mostly familiar works by Bortniansky, Lvov, Starorussky, Turchaninov, and Tchaikovsky, arranged for men's choir. The singing is polished, well blended, and always remains within the bounds of good taste, something that cannot always be taken for granted when modern-day Russian professional choirs undertake to sing liturgical music. The booklet is in Russian only; this, however, will not prevent this CD from being enjoyed by all lovers of Russian men's chorus music.—*V. M.*

★★★★

### *A beautifully sung Divine Liturgy for the Nativity!*

**Russian Orthodox Christmas** / Don Cossack Choir / Serge Jaroff, cond. / Recordings from 1948-1950 / Brilliant Classics 9161 / 2013 / 79:23

**Price: \$21.98**

During their illustrious career, spanning six decades, from 1921 to 1981, the Don Cossack Choir made hundreds of recordings. Of late, some of these have been re-mastered and re-released on CDs. The latest series of re-issues comes from Holland, on the Slava and Brilliant Classics labels. These will be enjoyed both by Don Cossack fans and by those who are only discovering these "superstars" of the Russian choral world for the first time. Nine tracks are actually related to Christmas; the rest are Great Lenten hymns and an assortment of other sacred hymns and secular and opera selections, some of which have not appeared on previous CDs by the Cossacks. The booklet gives some historical information about the Choir (in English only) but no text translations.—*V. M.*

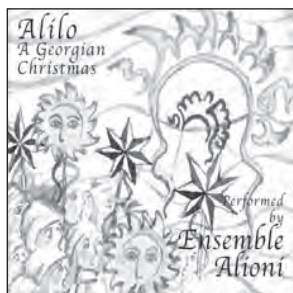
**D187**



★★★★

### *Rare re-mastered Don Cossack recordings from 1948-1950*

**K086**



**Alilo: A Georgian Christmas** / Ensemble Alioni (Chicago) / Clayton Parr, cond. / 32:00

**Price: 14.98**

The Ensemble Alioni is an American choir dedicated to the performance and preservation of polyphonic singing from the Republic of Georgia. Their conductor, Clayton Parr, has studied in Georgia and is well-versed in the many styles and authentic performance practices of the rich and varied vocal traditions in that country. Certainly their results on this short CD sound convincing to this reviewer's ear: a delightful selection of traditional Christmas carolling songs (Alilo), together with some liturgical hymns for the feast of the Nativity of Christ. This CD is a welcome addition to the international lineup of discs for the joyful Christmas season, and will be enjoyed both by lovers of Georgian vocal music and by those who might be encountering this ancient vocal tradition for the first time.—*V.M.*

### *A spirited collection of Georgian Christmas carols and hymns*

## NEW LISTINGS

### A. MAJOR WORKS AND COMPOSERS

#### A132



★★★★

**Ivan Alekseyevich Gardner: In Memoriam (1898-1984) / Choir of the Synodal Library of the Moscow Patriarchate / Vera Romanchenko, cond. / 2011 / 56:57** **Price: \$18.98**

This historic CD is a world-premiere recording devoted entirely to the sacred choral works of Ivan Alekseyevich Gardner, better known in the West as Johann von Gardner. A unique and multi-faceted Russian musician and scholar, whose entire life, in one way or another, centered around Orthodox church music, Gardner was compelled to leave his homeland in 1920, living thereafter in Serbia (Yugoslavia), the Holy Land, Austria, and Germany. Virtually single-handedly, he carried the torch of scholarship in the field of Russian Orthodox liturgical music, while his compatriots in the Soviet Union were prevented from doing so by the Communist regime. He authored a major two-volume history of Russian church singing as well as nearly one hundred articles and monographs, in which he sought to continue, through historical investigation and scholarly argument, the movement initiated at the Moscow Synodal School of Church Singing—the return of Russian liturgical music to its traditional Orthodox roots from which it had strayed in the 18th and 19th centuries under Western European influence. Although Gardner's contribution to this process as a composer is lesser-known, he wrote over 100 sacred liturgical choral works, almost all of them based on authentic Znamenny, Demestvenny, Kievan and other chants. As this CD reveals, Gardner was in every respect a follower of the best traditions of the “new Russian choral school”—Kastalsky, Gretchaninoff, Chesnokov, Rachmaninoff—using the full coloristic resources of the mixed choir in a rich palette of “choral orchestration.” Like the many of the works of the “Moscow School,” Gardner's works for the most part lay outside the capabilities of Russian émigré choirs, and thus remained unsung... until now. Twenty-three of them are given a competent initial reading on this disc by the Choir of the Synodal Library—a newcomer to the Musica Russica catalog. Every track contains sonorous combinations that surprise and delight the ear, while remaining within the bounds of the ecclesiastical style: firmly grounded in traditional, text-bearing chant melodies and clothed in beautiful, consonant harmonies, intended to transport the hearer to a heavenly reality. This disc reveals Gardner to be an important composer whose works merit being extensively explored and incorporated into the corpus of the Russian choral repertoire. This limited-edition CD is a must for every lover of Russian sacred choral music.—*V. M.*

#### A133



★★★★

**Dmitry Bortniansky: I Cried Out to the Lord, Hymns and Choral Concertos / Ensemble Cherubim / Marika Kuzma, cond. / 2013 / 63:04 / Naxos 8.573109** **Price: \$ 9.98**

This CD is the singular achievement of Dr. Marika Kuzma, director of choirs at UC Berkeley in California. Not only is she the organizer and conductor of the choir featured on this CD, but she has also researched, documented, and produced the newly edited scores of Bortniansky's concertos that serve as the basis of the performances. As editor and scholar, Kuzma has shown that in Bortniansky's time, a particular, Ukrainianized form of Church Slavonic pronunciation was used at the Russian Imperial Chapel in St. Petersburg; she has also restored in the scores a number of vocal ornaments and soli-tutti divisions, written by Bortniansky but removed or selectively altered by subsequent editors of his works (chief among them—Peter Tchaikovsky). Consequently, on this CD one hears a number of Bortniansky's most famous concertos in “old,” period-authentic renditions that will be “new” and eye-opening to listeners in the 21st century. Perhaps the one detail in which these performances differ from those of Bortniansky's day is that the Imperial Kappella of boys' and men's voices would likely have had a clearer, more transparent sound than this modern-day choir of men's and women's voices. The booklet includes notes about the music in English and texts in Cyrillic and English translation.—*V. M.*

**Boris Feoktistov: Parastas: The Great Funeral Service [Velikaya Panikhida] / Combined Moscow Choirs / Boris Feoktistov, cond. / Rec. 1993 / 58:00** **Price: 18.98**

I first encountered the works of Moscow composer Boris Feoktistov in 1979, at a time when this talented composer was struggling to get his sacred compositions and arrangements sung by Moscow church choirs: at that time, choirmasters had to submit the list of works to be sung for approval by the church rector, and only “famous and recognized” names were allowed. The composer, who was writing in the style of Kastalsky and Gretchaninoff, would present his works unsigned, but with the notation “s. p.” (standing for “svetloi pamiati”—to the blessed memory of) followed by some famous composer's name, and thus would get his works performed. The present recording shows that his works absolutely deserve to stand on their own merit. The choral writing is rich, colorful, sonorous and expressive, reminiscent of Gretchaninoff and Rachmaninoff, very much keeping with the aesthetic of the worship service, but also extending beyond strictly workaday service music. Occasionally, recognizable pre-existing chant melodies make their appearance in unexpected new harmonic attire; other times, the melodies are skilfully-crafted “chant counterfeits,” in all cases, quite beautiful. This CD is an important document of Russian Orthodox church musical creativity in the late 20th century, demonstrating a living link with the first two decades of the 20th century, prior to the Communist catastrophe.—*V. M.*

#### A134



★★★★

## NEW LISTINGS

### B. LITURGICAL CYCLES and SERVICES

**Akathist to St. John of Shanghai and San Francisco** / Choir of the Church of St. Antipas, Moscow / Alexei Pokrovsky, cond. / Russky Pastyr / 60:00 **Price: \$10.00**

The honor accorded to St. John of Shanghai and San Francisco, the Wonderworker, outside of Russia is now also spreading throughout the Russian Orthodox Church in Russia itself. This CD is evidence of this fact. The singing is resonant and tuneful, reflecting the common Moscow practices for singing Akathists. The CD comes in simple packaging, as perhaps befits the great saint: a simple slip-cover with no booklet, text, or liner notes. (Those who wish to follow an English translation can find one online here: <http://www.atlantaorthodoxchurches.org/stjohn/akathist.htm>). This is a CD that will be enjoyed particularly by those who understand Church Slavonic—the diction comes across very clearly—and who would like to experience often the devotional service to this beloved saint.

**B136**



★★★★

**B139**



★★★★

**A Prayer Service to Christ for Any Petition, according to the Old Rite** / Sergei Pichugin, chanter / Svetloyar, Riga **Price: \$18.98**

The singing of Russian Old Believers or Old Ritualists represents a fascinating window into the chant traditions of the Russian Orthodox Church prior to the schism that occurred in the 1660s. Highly conservative by their very nature, Old Ritualists have preserved and handed down the melodies, their staffless neume (znamenny) notation and their manner of performance to this very day without the numerous stylistic changes that have permeated the singing of the official "State" Russian Church—harmony, polyphony, expressive affects, and the like. Particularly conservative among the Old Ritualists are the members of the "priestless" Old Ritualist Community, some 7,000 strong, located in Riga, Latvia. Over the past decade, their publishing house, Svetloyar, has released close to two dozen discs of chant melodies, recorded by chanter Sergei Pichugin. The present disc will be of interest to those who would like to learn more about the ancient chant traditions of the Russian Church, made possible by the fact that Old Ritualists have embraced modern recording technology.

### C. SACRED CHORAL ANTHOLOGIES FOR MIXED CHOIR

**C122**



★★★★★

**The Sacred Spirit of Russia** / Conspirare / Craig Hella Johnson, cond. / Harmonia Mundi HMU807526 / 77:50 / Super Audio **Price: \$19.98**

As a prelude to this review a disclosure needs to be made: my company, Musica Russica, and I were intimately involved in every detail of this production, from selecting the repertoire, to consulting with Conspirare's Music Director, Craig Hella Johnson, to on-site coaching of the choir, to sitting in the recording booth listening for minute details of diction, to writing the program notes.

None of this, however, changes the fact that this is an outstanding recording of fine repertoire by an extraordinary choral group. The artistic conception was to present "The Sacred Spirit of Russia" through the medium of a festive, Russian cathedral-style Divine Liturgy, assembling musical settings by a variety of composers, in much the same way this is done in most Russian Orthodox churches on a given Sunday or feast day. For this recording, some of the changeable propers were selected for the feast of the Nativity of Christ, although the feast-day rubrics weren't followed in every detail. While much of the program was selected from well-known settings by Chesnokov, Ippolitov-Ivanov, Gretchaninoff, and Rachmaninoff, also featured were

lesser-known works by Kastalsky, Sviridov, Martynov, and Ilyashenko; several pieces were world-premiere recordings, even though they were written a century or more ago. The overall results manifest the richness, color, and subtlety of nuance and musical gesture that have given Russian sacred choral repertoire its well-deserved reputation as one of the most sublime forms of human vocal expression ever developed in history. The high professional artistry of Conspirare fully measures up to the task of interpreting and bringing to life the sacred words and their musical embodiment. The lavish packaging presentation by harmonia mundi offers a booklet with introductory notes and translations in English, French, and German, in addition to the original Church Slavonic text in Cyrillic. No collection of great choral music in general or Russian Orthodox sacred music in particular will be complete without this CD.—V. M.

## NEW LISTINGS

### C. SACRED CHORAL ANTHOLOGIES FOR MIXED CHOIR (cont'd)

#### C123



★★★1/2

**Sing Praises to Our God, Sing Praises [Poyte Bogu nashemu, poyte] / Choir of the Dormition Cathedral, Odessa / Archpriest Gregory Kayun, cond. / Rec. 1987 / 2007 / 78:00 Price: \$17.98**

This CD, recorded in 1987, but released only in 2007, represents an interesting sound document of Russian Orthodox church singing in the late-Soviet period, prior to the collapse of Communism and the re-birth of the Church that coincided with the celebration of the Millennium of the Baptism of Rus' in 1988. The choir is an above-average cathedral choir, with a wide-ranging repertoire, and a rich, colorful sound, reminiscent of some emigre Russian choirs of the mid-20th century. They sing some well-known but rarely-recorded works such as Goncharov's "Krestu Tvoyemu" (Before Thy Cross) and the 75-fold "Ghospodi, pomiluy" for the Elevation of the Cross, and "Angel vopiyashe" (The Angel Cried Out), attributed in some manuscripts to Modest Mussorgsky, but more than likely by another, lesser-known composer by the name of Uvarov. For many listeners, listening to this CD will be a very "familiar" and comfortable experience.

**Behold Now, Bless the Lord [Se nīne blagoslovite Ghospoda] / Choir of St. Alexander Nevsky Church, Baranovich, Belarus / Tatyana Mikhalkovich, cond. / 48:57 Price: 16.98**

The singing on this CD exemplifies a newer, younger type of church choir in Russia and, in this case, near-lying Belarus': the group is not large, but sings in tight ensemble, with a clean and pure sound. The repertoire is a mix of 19th-century classics, and a number of 20th-century composers, both from the early decades of the century, and the post-Revolution period. Composed works are balanced by chant arrangements. This type of singing will prove to be enjoyable and inspirational particularly to church musicians as a model of what can be accomplished by a relatively small, well-rehearsed group of above-average but by no means extraordinary voices.

#### C124



★★★1/2

### D. CHORAL MUSIC FOR MALE CHORUS (Sacred & Secular)

#### D184



★★★★1/2

**Today All Nations Beheld Glorious Things [Preslavnaya Dnes']; Selected Hymns from Vigil, Liturgy, and Feasts / Choir of the Holy Trinity St Sergius Monastery Representation Church, Moscow / Vladimir Gorbik, cond. / 62:29 / PSTSL Price: \$18.98**

Vladimir Gorbik has, in recent years, emerged as one of the foremost interpreters of Russian sacred choral music, continuing the spiritual traditions of singing established at the Holy Trinity-St. Sergius Lavra by the acclaimed Archimandrite Matfey (Mormyl'), but further refining them and elevating them to a professional level. With the Male Choir of the Representation Church (Metochion) of the Trinity-St. Sergius Monastery, he has released nearly a dozen CDs that have become perennial best-sellers in our catalog. On this most recent CD, recorded live in concert, Vladimir Gorbik takes his fine choir into the most adventuresome territory, repertoire-wise, to date. Here we hear premiere recordings of several movements from Rachmaninoff's monumental *All-Night Vigil*, in a brand new arrangement for male chorus, as well as several compositions and arrangements by Gorbik himself. The choir negotiates these difficult and complex works with characteristic skill and finesse. For all our listeners already familiar with Vladimir Gorbik's choral mastery, this new disc is a must-have. For those who have not yet discovered him, this CD will be a revelation!—V. M.

*The latest release from Vladimir Gorbik's Men's Choir*

## NEW LISTINGS

### D. CHORAL MUSIC FOR MALE CHORUS (Sacred & Secular) (cont'd)

#### D185

Favorite Russian Songs / Sretensky Monastery Choir / Nikon Zhila, cond. / n.d. / 50:00 /  
Regular Price: \$20.00 Sale Price: \$10.00



★★★★

From the time of its founding in the 1990s, the Choir of the Sretensky Monastery—a choir of professional, not monastic singers—has cultivated not only the performance of sacred hymns but Russian folksongs as well, in recognition of the fact that folksongs constitute an important aspect of Russian national culture and serve as an important vehicle of the Orthodox Church's outreach to the Russian population. These same folksongs, whether performed by the Don Cossacks or the Red Army Chorus, have smitten non-Russian listeners as well for decades. As we have noted in previous reviews (e.g. cat. No. D158), the style of singing practiced by the Sretensky Choir is more appropriate for folk songs than liturgical hymns. We thus, highly recommend this CD, which contains a mix of very traditional and some fresh, new material, to all lovers of Russian folksongs and men's choral singing. The packaging of this rare gift edition, not available through regular retail outlets, is in English.—V.M.

## CLOSEOUT SALE on LAST REMAINING STOCK!

#### D186

The Don Cossack Choir 1921–2013 (3 CDs) / Serge Jaroff, Michael Minsky, Wanja Hlibka, conds. / Recordings from 1928–2013 / SLAVA! SL0400 / 2013 / 3 hrs 52 min. Price: \$ 26.98



★★★★

During their illustrious career, spanning six decades, from 1921 to 1981, the Don Cossack Choir made hundreds of recordings; after Serge Jaroff's retirement in 1981, the performance traditions of the Cossacks were continued by Michael Minsky (with Nicolai Gedda as soloist) and, more recently, by Wanja Hlibka. A representative selection of works from nine decades have been assembled on three CDs in this extraordinary collectors' set. Of particular interest are early recordings from the late 1920s and early 1930s, including a track featuring the basso Fyodor Chaliapine, and a rendition of Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture* with Constantin Shvedoff at the piano. Also, a rare recording of "The Star-Spangled Banner," a fragment of a rehearsal with Serge Jaroff, and seldom-heard tracks with Nicolai Gedda as soloist, recorded in the 1980s, all serve to make this collection a "must-have" for all Don Cossack aficionados and all those interested in the historical paths of Russian choral music in the turbulent 20th century. The booklet contains some rare archival photos of the Don Cossacks, along with a history of the choir in English and Russian; titles are also in English and Russian, but no text translations are given.—V.M.

## A 3-CD set of material never heard on CD before

#### D188

Blessed Is the Man Who Has Kept the Faith—for the 200th Anniversary of the Birth of St. Amvrosy of Optina [Blazhen, kto veru sokhranil] / Amvrosiy's Choir / Hieromonk Amvrosiy (Nosov), cond. / 53:03 / 2012 Price: \$18.98



★★★★

In honor of the 200th anniversary of the birth of Elder Amvrosy of Optina (1812–1891), the Men's Choir under Hieromonk Amvrosy (Nosov) has assembled a selection of hymns connected in various ways to this saintly man, who was recognized by his 19th-century Russian contemporaries as a great example of holiness and whose advice and wise counsel were sought by many.

At the time of printing, a full copy of the CD was not available for review. Please check our website regularly for an updated review.

## NEW LISTINGS

### D. CHORAL MUSIC FOR MALE CHORUS (Sacred & Secular) (cont'd)

**D189**



★★★★★

The Great Year, The Sacred Year (1812–2012) [God velikiy, god sviashchenniy] / Amvrosiy's Choir / Hieromonk Amvrosiy (Nosov), cond. / 2012

**Price: \$18.98**

In honor of the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812, in which Russia repelled the armies of Napoleon at the great price of burning the capital city of Moscow, the Men's Choir under Hieromonk Amvrosiy offers a number of historical and military songs, ranging from the time of Peter the Great up to the "Farewell to Slavanka," a marching song which, though written before World War I, was made famous by the Soviet Red Army Chorus. The first-rate choir of professional voices finds themselves equally at ease in the realm of secular music as they do sacred music. The voices are resonant, expressive, singing with tight ensemble and well-defined nuances. This CD will be enjoyed by all lovers of good Russian men's chorus music, and particularly by Russian history buffs.

*The best-loved Russian patriotic and marching songs.*

### E. CHORAL MUSIC FOR TREBLE CHOIR

Spiritual Hymns / Choir of the Convent of the Protection of the Theotokos, Bussy-en-Othe, France / 2012

**Price: \$18.98**

The Russian Orthodox Monastery in Bussy-en-Othe, France, has been in existence for over 60 years; it is perhaps best known in the Orthodox world as the home of Mother Mary, who was the collaborator of Metr. Kallistos (Ware) in compiling the English translations of the *Festal Menaion*, and the *Lenten Triodion*. From the resonant acoustics of the monastery church, the current community of nuns offers a selection of 14 hymns, sung mostly in Church Slavonic.

At the time of printing, a full copy of the CD was not available for review. Please check our website regularly for an updated review. A

**E031**



★★★1/2

*The tender sound of women's monastic singing.*

### H. MIXED CATEGORIES and COMPILATIONS

**H086**



★★★★★1/2

Church Polyphony in Russia of the 16th-18th Centuries / Children's Choir of the Bolshoi Theater; Sirin Ensemble; Drevnerussky Raspev Ensemble / A. Zaboronok; A. Kotov, A. Grindenko, cond. / 73:00

**Price: \$21.98**

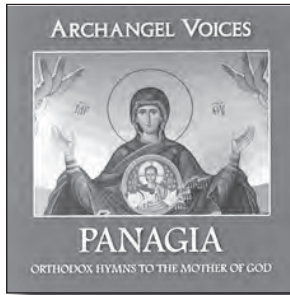
Three venerable choirs that pioneered the recording of early Russian polyphony, thus opening this heretofore unknown realm of sound to listeners throughout the world, are reunited on this rare CD, recorded in 2002 in the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatory. The transcriptions are the work of musicologist Anatoly Konotop, whose tireless research over a 50-year period has greatly expanded our understanding of early Russian church music, particularly in the polyphonic realm. The performances on this CD are first-rate, offering a variety of timbres, from the treble voices of the Children's Choir, to the mixed voices of the Sirin Ensemble, to the all-men's sound of Drevnerussky Raspev. The CDs by all three of these ensembles have been best-sellers in the past and are now out of print. Anyone with an interest in Russian church music history should not miss the opportunity to own this disc.—V. M.

*The Sirin Ensemble is back! Along with A. Grindenko.*

## NEW LISTINGS

### I. ORTHODOX MUSIC IN ENGLISH

**I-112**



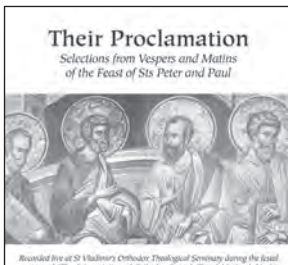
**Panagia; Orthodox Hymns to the Mother of God / Archangel Voices / Vladimir Morosan, cond. / 2013 / AV-107**  
**Price: \$18.98**

The repertoire on this CD reflects the “ever-presence” of the Most Holy Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary (Panagia) in Orthodox hymnography. Out of the vast range of possibilities, Archangel Voices has selected a mix between works that are familiar and traditional and those that reveal new vistas of the sacred repertoire. A number of works—by such Russian masters as Chesnokov, Kastalsky, Nikolsky, and Yaichkov—are appearing for the first time in English adaptations. Works by relatively unknown 20th-century composers such as Ilyashenko and Cecil A. Bailey are brought to light for the first time. Works by modern-day Orthodox composers, currently living and creating in North America—Archpriest Paul Harrilchak, Vladimir Morosan, Kurt Sander, Benedict Sheehan, Richard Toensing, and Nazo Zakkak—round out the program.

<http://audaud.com/2013/11/panagia-orthodox-hymns-to-the-mother-of-god-archangel-voices-vladimir-morosan-archangel-voices/>

## BRAND NEW from ARCHANGEL VOICES!

**I-113**



**Their Proclamation: Selections from Vespers and Matins of the Feast of Sts Peter and Paul / Master Class Chorus / Vladimir Gorbik, cond. / 55:00 / SVS Press**  
**Price: \$17.98**

June 2012 marked the first Master Class on the “Interpretation of Orthodox Sacred Choral Music” taught by Vladimir Gorbik of Moscow, who is arguably one of the finest current practitioners of the art of conducting Orthodox services in the world today. A select auditioned Master Class Chorus of 29 singers and 5 student conductors worked intensely for three-and-a-half days to prepare nearly 250 pages for the All-Night Vigil and Divine Liturgy for the feast of SS Peter and Paul. The present CD presents only a portion of the selections sung at the Vigil, chosen for technical quality of sound and absence of interference from the full congregation that was in attendance. The challenges presented by live recording during the actual services are offset by the manner in which the Master Class Chorus fulfills their role as a liturgical choir, remaining focused on the prayerful delivery of the sacred texts (for the most part in English, with a few selections in Slavonic). At the end of the services, those in attendance remarked that these may have well been the best-sung Orthodox choral services in recent history on the North American continent. This

CD thus not only represents an important historical sound document, but also offers a model listening experience, setting a new standard for Orthodox church choirs in America.—V. M.

*To learn more about Vladimir Gorbik’s activities in North America, visit **PATRAMINSTITUTE.ORG***

**Hymns of Holy Russia in the New World / St. Tikhon, St. Vladimir, & Holy Trinity Seminary Choirs / Vladimir Gorbik, cond. / 2013 / 43:24 / St. Tikhon’s Press**  
**Price: \$18.98**

In 2013, three esteemed theological seminaries in America—each of them in their turn an offspring of Russian Orthodoxy—celebrated major anniversaries: St. Tikhon’s Seminary and St. Vladimir’s Seminary together marked 75 years, and Holy Trinity Seminary its 65th. As a way of commemorating these joint anniversaries, the select student choirs of the three institutions came together to form a single ensemble for the first time in their respective histories. Gathering at St. Tikhon’s Seminary a few days prior to the Sunday of the Prodigal Son, the 25 young men who were invited to participate in the event rigorously prepared to sing Vigil and Divine Liturgy with His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon at St. Tikhon’s Monastery (America’s oldest Monastery, founded in 1905), and afterwards to perform a public concert. The present CD is a live recording of this concert, which took place on March 3, 2013, in the Episcopal Pro-Cathedral of St. Stephen, Wilkes-Barre Pennsylvania. Guiding the proceedings was the world-renowned Russian conductor Vladimir Gorbik, who was invited to prepare the choir for this historic event.

This CD will be enjoyed on many levels--by lovers of the Russian men’s chorus sound, so effectively evoked by Vladimir Gorbik from American seminarians; by lovers of serenely spiritual chants, which make up the greater portion of the repertoire; and by those interested in the growth and development of Orthodox liturgical singing in America, which enters a new stage of maturity and quality under Gorbik’s talented and inspired guidance.

**I-111**



*Vladimir Gorbik’s 2nd Master Class in the U.S.A.*

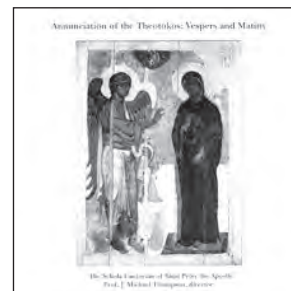
## NEW LISTINGS

### I. ORTHODOX MUSIC IN ENGLISH (cont'd)

**Annunciation of the Theotokos: Vespers and Matins** / Schola Cantorum of St. Peter the Apostle / J. Michael Thompson, cond. / 68:00 **Price: \$14.98**

A welcome addition to the recorded English repertoire is this CD of Vespers and Matins for the Annunciation of the Most Holy Theotokos. The program consists of the feast-day propers of the feast, using melodies from the Carpatho-Rusyn *prostopinie* (plainchant) tradition, set to English and harmonized by J. Michael Thompson. The repertoire is presented in all its melodic richness, using numerous "model melodies" (*podobny* or *prosomoia*). Likewise, the poetry of the hymnography, much of which focuses and expands upon the dialogue between the Archangel Gabriel and the Virgin Mary, is presented here in ample fulness. This CD will be enjoyed not only by lovers of the Carpatho-Rusyn musical tradition, but by all who wish to broaden their acquaintance with the hymnographic and musical richness of this important Christian feast.

**I-114**



**I-115**



**The Paraklesis** / Schola Cantorum of St. Peter the Apostle / J. Michael Thompson, cond. / 55:00 **Price: \$14.98**

The Paraklesis, a prayer service of supplication (in Slavic terminology—*Moleben*) most commonly addressed to the Mother of God (though it can also be addressed to other saints) is presented on this CD using the melodies and performance practices of the Carpatho-Rusyn Byzantine Catholic tradition, adapted into sensible, serviceable English. The singing of the Schola Cantorum is tuneful and with good ensemble, which results in a very pleasant listening experience. The text and music of this service, as well as the four-part arrangements sung on this disc, are available on the website of the Metropolitan Cantor Institute of the Archeparchy of Pittsburgh (<http://metropolitancantorinstitute.org/sheetmusic/general/Paraklesis.pdf>). This CD will be enjoyed not only by lovers of the Carpatho-Rusyn *prostopinie* (plainchant), as well as by those who wish to become acquainted with this important and beautiful chant tradition.

### K. CHURCH MUSIC OF VARIOUS NATIONALITIES (GREEK)

**K085**



**Tikey Zes: The Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom** / Cappella Romana / Alexander Lingas, cond. / Cappella Romana CR410 **Price: \$16.98**

Cappella Romana continues its outstanding path of presenting first recordings of seminal Orthodox sacred works. The Divine Liturgy of Tikey Zes (b. 1927), composed in 1991, in some respects epitomizes Orthodox choral music in Greek-American churches in the latter half of the 20th century—it is cyclic and thematically related from hymn to hymn, and it uses organ in some sections. On the other hand, the musical content is highly original in that it uses neither pre-existing Byzantine chant melodies, nor their reworked forms as popularized earlier in the 20th century by John Sakellarides. Tikey Zes's melodies and textures display the spirit of late-Medieval or early-Renaissance polyphony, possessing an inspired stylized archaic quality that is reminiscent of Sergei Rachmaninoff's "conscious counterfeits" of Russian chants in his *All-Night Vigil*. As customary, Cappella Romana's musical presentation is excellent: the accompanying booklet has informative notes by Alexander Lingas and the full text of the Liturgy in Greek and English translation. Complementing the choral singing

of Cappella Romana is the fine ekphonic chanting of the priest's and deacon's parts by Frs. John Bakas and John Kariotakis. This recording presents an important chapter in the ongoing development of Orthodox liturgical singing in North America, and will be enjoyed by all lovers of beautiful choral music as well as those who wish to broaden their acquaintance with the many facets of the Orthodox musical art.—V. M.

## BACK IN THE CATALOG

**B134**

**The Inextinguishable Star: All-Night Vigil for Grand Duchess Elizabeth** / Moscow Synodal Choir / Alexei Puzakov, cond. / 2012 / 73:55 / Russkii Mir; Konotop AK-17 **Price: \$21.98**

An ethereal "soundscape" assembled by chant scholar Anatoly Konotop, features chants from the 16th-century Suprasl' Heirmologion re-texted for Holy Martyr Grand Duchess Elizabeth. The chants are performed by various groups (men's and women's) of the Moscow Synodal Choir (formerly the Choir of the Church of St. Nicholas at Tolmachii), accompanied by shifting drones (*ison*), which scholar Konotop proposes were used to accompany the unison Znamenny chants, even though the notation does not indicate it clearly. The singing, pure in tone and deliberately restrained and "dispassionate," sounds almost "disembodied," as do the liturgical texts, which never seem quite to "reach" the listener. To its credit, the beautiful, understated booklet contains the complete text in Russian, along with translations in English, French, and German. The introductory article is in Russian only.—V. M.



★★★★

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—Vladimir Morosan, editor

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