



THE MOSCOW BOYS CHOIR® 2012 Christmas Around the World Tour
Mrs. Victoria Smirnova, Choir Mistress and Conductor
Mr. Leonid Golubev, Accompanist
Short Performance Program

GOD IS WITH US	(Soloist: Mr. V. Ovsyannikov)	F. Stepanov
HEAVEN AND EARTH	(Arranged by M. Kulikov-Scheglov)	Traditional Russian Christmas Carol
AVE MARIA		J.S. Bach/C. Gounod
PIE JESU		A. Lloyd-Webber
WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS		J. Rutter
SILENT NIGHT	(Soloist: Mr. A. Senaya, Traditional German Carol)	J. Mohr/F. Gruber
JINGLE BELLS	(Arranged by A. De Vito)	J. Pierpont
FUM! FUM! FUM!	(Arranged by E. Lojevsky)	Traditional Spanish Carol
O! TANNENBAUM		Traditional German Christmas Carol
FELIZ NAVIDAD		J. Feliciano
THE TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS		Old English Christmas Carol
CLAP YOUR HANDS	(Arranged by V. Smirnova)	G. & I. Gershwin
AMERICA, THE BEAUTIFUL	(in American Performances Only)	S. Ward
O! CANADA	(in Canadian Performances Only)	C. Lavallee/R. S. Weir
KALINKA		Traditional Russian Folk Song
(Arr. by Mr. Leonid Baklushin, Conductor and Choir Master for The Moscow Boys Choir, 1991 – 2011.)		

The Management reserves the right to alter this program and/or change soloists without notice due to performer illness or any cause whatsoever.

(Program Credits on Next Page...)



THE MOSCOW BOYS CHOIR®
2012 Christmas Around the World Tour
is produced by



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Updated September 2012.



THE MOSCOW BOYS CHOIR® 2012 Christmas Around the World Tour PROGRAM NOTES

Founded in 1957, this Choir is Russia's most prestigious all-boy choirs. In Moscow, members of the Choir attend a special school, The Moscow Boys Capella, that is much like the "magnet" performing arts schools in the West that provides both general education and musical training. Being selected as a member of the touring company of THE MOSCOW BOYS CHOIR is no easy feat. Handpicked from over 400 students, these highly talented youngsters have the voices of angels. However, they must also have the discipline to match their talents. There is a level of honor for these boys to be members of the choir, but there are no lifestyle advantages. They must work and study like everyone else. The boys traditionally begin their life in music as early as age 5, but are not allowed to perform for audiences until age 9.

Produced by IAI Presentations, Inc. since their highly acclaimed US debut in 1993, THE MOSCOW BOYS CHOIR has toured Belgium, Germany, Italy, France, Holland, Scandinavia, South Korea, and Japan. They have played such prestigious venues as the Bolshoi Theatre, the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatory, the Tchaikovsky Concert Hall, and the Kremlin - where they were honored to perform with the Presidential Orchestra on several occasions. They have appeared in a Command Performance at The Royal Albert Hall in London for members of the British Royal Family. During their 1996 US Tour, in addition to their highly successful and critically acclaimed return, they were invited to perform at the Crystal Cathedral in Southern California for Rev. Robert Schuller's Hour of Power. Their performance was broadcast both nationally and internationally and was seen by a worldwide television audience. They were also featured in a CBS-TV Christmas Eve Special, which aired across the US. Their angelic voices have carried them all the way to the White House where they were invited to perform at a private Holiday Gala for President Clinton, the First Family, and their guests. In 2004, THE MOSCOW BOYS CHOIR recorded a special performance on National Public Radio for airing on that network's program, "Performance Today." In 2005, they were invited by the City of Moscow to participate in a grand concert at Red Square for International Children's Day where they performed their renditions of "Ave Maria" and "Evening Bells" with the famous tenor Andrea Bocelli. They also perform frequently in operatic productions and musical festivals for which they have won numerous awards. THE MOSCOW BOYS CHOIR have even organized a Choral Festival all their own, called the All-Russian Children's Choral Festival. THE MOSCOW BOYS CHOIR have toured extensively across Europe, including such countries as Germany, Italy, and Holland. In February of 2003, they made their debut in South Korea, where they played to enthusiastic standing ovations. They performed as featured Guest Artists at the Festival of Russian Culture in Japan in November 2011. 2012 marks their twelfth North American Tour and the Choir will visit over eleven states in the United States and perform their very first concerts in New Brunswick, Canada on this tour.

While at home in Russia, the Choir has performed in ceremonies for Russia's prestigious National Cinema Awards - only the most popular performers in Russia are invited to participate in this highly publicized event. They also performed in the Moscow Festival of Choirs, dedicated to the 850th anniversary of the founding of Moscow plus many performances at the Olympic Hall in Moscow and at the Moscow Conservatory with the Moscow Symphony Orchestra. The Choir has performed many concerts at the Kremlin's Palace of Congresses. In some of these concerts, they performed their beautiful rendition of *Ave Maria* with the Presidential Orchestra and acclaimed Bolshoi Opera soloist, Nikolai Baskov. The Choir has also given recitals at the Central House of Literature Workers, where Russia's cultural elite discuss politics and share ideas. The Choir has performed at the Moscow House of Music, which is a beautiful and modern facility that has hosted such stars as Placido Domingo and Jose Carreras. In 2004, THE MOSCOW BOYS CHOIR performed in the Jubilee concerts at the Grand Hall of the Moscow Conservatory dedicated to Alfred Schnittke. In 2005, they sang at the annual Gala at the House of Teachers in a performance dedicated to the memory of Ninel Kambourg, their Choir's founder. They also performed in Yuri Grigorovich's ballet *Spartacus* at the Kremlin's Palace of Congresses, and made recording of Alexander Grechaninov's *Sister Beatrix* as well as Dmitri Shostakovich's *Songs About Forests* which The Choir first performed on Russia's "Culture TV," dedicated to the memory of that famous composer.

(Program Notes Continued on Next Page...)



The year 2007 marked the 50th Anniversary of the Moscow Boys Capella, the school at which the boys study their craft, and there were many concerts and celebrations surrounding this momentous event. Some of these included performances in the city of Volgograd, a Gala concert dedicated to the composer Aleksandr Klevitsy at the Tchaikovsky Concert Hall in Moscow, and a concert at the Slobodkin Concert Center located on the famed Arbat Square in Moscow. They performed a gala performance at the beautiful Roman Catholic Cathedral in Moscow as well as at the Gnesin Russian Academy of Music in honor of their 50th Anniversary. All of these events, along with many other special events, hailed a half-century of artistic excellence, awards, accomplishments, and touring for **THE MOSCOW BOYS CHOIR**.

Tragically, in December of 2011, the Choir's guiding light from 1991 through 2011 Mr. Leonid Baklushin, passed away at a very young age, leaving behind a legacy of musical accomplishment that the Choir carries on in his memory at every performance. Mr. Baklushin actively carried the torch for **THE MOSCOW BOYS CHOIR** for 10 years after the passing of the Choir's founder, Mrs. Ninel Kambourg, in August of 2002. In memory of these two musical giants, the Choir continues to carry on the tradition of excellence began by Mrs. Kambourg and Mr. Baklushin. Music is a timeless art form and speaks to souls of people the world over, and sharing their beautiful and transcendent music with the world has been the hallmark of the Choir's success. We hope you enjoy being transported to another realm as **THE MOSCOW BOYS CHOIR** performs especially for you at this very special concert!

VICTORIA SMIRNOVA ~ *Soprano, Conductor, and Choir Mistress for **THE MOSCOW BOYS CHOIR***[®]. Born in 1980 in Minsk, Belarus, Victoria Smirnova began her life in art at the tender age of eight. She excelled in her studies at the National Opera Theatre in Minsk, and her beautiful soprano voice opened many doors for her early on in her musical career. Her vocal talents took her all the way to Moscow, where, from 1999, Mrs. Smirnova began working at New Opera Theatre there. While there, Mrs. Smirnova performed as leading lady in many operas including *Lucia di Lammermoor* by Donizetti, *The Tzar's Bride* by Rimsky-Korsakov, and *Iolanta* by Tchaikovsky to name only a few. Mrs. Smirnova is the recipient of many awards for her singing and opera performances. She feels strongly that her opera background and stage performances prepared her immeasurably for her work with the singers in **THE MOSCOW BOYS CHOIR**. In 2000, Mrs. Smirnova married Leonid Baklushin, then conductor of **THE MOSCOW BOYS CHOIR**. During their 11 years of marriage, Mrs. Smirnova bore four children, while continuing her work in music and the arts. From 2003 to 2007, Mrs. Smirnova attended the Moscow State Institute of Music and earned a degree in Choral Conducting. Since 2007, Mrs. Smirnova has focused on training the soloists in **THE MOSCOW BOYS CHOIR**. In her capacity as *capel* mistress for the Choir, she has participated in many concerts and Russian recordings by the Choir including *Ode to Joy* by Beethoven, *Requiem Mass in D Minor* by Mozart and *Stabat Mater* by Pergolesi. With her youthful exuberance and elegant conducting style, Mrs. Smirnova is guiding **THE MOSCOW BOYS CHOIR** to new heights in the musical world and into the future!

LEONID GOLUBEV ~ *Accompanist for **THE MOSCOW BOYS CHOIR***[®] - Mr. Golubev is an accomplished pianist with a long background in music. Mr. Golubev was born in 1968 in Sukhumi, Abkhazia, currently part of the Republic of Georgia. Mr. Golubev's affinity for music became apparent very early in his life, and he attended the Sveshnikov Choral School in Moscow, Russia as a young student. Mr. Golubev completed his post-secondary studies at the Moscow State Conservatory, and has performed as an accompanist and soloist with many ensembles throughout Europe. He is also a graduate of the University of Karlsruhe in Germany, and has performed in France, Poland, the Czech Republic, and Germany. Mr. Golubev has recorded three professional CD's over the course of his career. He also teaches piano and his work sharing the joy of music with young people is among his most prized achievements. In addition to his work as a musician, Mr. Golubev is also an accomplished singer and conductor. He has performed as a singer with the Bach Academy in Stuttgart, Germany and with the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra in Bamberg, Germany. While he has traveled to the US before, this is Mr. Golubev's very first North American Tour as accompanist with **THE MOSCOW BOYS CHOIR**, and he is very honored to be participating in these very special performances!

(Holiday Traditions from Around the World on Next Page...)



THE MOSCOW BOYS CHOIR® ~ 2012 Christmas Around the World Tour Holiday Traditions from Around the World

Russia ~ Due to the “dual calendars” honored in Russia (that of the Gregorian Calendar and the Julian Calendar), Russians celebrate Christmas on January 6, which is called Kolyada, and the New Year’s Eve holiday, or Epiphany Eve, is celebrated twice - on December 31 and also around January 14. At Kolyada, Father Christmas brings gifts to the children and people go caroling house-to-house singing songs, called kolyadki in the North and schedricks in the South. The Russian Orthodox Hymn, “All the Angels in the Sky Rejoiceth” by Nikolay Sokolov and the traditional Russian Christmas Song “Heaven and Earth,” typifies the deep spiritual significance the Christmas season holds for the Russian people.

Germany ~ In Germany, Christmas technically begins December 6 and is celebrated throughout the entire month. The center of a traditional German Christmas is, of course, the Christmas Tree. It is said that the idea of raising and decorating a tree for Christmas comes out of Germany and decorations were originally homemade trinkets or even fruit and cookies. The Choir sings “O! Tannenbaum” in a nod to these German Christmas Traditions. The Choir also performs the perennial favorite “Silent Night” which, ironically, was written hastily by Father Josef Mohr and his organist, Franz Gruber, to save Christmas Eve 1818 from being without music as the church organ had rusted. Instead, “Silent Night” was first performed by a Choir to the accompaniment of a guitar. It is interesting to note that such an enduring Christmas Classic had such humble beginnings!

England ~ England enjoys many rich traditions at Christmas, typified by the presence of delicious roast beef (dubbed “Sir Loin of Beef” during the Middle Ages) and the “kissing bough,” a combination of greenery and mistletoe still popular today. During Medieval times, there was the tradition of the Lord of Misrule, who “reigned” over the numerous masques and great feasting during “The Twelve Days of Christmas.” Oddly, this carol, performed by the Choir, is entirely about getting gifts and it is thought that its origins go back to “counting songs” that taught children to count. Another strong English Christmas tradition is Boxing Day, December 26th, where the church alms boxes are opened to the poor to ensure they, too, enjoy a Merry Christmas. Boxing Day is still celebrated in modern England and is a legal holiday. In the days of Olde England, groups of traveling singers would entertain for food or pay. These groups were called “waits” and were extremely popular at Christmas time. “We Wish You a Merry Christmas” is one of these carols and the caroler’s tenacity in waiting for their treats is exemplified as the choristers sing about their figgy pudding, exclaiming “...and we won’t go until we get some!”

Spain ~ In Spain, Christmas actually begins on December 8 during the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. The manger scene or nacimiento is the center of much activity. Children dance around the nacimiento and play their tambourines. “Fum! Fum! Fum!” is an example of the songs they sing. After Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve, called Noche Buena, there is feasting, fireworks, and dancing in the streets. On the afternoon of Christmas Day, 17th century costumes are donned and a special dance called the Seixesare are performed before the church altar. In the Spanish tradition, the Wise Men are the bearer of gifts to the children.

(Holiday Traditions from Around the World, Continued on Next Page...)



Mexico ~ Traditional Christmas celebrations in Mexico begin December 16th with Las Posadas, where a costumed Mary and Joseph search from house to house each night to find la posada – the Inn where they are finally invited to rest. Then, the children sing songs and bring out la piñata, originally a decorated clay jar, but today made from papier-mâché in the shape of stars or animals. The children take turns trying to break the piñata that is filled with candy, fruits, sweets, and toys. Gifts are given on January 6th, when the children leave their shoes out on the patios for the Wise Men to fill. To represent Mexico, the Choir has selected the ever-popular “Feliz Navidad” which reflects the fun and warmth of the Christmas celebrations held there.

United States ~ Christmas in America embraces almost all customs of the world. Every ethnic group has brought their own traditions and a great diversity of climate makes a difference to how Christmas is celebrated regionally. For most people, though, Turkey is the feast of choice and the presents are placed beneath a Christmas Tree, brought for children young and old by Santa Claus. The selection the Choir performs points out that harmonized diversity. The perennial favorite “Jingle Bells” captures the joys of wintertime as shared by friends and family during the holiday season. This song’s images are truly a part of the American Christmas tradition and the fun of the Holidays!

SOURCES FOR THIS PROGRAM

The program notes are intended to enhance the audience’s enjoyment of this performance. Information sources are listed below, but there is so much more to know about the Classical Composers in our program and the fascinating Holiday traditions that exist worldwide. Find out more! For further reading, pay a visit your local public library or explore some of these resources on-line.

“Celebrating Christmas Around the World” ed. By Herbert H. Wernecke
The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, PA 1962

“The Christmas Almanac” by Gerard and Patricia Del Re
Doubleday & Co. Inc., Garden City, NY 1979

“Christmas Around the World” ed. by Elizabeth Gutierrez
FJH Music Co., Inc., Miami, FL 1995

“Naxos Classical Music Reference” ed. by © Naxos Digital Services Ltd., 2004

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“The Grove Concise Dictionary of Music” ed. by Stanley Sadie © Macmillan Press Ltd., London, 1996

Wikipedia Foundation, Inc., St. Petersburg, Florida (2001-2009) www.wikipedia.org

Answers Corporation, New York, NY (2005) www.answers.com

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