

Russian newspaper reviews: Two

Review of the CD Mi Shebeerach by Mikhail Fikhtengold

This CD is the “firstborn” of the Russian branch of Universal Music. It’s an unusual start, but a thrilling one...especially when you hear the voice of the “Jewish Pavarotti” – New York cantor Joseph Malovany, soaring above the rich voices of the Hasidic Cappella. Malovany’s concert with the Hasidic Cappella choir and the Young Russia Orchestra was greeted ecstatically by both Jewish and non-Jewish music lovers in Moscow.

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From “CD Commentator” October 27, 2000

The Polish branch of Universal has just put out a CD of the Moscow Male Jewish Choir Hasidic Cappella (artistic director: Alexander Tsaliuk)

The CD Mi Shebeyrach is one of the most successful discs produced by the Russian branch of Universal in the last season. The great cantors Joseph Malovany and Borukh Finkelshtein both sing in the recording. The CD was officially launched on June 30, 1999 in the Russian Cultural Foundation, and on February 7 and 10, 2000 Joseph Malovany came to Russia to perform with the Hasidic Cappella in Moscow and St. Petersburg. Video and audio cassettes were also produced.

In the spring of this year the Hasidic Cappella and Joseph Malovany took part in the Tenth “Gaude Mater” International Festival of Sacred Music held in Chencstochowa, (Poland) and took the bronze medal. They were invited by the Polish President to give a concert on September 12, dedicated to Memorial Day for those who perished in Auschwitz. After the concert, the Polish branch of Universal decided to produce a disc of the Hasidic Cappella [for distribution in Poland].

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From “Universal News” # 6 (1/2000)

Mi Shebeyrach: The Year’s Bestseller

One of the most important projects of the Russian branch of Universal Music is a CD of Jewish liturgical music. ... On February 7 in the Grand Hall of the Moscow Conservatory will be a concert of the cantor Joseph Malovany and the Moscow Male Jewish Choir Hasidic Cappella, headed by Alexander Tsaliuk.

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The Triumphant Cantors

On February 10 a concert by the renowned cantor Joseph Malovany (USA) was held in the St. Petersburg State Glinka Hall

... The concerts of Joseph Malovany [in Russia] were also a presentation of the album (CD, audio and video cassettes) *Mi Shebeyrach*, produced by Universal Music Russia in May 1999. The success of the album was as momentous as the concerts themselves.

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“From Walzes to Laments” by Ekaterina Kretova

A unique concert was held in the Grand Hall of the Moscow Conservatory: Joseph Malovany, cantor of the 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Synagogue in New York, gave a varied and impressive concert: Jewish folk music, opera classics, Jewish liturgical music and a thrilling Georgian *Lezginka*. The concert was attended by a huge number of people, many of whom were in yarmulkes. The hall gave an ecstatic welcome to the cantor, as well as the Russian musicians performing with him: the Hasidic Cappella (artistic director: Alexander Tsaliuk) and the symphony orchestra Young Russia (artistic director: Mark Gorenshtein).

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“An Unforgettable Purim”

At Purim we give our friends gifts. But there is one gift we can't give even our closest friends. For the first time in many decades, not one cantor, but an entire choir of cantors came to our city of Kostroma, still covered in spring snow. For Purim the Hasidic Cappella brought the light and warmth of Jewish melodies, joy and inspiration. When our Rabbi heard that the Hasidic Cappella was coming to our city, he was speechless with delight – and then started to figure out how we could be sure that the city's Jewish community would be able to attend the concert.... The appearance of the choir on the stage, dressed in austere dark suits and black yarmulkes, thrilled and silenced the audience. When Leonid Bomshtein sang, the audience felt the grandeur of the cantor's art, the deep significance of the prayers, whether they knew Hebrew or not. Indeed, the profound meaning of Judaism becomes clear through music, especially liturgical music. How often we think of Jewish music as popular music, as if we didn't believe that Jewish themes could be lofty. This choir gave the music special richness. And one is mesmerized by the artistry of Alexander Tsaliuk. All the singers fixed their gaze on him, as if he held in his hand the invisible strings of a lyre. And when they sang the final blessing, we in the audience found ourselves responding “Amen.”