

Russian newspaper reviews: Three

“Hasidic Cappella on Tour”

The Moscow Male Jewish choir “Hasidic Cappella” returned to Russia from the Polish city of Chenstochowa, the venue of the Tenth “Gaude Mater” International Festival of Sacred Music, with yet another trophy – the bronze award.

In the Philharmonic Hall in Chenstochowa the Hasidic Cappella performed with the cantor Joseph Malovany in a three-hour concert, which included six premieres of the extended versions of Jewish liturgical music... The new concert repertory was performed with top professionalism. Polish TV and radio broadcast the music live and recorded it. President Kwasniewski had the highest praise for the choir, with its rich and harmonious singing, and for the unsurpassed artistry of the cantor....

The success of the choir in Poland was no surprise for the troupe. In the ten years since the choir was founded the troupe has made 20 concert tours of the country. On September 4-5 the choir will take part in a large international festival in Bratislava. Indeed, this is the peak of the touring season for the Hasidic Cappella. In the last six weeks the troupe has performed in Nizhniy Novgorod, Vyatka, Ivanovo, and Kostroma. Soon, with the support of the JOINT and the Moscow Jewish Cultural Center Marina Roshcha, the choir will begin a tour of weekly charity concerts in a number of Jewish religious organizations in Moscow and the Moscow oblast (province). In September the Hasidic Cappella will tour Germany and Switzerland with the cantor Joseph Malovany.

“We are once again opening the door to the rich world of Jewish religious music,” said Alexander Tsaliuk, artistic director and main conductor of the Hasidic Cappella.

“Joseph Malovany: Singing for Russians is a Joy”
by Georgi Milikiants

On February 7 in the Grand Hall of the Moscow Conservatory Joseph Malovany, professor and cantor of the 5th Avenue Synagogue in New York, will perform with the symphony orchestra Young Russia and the Hasidic Cappella male Jewish choir. Professor Malovany answered Izvestiya’s questions in a telephone conversation.

What were your feelings as you left for Russia this time? Why will there only be one concert in Moscow?

I know that Russians have big hearts and they are a great audience – warm, grateful and intelligent. It’s a joy to sing for them. This time I plan to give two public concerts, one in Moscow and one at the State Cappella in St. Petersburg. **The Hasidic Cappella, with whom I’m performing, is in my view the best professional Jewish musical troupe in the world.** We will also perform at the residence of the American Ambassador. I can only give one public concert in Moscow due to my tight schedule.

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Hasidic Cappella

It's hard to cite the exact number of concerts performed by the Hasidic Cappella in a season – certainly more than 100. The Hasidic Cappella performs regularly in the halls of the Moscow Conservatory, at concerts to celebrate holidays in the Jewish religious calendar, as well as at festivals, conferences, and workshops. Since the choir was founded ten years ago, it has gone on over 30 foreign concert tours, including to Germany, Scandinavia, Great Britain, Israel, Switzerland, and Poland. In the spring of 2000 the choir was awarded the bronze prize at the Tenth “Gaude Mater” International Festival of Sacred Music in Chęstochowa, Poland.

“Vivid Impressions”

The Hasidic Cappella, led by artistic director Alexander Tsaliuk, performed [at a concert on February 23]. The rich and powerful voices of the singers, who performed liturgical music and songs in Hebrew and Yiddish, astounded the audience. The audience was thrilled to hear familiar melodies and to feel closer to Jewish musical heritage.

“Pavarotti from a Synagogue” by Elena Cheremnykh in “Kommersant”

Joseph Malovany, the cantor of the 5th Avenue Synagogue in New York and Professor of Liturgical Music and Yeshiva University, performed in the Grand Hall of the Moscow Conservatory. The partners of this incredibly popular cantor (who has a non-traditional tenor repertory) were the members of the preeminent Moscow choir Hasidic Cappella (led by artistic director Alexander Tsaliuk) and the magnificent Symphony Orchestra (Mark Gorenshtein, artistic director).

I'm no stranger to prestigious concerts, but here this impression was compounded by the feeling of being at a real Jewish holiday. ... Joseph Malovany is omnivorous and artistic. When his partner, the Georgian Jew Gia Beshitailshvili (also a tenor) interrupted the audience's wild applause with a traditional *lezginka* (traditional, it would seem, among Jews as well as Georgians), Malovany might have been at a bit of a loss. But he resolved this potential interethnic conflict by conducting the overture to the Verdi opera *La forza del destino*...

“Pavarotti from a Synagogue” by Ekaterina Biriukova

The Main Cantor from the 5th Avenue Synagogue performed in the Grand Hall of the Moscow Conservatory

Either in jest or seriously, Joseph Malovany is called “Pavarotti from a Synagogue.”... Malovany was magnificent in the first half of the concert, accompanied by the Hasidic Cappella, which met every movement of his head and every lift of his arms with nearly synchronized enthusiasm. There was great style in how carefully, seriously and tenderly the singers performed the incredibly varied pieces, which represented the latest phase of Jewish musical tradition, at times unpretentious to the point of caricature. It is astonishing how much has been assimilated into this music, how easily it moves from joy to lament, how simply it combines entertaining melodies with religious texts, and

how unexpectedly the light village music is suddenly interrupted by the authentic and captivating spirit of the Eastern recitative. Here the ecstatic tenor Malovany was peerless.