

RUSSIAN FOLK SONGS

with the **Piatnitsky Chorus**

edited and with notes by Pete Seeger

song texts in English and Russian

Folkways Records FW 6820

SI-FP-FW87-D c --02185
Piatnitsky Chorus
Russian Folk Songs



Rosenhouse

RUSSIAN FOLK SONGS

Rolling Lion
Instrumental
Flowing Stream
Sinkiang Drum Dance

My beloved walked down the Road
Who knows
Oh, mists and dew
Farm Dance (instrumental)

Descriptive notes are inside pocket.

FOLKWAYS RECORDS Album # FW 6820
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121 W. 47th St. NYC USA

Russian Folk Songs



with the PIATNITSKY CHORUS

About The Chorus

In 1911 Mitrofan Piatnitsky, a young musician and folklorist who earned his living occupying a minor post in a Moscow hospital, spent his summer as usual collecting songs of the Byelorussian villages where he was born and raised, near the towns of Smolensk and Voronets. In addition he realized an old dream; he gathered together a group of talented singers, brought them to Moscow, rehearsed them, and in the fall put on a full scale concert. It won instant critical acclaim. The chorus was augmented by Moscow factory workers from the same region, and future concerts increased the popularity of the chorus. After the revolution of 1917 they became state supported, and with the addition of a folk dance ensemble, and a folk instrument orchestra, toured widely and started making phonograph records.

In 1927 the chorus was plunged into mourning by the death of Piatnitsky. His place was taken by his nephew, the folklorist V. Kazmin, soon after joined by the composer V. Zakharov; they have been co-directors ever since. At present the group numbers well over a hundred members, with a huge library of songs and recordings, and a systematic training and recruiting program for new members.

The chorus usually starts a program in peasant costume. Their songs may range from the ancient and austere ballads about peasant heroes, to love songs and dances. The second half of the program would be in modern dress, and here we might hear some of the new songs composed by Zakharov to words by the poet, Mikhail Isakovsky, which are today immensely popular throughout all the collective farms. In this album we have given a few samples of the many types of songs in their immense repertoire.

Songs and Dances of Central Russia

About The Songs

The songs in this album are based upon the centuries-old music traditions of Slavic peasants. Working long hours in the endlessly flat fields men and women would sing to each other. One voice usually started off; others joined in unison, or simple two or at most three-part harmony. They would be singing together on the weary walk home in the evening, and if there was a party that week one might hear some of the same songs sung in faster tempo, with accompaniment, and also spirited dances with rhythms very similar to American square dances.

But music tastes and traditions change when people's lives change. Further, folksongs tend to change drastically, and often for the worse, when they are transplanted from the fields and kitchens of their origins, to stages and microphones. One of the most remarkable achievements of the Piatnitsky Chorus has been its solution of how to maintain the artistic level of their music under changed performance conditions.

When city-educated performers take up folk music there is a tendency to "improve" a song with self-conscious cuteness and sophistication, which clashes with the song's basic integrity. When country folk musicians live long in the city they add elements which may or may not harmonize with their earlier idiom. We see this in American hillbilly music.

As if aware of both of these problems, the Piatnitsky Chorus stubbornly maintains three basic elements in their style of performing, which might be remembered by any American chorus singing American folk songs:

1) They keep the traditional vocal tone, without any attempt to prettify it. This country-style, "outdoors" voice is very similar, as a matter of fact, to many American folksinging groups, such as the Carter Family, well known to fans of "hillbilly" music.

2) The pianissimo, as it is taught in most music schools, seems unknown to them. True, they sing quiet songs as well as loud ones, but the self-conscious decrescendo or crescendo is abjured. Likewise the accelerando and the ritard.

3) Last, and perhaps most important, they end each song unpretentiously, just as would any unrehearsed group of amateur singers. It's the song that counts, not the flourishes. Perhaps this is one reason that their songs have been picked up everywhere throughout Russia, and amateurs may often be heard singing them, with harmony, almost as well as the Piatnitsky Chorus.

My beloved walked down a road,
A high road my beloved took.

A high road my beloved took,
And I, young maiden,
I ran after him.

I ran after him,
I ran and ran
And called out to him.

I called out to him,
He did not hear my voice,
I waved to him with my kerchief.

I waved to him with my kerchief.
Oh, my red flower of love
Why have you withered so early?

Why have you withered so early,
My dearest beloved,
Why have you stopped loving me?

ШЕЛ МИЛАЙ ДОРОЖКОЙ

1. Шел милый ох доро... дорожкой,
Дорожкой милый столбовой
2. Дорожкой милый столбовой
А я за... за ним де... девица
Следочком за ним бежала
3. Следочком за ним бежала
Следочком я бежа... бежала
Я голосом ему кричу

WHO KNOWS?

Every day at sunset
A young fellow walks by my house,
He gives me a wink, but says not a word.
What does he mean by that wink?
Who knows?

When I come to a party
He dances and sings gaily,
But when we part at my gate
He turns away with a sigh.
What does he mean by that sigh?
Who knows?

Shel milyi, okh dorozhko...dorozhkoi,
Dorozhkoi milyi stolbovoi

Dorozhkoi milyi stolbovoi
A ya za...za nim de...devitsa
Sledochkom za nim bezhala

Sledochkom za nim bezhala
Sledochkom ya bezha...bezhala
Ya golosom emu krichu

Ya golosom emu krichu
Golos moi on ne sly...ne slyshit
Platochkom ya emu mashu

Platochkom ya emu mashu
Alen'kii moi tsveto...tsvetochek
Zachem ty rano opal?

Zachem zhe ty rano opal,
Milen'kii moi druzho...druzhochek
Zachem zhe lyubit' perestal?

4. Я голосом ему кричу
Голос мой он не слы... не слышит
Платочком я ему машу
5. Платочком я ему машу
Аленький мой цвето... цветочек
Зачем ты рано опал?
6. Зачем же ты рано опал,
Миленький мой дружо... дружочек
Зачем же любить перестал?

I KTO EGO ZNAET?

Na zakate khodit paren'
Vozle doma moego
Pomorgaet mne glazami
I ne skazhet nichego
I kto ego znaet
Zachem on morgaet

Kak pridu ya na gulyan'e
On tantsuet i poet
A prostimsya u kalitki
Otvernetsya i vzdokhnet
I kto ego znaet
Chego on vzdykhaet

Once I asked him: "Why so unhappy?
Isn't life treating you well?"
And he replied: "I've lost my poor heart."
Why did he lose it?
Who knows?

Yesterday I received in the mail
Two mysterious letters from him.
Each line nothing but dots,
He wants me to guess what it means.
What is he hinting at?
Who knows?

I am not going to waste time guessing,
So don't wait and don't hope.
But why should my heart
Be melting so sweetly within me?
Why is it melting?
Who knows?

И КТО ЕГО ЗНАЕТ

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1. На закате ходит парень
Возле дома моего,
Поморгает мне глазами
И не скажет ничего
И кто его знает
Зачем он моргает.</p> | <p>3. Я спросила: «Что не весел?
Пль не радует житье?»
«Потерял я, — отвечает, —
Сердце бедное свое».
И кто его знает
Зачем он теряет.</p> |
| <p>2. Как приду я на гулянье
Он танцует и поет
А простимся у калитки
Отвернется и вздохнет
И кто его знает
Чего он вздыхает.</p> | <p>4. А вчера прислал по почте
Два загадочных письма.
В каждой строчке только точки
Догадайся мол сама
И кто его знает
На что намекает.</p> |

Ya sprosil: "Chto ne vesel?
Il' ne raduet zhit'e?"
"Poteryal ya, otvechaet.
Serditse bednoe svoe."
I kto ego znaet
zachem on teryaet

A vchera prislal po pochte
Dva zagadochnyykh pis'ma
V kazhdoi strochke tol'ko tochki
Dogadaiysya mol sama
I kto ego znaet
Na chto namekaet

Ya razgadyvat' ne stala
ne nadeisya i ne zhd
Tol'ko serdtse pochemu-to
Sladko tayalo v grudi
I kto ego znaet
Chego ono taet.

5. Я разгадывать не стала
Не надейся и не жди
Только сердце почему-то
Сладко таяло в груди
И кто его знает
Чего оно тает.

OH, MISTS! OH, FOGGY DEW!

Oh, mists! Oh, foggy dew!
Oh, my native forests and meadows

The partisans are starting on a march,
They are off to meet the foe.

At parting, our heroes said:
Expect good news from us.

On the old Smolensk road
They met the uninvited guests.

OI TUMANY RASTUMANY

Oi tumany moi, rastumany
Oi rodnye lesa i luga
Ukhodili v pokhod partizany
Ukhodili v pokhod na vraga

Na proshchan' e skazali geroi
Ozhidaite khoroshikh vestei
I po staroi Smolenskoj doroge
Povstrechali nezvannykh gostei

ОЙ, ТУМАНЫ, РАСТУМАНЫ

1. Ой, туманы мои растуманы
Ой, родные леса и луга
Уходили в поход партизаны
Уходили в поход на врага.
Уходили в поход партизаны
Уходили в поход на врага.

2. На прощанье сказали герои
Ожидайте хороших вестей
И по старой смоленской дороге
Повстречали незваных гостей.
И по старой смоленской дороге
Повстречали незваных гостей.

A STONE MOUNTAIN FEARS NO WIND

A stone mountain fears no winds,
No wind can move it.

We fear no foes,
We shall stand firm as a mountain before any foe.

We have designs against no one.
But no one should touch us

For if they do we shall repulse the blow.
We shall repulse the blow with greater force than before,
For now we are unconquerable.

We shall crush and destroy the enemy.

Our road is stormy and arduous.
But our land will flourish
And our peoples' hearts will be filled with joy.

NE BOITSYA VETROV GORA KAMENNA

Ne boitsya vetrov gora kamenna
Ot vetrov gora ne dvinetsya

Ne boimsya vraga suprotivnika
ot vraga kak gora my ne tronemysya

My ne tronem nikogo, da i nas ne tron'
Kak zatronesh nas, my dadim otpor

My dadim otpor krepche starogo
Teper' silushka u nas nebyvalaya

My s ognem sokrushim vraga protivnika
Tak velit nash put', burya groznaya

Chtob zemlya rastsvela s pribylitsiyu
Chtob narod nash vkusil sertse radosti

НЕ БОИТСЯ ВЕТРОВ
ГОРА КАМЕННА

1. Не боится ветров гора каменна
От ветров гора не двинется
Не боимся врага супротивника
От врага как гора мы не тронемся.
Не боимся врага супротивника
От врага как гора мы не тронемся.
2. Мы не тронем никого, да и нас не тронь
Как затронешь нас, мы дадим отпор
Мы дадим отпор крепче старого
Теперь ентушка у нас небывалая.
Мы дадим отпор крепче старого
Теперь ентушка у нас небывалая.
3. Мы с огнем сокрушим врага противника
Так велит наш путь, буря грозная
Чтоб земля расцвела с приближнцю
Чтоб народ наш вкусил сердце радости.
Чтоб земля расцвела с приближнцю
Чтоб народ наш вкусил сердце радости.

DUCKS IN FLIGHT

Ducks are in flight, ducks are flying,
and two geese.

Oh, the one I love, the one I love,
I wait in vain for him.

You are so far, oh so far!
Where are you, Oh where?

A message from you
Would be so welcome.

When my darling, Oh my darling
You resolve to forsake me

Do not tell me! Oh, do not tell me
Of your reasons.

LETYAT UTKI

Letyat utki, letyat utki
i dva gusya

Okh kogo lyublyu, kogo lyublyu
ne dozhdusya

Ty daleko, ty daleko
gde ty, gde ty?

Okh khoroshi, khoroshi
tvoi privety

Kogda milyi, kogda milyi
brosat' stanesh

Okh ne rasskazy...ne rasskazyvai
chto znaesh.

ЛЕТЯТ УТКИ

1. Летят утки летят утки
и два гуся
Ох кого люблю, кого люблю
не дождуся
Ох кого люблю, кого люблю
не дождуся

2. Ты далеко, ты далеко
Где ты, где ты?
Ох хороши, хороши
твои приветы
Ох хороши, хороши
твои приветы

3. Когда милый, когда милый
бросать станешь
Ох не рассказывай... не рассказывай
что знаешь.
Ох не рассказывай... не рассказывай
что знаешь.

BALALAIKA DITTIES

Balalaika strum but do not awaken my beloved,
I will not awaken him
I will just gaze at him. (Twice)

As I bade farewell to Vanya, I sat by the roadside
And stayed there a long time
Admiring his gait. (Twice)

Do not shake your leaves, my birch tree, I am hurrying off
Vanya, darling, do not be shy,
You are the only one I love. (Twice)

BALALAECHKA GUDIT

Balalaechka gudit, zhalko imilogo budit'
I budit' ne razbuzhu
Zato na nego poglyazhu

Ya Vanyushu provazhala, sela na dorozhechku
Dolgo, dolgo ya lyubovalas'
Na ego pokhodochku

Oi bereza ne kachaisya, ya v derevnye speshu
Vanya milyi ne stesyaisya
Odnogo tebya lyublyu.

БАЛАЛАЕЧКА ГУДИТ

Балалаечка гудит, жалко милого будить.
Я будить не разбужу.
Зато на него погляжу.
Я будить не разбужу.
Зато на него погляжу.

Я Ванюшу провожала, села на дорожечку
Долго, долго я любовалась
На его походочку.
Долго, долго я любовалась
На его походочку.

Ой береза не качайся, я в деревню спешу
Ваня милый не стесняйся
Одного тебя люблю.
Ваня милый не стесняйся
Одного тебя люблю.

LEAVE-TAKING

Partisan fighter rode out on a black horse
A steel sword
Ready for the enemy (Twice)

He checked his steed, stretched out his hand,
The spirited mount neighed
And pawed the ground. (Twice)

Two hands locked in handshake for a moment,
"Good-by, my son,"
Said the old man. (Twice)

The son pulled the reins, waved his hat,
And off he rode
Toward the din. (Twice)

НА КОНЕ ВОРОНОМ

1. На коне вороном выехал партизан
Эй, ей сабли воюструю сталь
Для врага он держал.
Эй, ей сабли воюструю сталь
Для врага он держал.

2. Он коня задержал, потянулся рукой
Эх, конь ретивый заржал
Бил он землю ногой.
Эх, конь ретивый заржал
Бил он землю ногой.

MY NEW PORCH

Oh, my porch, my new porch,
My wooden porch with lattice work.
I cannot step out upon my porch
Or bring my darling here.

The young maiden stepped out the gate.
From her right sleeve she released a falcon
Admonishing it as it flew off:

Fly my falcon, fly high and far,
Soar up until you come to distant parts,
Until you reach my native hearth
Where my stern father dwells.

Strict and stern and merciless,
He does not let the young maid out
To talk with the young fellows.

I did not heed my father
And went around with a young man.

АХ ВЫ СЕНИ.

1. Ах вы сени мои, сени
Сени новые мои
Сени новые, клиновые,
Решчатые,
Как мне теперь по сеням да не хаживать,
Как мне мила друга за ручку да не воживать.

2. Выходила молодца за клиновы ворота
За новые клиновые за решчатые
Выпускала сокола из правого рукава
На полетике соколику наказывала.

НА КОНЕ ВОРОНОМ

1. На коне вороном выехал партизан
Эй, ей сабли воюструю сталь
Для врага он держал (Twice)

2. Он коня задержал, потянулся рукой
Эх, конь ретивый заржал
Бил он землю ногой (Twice)

3. Две руки как замок, крепко сжались на миг
Эх, до свиданья сынок,
Ему молвил старик. (Twice)

4. Тронул сын повода, сам фуражкой махнул
Эх и поехал туда
Отколь слышен был гул. (Twice)

3. Две руки как замок, крепко сжались на миг
Эх, до свиданья сынок,
Ему молвил старик.
Эх, до свиданья сынок,
Ему молвил старик.

1. Тронул сын повода сам фуражкой махнул
Эх и поехал туда
Отколь слышен был гул.
Эх и поехал туда
Отколь слышен был гул.

АХ ВЫ СЕНИ

Akh vy seni moi, seni
Seni novye moi
Seni novye, klinovye, reshechatye.
Kak mne teper' po senyam da ne khazhivat
Kak mne mila druga za ruchku da ne vazhivat

Vykhodila moloda za klinovy vorota
Za novye klinovye za reshechatye.
Vypuskala sokola iz pravogo rukava
Na poletike sokoliku nakazyvala.

Ty leti, leti sokolik vysoko i daleko
I vysoko, i daleko, na rodimu storonu
Na rodimoj na storonke grozen batyushka zhivet
On grozen sudar, grozen, on ne milostiviy

Ne puskaet molodu on na ulitsu khodit
Da na ulitsu khodit' s molodtsami govorit
Ya ne slushala ottsa, spoteshala molodtsa.

3. Ты лети, лети соколик высоко и далеко
И высоко, и далеко, на родиму сторону
На родимой на сторонке грозен батюшка живет
Он грозен сударь, грозен, он не милостивый.

4. Не пускает молодца он на улицу ходить
Да на улицу ходить с молодцами говорит
Я не слыхала отца, спотешала молодца.