

# DZINTARS



*songs of amber*

THE LATVIAN WOMEN'S CHOIR



Latvia, a small country on the Baltic Sea, celebrated its twenty-second year of independence in 1940, when the "non-aggression" pact between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union was signed. Within a year, the Soviet army occupied the Baltic States (Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania), which were forcibly incorporated into the Soviet Union. Today, thanks to *glasnost*, the Baltic States have begun their struggle to regain independence.



The struggle for national identity and political independence is often reflected and reinforced in folk song. Though a few older sources exist, collections of Latvian folk music and song were made during the mid-to-late 19th century as one branch of a general interest in Latvian history, language, and tradition - all of which had, since earliest times, been intertwined with those of its neighbors. Andrejs Jurjans and Emilis Melngailis were major figures in this collection effort at the turn of the century. Today, the folk song collection at the Latvian Academy of Sciences comprises about 1,500,000

song texts and 30,000 melodies - an extraordinarily rich heritage.



Many choirs and folk dance groups continue to perform this material, both in rural, traditional settings, and in urban, modern ones. Some composers have harmonized or arranged many volumes full of folk song settings. Other composers have preferred to compose new settings of traditional texts, with varying amounts of folkloric feeling. On this disc are examples of both of these styles, as performed by Latvia's leading female choir, Dzintars.



*Dzintar* is the Latvian word for amber, fossilized pine pitch turned into a warmly glowing semi-precious stone. Amber is considered very special among Latvians, worn in necklaces, bracelets, and rings. As a symbol of national identity, it stands for beauty, openness, and freedom. The Dzintars choir was founded in 1947 and has become a highly acclaimed professional artistic group. They are skilled professional singers, and



include in their repertoire traditional and modern Latvian songs, and folk songs of other nations (several of which are represented here). Under the direction of Imants Cepitis and Ausma Derkevica, the unique sounds of Latvian music have been heard and acclaimed both at home and abroad. They have won numerous awards and prizes, including a Gold Diploma in the Bartok Competition (Hungary, 1968), Grand Prix (Hague, 1977), and similar awards in Germany, Great Britain, and other countries.



The songs on this disc provide a cross-section of the Dzintars' music, and allow us to explore the remarkable musicality of this talented group. At the recording session at Lucasfilm's Skywalker Ranch, they shared with us some of the music that they brought to the United States during their 1989 tour. Included are arrangements or "settings" of traditional folk songs ("Blow, Wind, Blow," "The Sun Moves Quickly,"), modern interpretations of folk material ("Breaking Flax," "A Forest Shook From Dancing," "Where Have You Been, Brother?," "Orphan In White," "Christmas Masquerade"), and even



avant-garde new songs by young Latvian composers ("Song Of The Wind," "Autumn Landscape," "The Tomtit's Message"). To represent folk songs of other nations, they chose one modern Russian setting ("So Silent Is The Ukrainian Night") and three Yiddish folk song settings ("Sleep, My Child," "Di Raike," "Oi Hanuke"). We have given the composer or arranger's name whenever possible. Included in the troupe were 76 singers, 2 conductors, 2 accompanists, 2 choir masters, and 1 soloist.



Imants Cepitis	Chief Conductor
Ausma Derkevica	Conductor
Ruta Vintule	Accompanist, piano
Aivars Kalejs	Organist
Gunta Malevica	Choir Master
Anna Savickaja	Assistant Choir Master
Inese Galante	Soloist, Latvian State Opera and Ballet Theatre

The Dzintars are, in alphabetical order:

Vineta Aboltinia, Date Adamsone, Olivija Akuratere, Inguna Amolinia, Ieva Apsite, Aina Bajare, Daiga Balode, Anita Berzinia, Skaidrite Berzinia, Daina Broka, Rudite Bukarte, Inguna Cepite, Santa Cinkore, Kaiva Damberga, Vita Daubere, Liga Drozd, Valerija Dubnika, Dina Dumpe, Agrita Dzenite, Ilona Eglite, Ina Eglite, Ina Fedorovska, Ilze Freimane, Ingvilda Gaisa, Daiga Gaisiminia, Anita Getlinia, Ingrida Gulbe, Ruta Icaika, Aelita Ikaunieca, Smaragda Isajeva, Ilona Ivanova, Liene Jakovlava, Arta Jansone, Ieva Jansone, Ilze Kacheveka, Dita Kalninia, Ilze Kalninia, Andra Kanepe, Gunta Kantane, Lolita Kemnica, Vita Kislicka, Spodra Kliavinia, Nika Kotovica, Agita Kruminia, Zita Kursheva, Stella Levina, Ginta Lochmele, Ludmila Moroza, Irina Nukshevica, Raili Orrava, Dace Ozolinia, Ginta Petersone, Lolita Podinia, Tatiana Popsuja, Inga Rekmane, Anita Ribaka, Inese Rokjane, Vesma Roze, Aira Ruda, Inita Savicka, Inga Sharke, Jolanta Shildmane, Dace Shteinbaha, Sandra Shteinberga, Aija Smiltena, Daniela Sprude, Aija Spunge, Lilita Streliece, Olga Svelpe, Jolante Upe, Sandra Upena, Evija Vaciete, Solveiga Veisa, Violeta Zake, Dina Zarinia, Inese Zilberte



Produced by Mickey Hart & Jerry Garcia  
Recorded at Skywalker Ranch Soundstage on April 27, 1989  
Engineered by Tom Flye

Assistant Engineers are Jeff Sterling and MT Silva  
Mixed at Front Street Studio, September 27-October 2, 1989  
" Breaking Flax , " "Where Have You Been, Brother?, " and " The Tomtit's Message"  
Mixed at Studio X, Petaluma CA Nov 15, 1989  
Engineered by Tom Flye

Assistant Engineers are Jeff Sterling and Kris Wiskes  
Vice-Minister of Culture, Republic Of Latvia: Nellija Janaus  
Interpreter Extraordinaire: Olga Lisagor  
Series Ethnomusicology Consultant: Fredric Lieberman  
Liner Notes: Laura Rokpelne  
Black & White Snow Photo: Halina Krukowski  
Color Photos: John Werner  
Package Design: Steven Jurgensmeyer  
Digital Mastering: Joe Gastwirt

Special Thanks to George Lucas, Jane Bay, Tom Scott, Doug Norby, Robin Dietrich Veasey, Rikki Didier (& the Kitchen Crew), Tami Butcher, John Boyd, Bob Heilman, Daira Cilnes, Halina Krukowski, Atesh Sonneborn, Kathy Newton, Sergio Lub, Dan Stockbeck, Judith Stockbeck and Terrence Yallop.

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Traditional arrangements by Dzintars

#### TECH NOTES:

The Dzintars choir was recorded utilizing near and far field miking techniques. The near field microphones were Neumann U87s and KM 84s. The soloist mic was a KM 86. Far field microphones included: a Neumann SM69 stereo mic from the conductor's perspective, a pair of AKG C12s at mid-room, and a pair of Brüel & Kjær 4003s in the rear of the room. A Neve V-Series console was used for preamps and was routed to a Studer 820 24-track analog tape recorder, utilizing Dolby SR noise reduction. The master 24-track tape was mixed from a Studer 820, through a Neve V-Series console, to an Ampex ATR 100 1/4 inch 2-track, except "Breaking Flax," "Where Have You Been, Brother?," and "The Tomtit's Message" which were mixed from a Studer A80 through a Neve 8058 to an MCI JH110 1/4 inch 2-track, both processes using Dolby SR noise reduction. This analog 2-track master was transferred to 1630 digital format to create 1630 digital masters for CD.

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# OSINTAVR

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**1 Blow, Wind, Blow 3:10 ‡**  
Folk song, arranged by Andrejs Jujans  
(1856-1922)

**2 Breaking Flax 2:10 ‡**  
By Peter Plakidis

**3 The Sun Moves Quickly 3:07 ‡**  
Folk song arranged by Jekabs Graubins  
(1886-1961)

**4 Sleep My Child 3:21 ‡**  
Yiddish folk song

**5 Song Of The Wind 2:10 ‡**  
Words by Rainis (pseudonym of  
Janis Plikschans 1865-1929)

**6 So Silent Is The Ukranian Night 2:32 ‡**  
Words by Alexander Pushkin  
(Russian poet 1799-1837)  
Music by Rodion Shchedrin  
(Soviet composer, b. 1932)

**7 The Forest Shook From Dancing 2:10 ‡**  
Folk song arranged by Y. Graubins

**8 Where Have You Been, Brother ? 2:28 ‡**  
By Selga Mentse

**9 Orphan Girl In White 4:13 ‡**  
By Selga Mentse

**10 Di Raik 1:52 ‡**  
Yiddish Folk Song

**11 Christmas Masquerade (Mummers Song) 2:32 ‡**  
By Peteris Vasks

**12 Oi Hanuke 1:33 ‡**  
Yiddish Folk Song

**13 Autumn Landscape 2:17 ‡**  
Words by Rainis  
Music by Margers Zarinsh (b. 1910)

**14 The Tomtit's Message 5:19 ‡**  
By Peteris Vasks

‡ Ausma Derkevica Conducting  
‡ Imants Cepitis Conducting



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