

MONITOR PRESENTS

THE ICELANDIC SINGERS

INTRODUCTION

THE ICELANDIC SINGERS evoke the sights and sounds of their native land — a land where the midnight sun illumines a rugged scenic grandeur, where the exploits of the Northmen are celebrated in song and story. The most famous of all Iceland's great male choirs, the Icelandic Singers ("Karlakór Reykjavíkur") founded in 1926 by Sigurdur Thordarson, is a national pride, bearing the banners of a choral art which has flourished in the North since the days of the Vikings.

This splendid ensemble, 36 members strong toured the U. S. and Canada in the Fall of 1960. No newcomers to these shores, the Icelandic Singers made highly successful first appearances in North America in 1936. Since then they have toured throughout Europe, winning critical acclaim everywhere.

Under the direction of Mr. Thordarson, featuring baritone soloist Gudmundur Jonsson, the Icelandic Singers offer in this Monitor recording a varied program including the beautiful songs of native Icelandic composers, some standard choral classics, and a special group of familiar songs in English.

SIGURDUR THORDARSON, the conductor of the Icelandic Singers, was educated in Germany and Austria, making a special study of choral music. Since 1930 he has served as manager of the Icelandic State Broadcasting Service.

GUDMUNDUR JONSSON, the leading baritone of the Icelandic Singers, is one of the top opera and concert singers of Scandinavia. He has appeared widely as soloist on many international tours.

Piano: FR. WEISSHAPPEL (Side 1, Nos. 2 and 3; Side 2, Nos. 1, 3, 5, and 6)

All numbers are sung in Icelandic except: Side 1, No. 2: Latin; Side 1, No. 5: English; Side 2, No. 3: English; Side 2, No. 4: English; Side 2, No. 6: Norwegian

Side One

1. ICELANDIC RHYME SONGS

(By Jon Leifs)

Cock and raven, dog and swine,
Horse and mouse and sparrow.
Crow and croak, bark and whine,
Neigh and squeak and sing.
My old Jarpur (horse name), you
Deserve a rhyme. Never was there
Such a four-footed hero.
At hay-harvest everybody, young
And old, has a happy heart.
Give your horse green hay at
Sunrise and the light feet will
Carry you until sunset.
Rich man, see the sparrows crouching
In the snow. Feed them with the crumbs
From your table.

2. KYRIE

(By S. Thordarson)

Solo: Gudmundur Jonsson
Kyrie, Kyrie eleison!
Christe, Christe eleison!
Kyrie, Kyrie eleison!

3. TARANTELLA

(By Enrico Barraja)

Warm and azure are our heavens,
Clear the waters of the bay,
This is Napoli la bella,
Here on earth is paradise!
Where are there more wondrous gardens,
Gleaming 'neath the sun's bright ray?
There's no hue that is more vivid
Than the color of our skies.
Precious Capri shores enchanting,
Isle of dreams kiss'd by the breeze,
There's no country more alluring,
There's no spot on earth so fair,
Flow'rs are blooming, birds are singing,
In the gardens 'among the trees.

Here creation in its glory
Sends sweet music ev'rywhere.
Oh, come to see this wonderland,
Oh, come to see this Eden.
We bid you all to share our glee,
This joy you should not miss.
We'll sing to strains of mandolins,
And dance a tarantella,
We'll sing a song of ecstasy,
Or dream of love and bliss.

4. LULLABY

(By Bjorgvin Gudmundsson)

Light is fading and my child should
go to sleep.
Sun is setting and shadows become
darker.
Sleep, my baby, in peace.

5. CAROL OF THE DRUM

(Czech Carol arranged by S. Thordarson)

6. THE SWAN

(By Armas Jarnefelt)

Once a beautiful swan was singing
Frolic songs, out of sheer delight.
Its home was a lake in the heath,
With the blue sky above.
The sun shone bright,
The flowers and meadows,
Hills and mountains,
Listened and smiled.
"Why are you singing, lazy fool,
All day long your silly songs.
Do some work, or else,
You will starve and die."
Thus spoke the black raven,
That cunning bird,
Which always grudges you
The nice things in life.
Once a beautiful swan was singing
Frolic songs, out of sheer delight.
Its home was a lake in the heath,
With the blue sky above.

7. OLAFR TRYGVASON King of Norway

(By F. A. Reissiger)

The ships head north, the wind is fair,
Sun is rising and in the high poop
Stands Erlingur Skjalgsson of Jadar
Scanning the sea to the south and thinking:
"Why tarries Olaf Trygvason?"
Fifty were the galleys drifting,
Sails all folded. Then, looking at the sea
They said, these warriors brave:
"Who has news of The Serpent?
Why tarries Olaf Trygvason?"
As appeared the red glow of dawning next day
On the far horizon no ship yet was sighted
Once more like a rising gale resounded:
"Who has news of The Serpent?
Why tarries Olaf Trygvason?"
Silence, silence then fell upon all
As by each of the ships the icy waves
Their lament made known:
"On the Serpent man is no more
And Olaf Trygvason is lost!"
Since then the sea by Norway resounds,
Especially at daybreak:
"On The Serpent man is no more
And Olaf Trygvason is lost!"

Side Two

1. STOUTHEARTED MEN

(From "New Moon" by Sigmund Romberg)

Solo: Gudmundur Jonsson

You who have dreams,
If you act
They will come true!
To turn your dreams to a fact, it's up to you!
If you have the soul and the spirit
Never fear it, you'll see it through.
Hearts can inspire other hearts, with their fire.
For the strong obey when a strong man shows them
the way!

Give me some men who are stouthearted men
who will fight for the right they adore.
Start me with ten, who are stouthearted men
and I'll soon give ten thousand more, Oh!
Shoulder to shoulder and bolder and bolder
they grow as they go to the fore!
Then there's nothing in the world
can halt or mar a plan,
When stouthearted men can stick
together man to man!

2. HOLY NIGHT

(By Franz Gruber)

monitor

MP 585

This recording will never be obsolete. You may play it on all 33 $\frac{1}{3}$, long-playing phonographs and high fidelity systems, regular or stereo.

3. SOLDIERS' CHORUS

(From "Faust" by Charles Gounod)

4. BEAUTIFUL DREAMER

(By Stephen Foster; Arranged by S. Thordarson)

5. HUNTING SONG

(By Paul Isolfsson)

Solo: Gudmundur Jonsson

The morning sun shines gaily on the forest tall
As shrilly in the distance horns are sounded.
I know where roe and buck are hiding
And now they shall be slain.
But in the evening we shall meet anew
Recount our exploits and enjoy ourselves.
When brave deeds are done and toiling day is ended
The prize of victory is on each brave knight bestowed.
On the chessboard of life the moves are swift
Disgrace and glory but a short space apart.
The best marksman is he who shoots both straight and
fast
If you delay you are sure to lose.
These laws apply to hunters all
Though life divides itself its treasures.
So let us sit here, good companions, by the glowing fire,
Sipping the golden nectar in our cups.

6. LAND-SIGHTING

(By Edvard Greig)

Solo: Kristinn Hallsson

And it was Olav Trygvason
Sailing o'er the North Sea wide,
Bearing the hope to found a kingdom
Far on the other side.
Yonder the cliffs appearing
Like a battlement loom, their dark crest rearing.
And it was Olav Trygvason,
Found he ne'er a spot to land,
E'en like the waves the royal desire
Shattered upon the strand.
"See," cried the bard upleaping,
"Yonder snowcovered peaks o'er cloudbanks peeping."
And it was Olav Trygvason,
Suddenly he seem'd to sight
Towering temples, domes and spires,
Glist'ning in virgin white.
Then vow'd the King undaunted,
With his followers to tread that land enchanted.
Onward he went, the rushing streams
Heralded the coming spring,
Swayed in the stormy wind,
The forest strangely was murmuring,
Sounds as of church bells chiming,
And then spake the King, spake as tho' dreaming:
"Here the spot to found our Kingdom.
Hell! these temple walls defy thee!
Hearts are swelling, souls are yearning,
God to Thee alone be glory!
Be, my faith, as yonder mountains,
Root as deeply, shine as purely,
And as these my faith strive upward
On to Him, the All-Creator!"
Olav's prayer be ours to utter,
As we near the Throne of Mercy.
Hearts are swelling, souls are yearning,
God to Thee alone be glory!
Be, my faith, as yonder mountains,
Root as deeply, shine as purely,
And as these my soul shine upward,
On to Him the All-Creator!
On to God!

Notes and translation by THE ICELANDIC SINGERS

For complete catalogue of Folk music of many lands write:

MONITOR RECORDS

413 West 50th Street
New York 19, New York

For the care of your records check needle periodically;
store away from heat; wipe with a damp cloth before
playing. For playback on wide-range equipment use RIAA
curve.

Cover design: David Chasman

Printed in U.S.A.