INTRODUCTION

The Icelandic Singers evoke the sights and sounds of their native land — a land where the midnight sun illuminates 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 ("Karlukar Bandavirkur") 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.

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

The ICHELANDIC SINGERS, the leading baritone of the Icelandic Singers, is one of the top concert performers of Scandinavia. He has appeared widely as soloist on many international tours.

Piano: FR. WEISSLAPPHEL (Side 1, Nos. 2 and 3, Side 2, No. 4; English: Side 3, No. 2; English: Side 2, No. 6; Norwegian: Side 1, No. 5; English: Side 2, No. 4; English: Side 2, No. 6; Norwegian: Side 1, No. 5; English: Side 2, No. 4)

1. ICELANDIC RHYME SONGS

1. CUCK O' THE MOON (By Jon Landi)
Cuck o' the moon, wind and wave, Horse and mouse and sparrow, Crow and creak, bark and wail, Neigh and squeal, and sing, My old Jarpur (horse name), you deserve a rhyme, Never was there such a four-footed brute, As hay-harvests 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 sparrow crouching In the mow, Feed them with the crumbs From your table.

2. KYRIE

2. KYRIE (By S. Thordarson)
Solo: Gudmundur Jonsson
Kyrie, Kyrie eleison! Christe, Christe eleison!

3. TARANTELLA

3. TARANTELLA (By Enrico Bartass)
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, Glowing 'neath the sun's bright ray! There's no hall that's more vivid Than the color of our skies, Precious Capri enchanting, Isle of dreams 'knew'd by the breeze, There's no country more alluring, There's no spot on earth so fair, Fountains are blooming, birds are singing, In the gardens among the trees.

4. LULLABY

4. LULLABY (By Bjorgvin Gudmundsson)
Here in creation in its glory Sends sweet music everywhere, Oh, come to see this wonderful land, Oh, come to see this Eden, We bid you all to share our glee, This joy you should not miss, We'll sing to strands of mandolins, And dance a tarantella, We'll sing a song of ecstasy, Or dream of love and bliss.

5. CAROL OF THE DRUM

5. CAROL OF THE DRUM (By Armas Jarnefelt)
Oh, the drums of a rugged sea, Where the exploits of the Northmen are celebrated in song and story. The most famous of all the Vikings — 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 the Vikings.

6. THE SWAN

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.

7. OLAF TRYGVASON King of Norway

7. OLAF TRYGVASON King of Norway (By F. A. Bissen)
The ships head stern, the wind is fair, Sun is rising and the high poop Shining, as these warriors brave: "Who has news of The Serpent? Why carries Olaf Trygvason?" As appeared the real glory of daunting next day On the far horizon no ship yet was sighted Since the sea by Norway resounds, Especially at daybreak, "Oh, The Serpent man is no more and Olaf Trygvason is lost!"

8. LAND-SIGHTING

8. LAND-SIGHTING
(From "Faust" by Charles Gounod)
Solo: Gudmundur Jonsson
You who have dreams, If you see They will come true! To turn your dreams to a fact, it's up to you! 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! Shoulders to the sholder and houlder and they grose as they go to the fire? Then there's nothing in the worlds can halt or mar a plan. When stouthearted men can stick together than to want.

9. HOLY NIGHT

9. HOLY NIGHT (By Franz Gruber)
Hark! the herald angels sing, Glorious morn with healing wings, This recording will never be obsolete. You may play it on all 33/4, long-playing phonographs and high fidelity systems, regular or stereo.

3. SOLDIERS' CHORUS

3. SOLDIERS' CHORUS (From "Faust" by Charles Gounod)
Solo: Gudmundur Jonsson
The morning sun shines brightly on the forest floor, As brightly in the distance horns are sounding. I know where rose 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 telling day is ended The praise of victory on each brave knight bestowed. On the chessboard of life the moves are swift Disgrace and glory but a short space apart. The heap markman is he who shouts both straight and fast.

If you delay you are sure to lose, These laws apply to hunters all, Though life divides itself its treasures, Do let us here, good companions, by the glowing fire, Sipping the golden nectar in our cups.

5. HUNTING SONG

5. HUNTING SONG (By Stephen Foster; Arranged by S. Thordarson)
Solo: Kristinn Hallsson
And it was Olaf Trygvason, Sailing o'er the North Sea wide, Bearing the hope to found a kingdom Far on the other side, Tender the cliffs appearing, Lidy a battle-iron, their dark crest rearing. And it was Olaf Trygvason, Found he not a spot to land, Een'the waves the royal desire Shimmered upon the ground, "See, cries the bard upholding, "Tender uncovered peaks o'er cloudlands peeping."

Suddenly he seemed to sight Towering temples, domes and spires, Glittering in golden white, Then vowed the King undaunted, With his followers to tend that land encirced. Onward went he, 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 thou dreaming: 'Here the spot to found our Kingdom! Here the temple walls defy thee! Hearts are swelling, souls are yearning, God to Thee alone be glory!' Be, my faith, as yonder mountains, Rose as deep as, shine as purely, And as by the gods may be revealed, On to God!""