

SLAVIC VOICES choir at St Mary Redcliffe, 14 June 2025

1. **Oy Rana na Ivana / Early on St John's Day / "Ой, рана на Івана".** *Belorussian folk— seasonal, summer*
An ancient chant for the pagan summer solstice festival about Kupala, the god of fecundity, with a nod to Ivan, John the Baptist. Kupala spent the shortest night in the open field. What shall we give her? White cheese and dark beer.
2. **Czerwony Pas / Red Belt.** *Polish song*
A red belt, behind the belt – armour and an axe that shines from afar. A cheerful thought, a free hand, this is the attire, this is the life of a highlander. There the song of the Prut, of the Cheremosh Plays for the Hutsuls, and a cheerful cartwheel encourages them to dance. There is no better life for a Hutsul. As in a mountain pasture, when fate throws him into the pits he soon dies of longing. When a fresh leaf covers the beech and Czana Góra (Black Mountain) turns black, let the flute ring, let the horn roar, our hopes have been revived.
3. **Stav Ya Pity u P'atnitsu / I started to drink on Friday.** *Traditional Ukrainian/ Jewish Chasidic*
I started to drink on Friday [*Saturday in verse 2*]. I had drunk my 'calf' away [*'work' in verse 2*]. One must know how to be merry. One must know how to talk, how to give a just reckoning for the Master, the Lord, to justify oneself. But we drink and we revel. We drink wine like water and we say together "lechayim" [= *to life*]. And you, O Lord, please hearken to us in heaven.
4. **Ta divna splitska noc' / That Wonderful Night in Split.** *Traditional Croatian*
If I could walk with you again, Mare, once again by our Marjan [= *a hill on the peninsula of Split*]. I dream about it every night. Will that day come? That wonderful night in Split in the harbour in a small boat... Do you remember me and our love? There are three balconies, one for me, one for you and one for our love. As long as the moon shines through the branches and the stars are bright, love makes our hearts drunk. Come on, I'm waiting for you.
5. **Kad ja podjoh na Bembašu; Mi Querido, Mi Amado / When I went down to Bembaša.**
Bosnian / Ladino folk song
When I went down to Bembaša, to the river, I brought with me a white lamb. All the girls from Bembaša stood there at the gate. Only my sweetheart stood at her high window. I said to her: "Good evening, girl!". She said to me: "Come in the evening, my darling!". I did not go that evening, I went there the very next day. But my sweetheart was married to another man. My dear, my beloved, I want to know where you are. I want to see you and nothing more. My dear, my beloved, you are everything to me. I'm dying for you.
6. **Yakby ne Marusa / If not for Marusa / "Як би не Маруся".** *Ukrainian folk song*
If it weren't for Marusya, I wouldn't have got married. I've set my soul on fire; I must get married. Gryts, my mother, Gryts, I love you. And Marusya is beautiful, I liked her. I bought some shoes for three nickels so that I could dance the 'hopak'.
7. **Nochevala Tuchka / Little Golden Cloud / «Ночевала Тучка Золотая».**
Music by P. Tchaikovsky, lyrics by M. Lermontov. 1887
A little golden cloud slumbered all night upon the breast of a giant crag. In the early morning it went wandering again through the vault of the azure sky. But a trace of dew remained in a wrinkle of the old crag. Lonely he stands, pondering deeply and silently weeps, forsaken in the wilderness. [*N.B. Lermontov's poem is called 'The Crag'.*]
8. **Ustalo Vs'o Krugom / Everything around is Tired / "Устало всё кругом".** *Lyrics - A. Fet. Music- A. Arensky*
Everything is tired. The colour of the sky, the wind and the river, and the newborn crescent moon are all tired. The night and the forest that rests in the faded green and the yellow leaf that finally fell down. Only a fountain babbles in the middle of the distant darkness, talking about life, invisible but familiar. O autumn night, how omnipotent you are in giving up the struggle and in mortal languor.
9. **Svyaty Bozhe / Holy God / "Святы Боже".** *Georgy Sviridov*
Holy God! Holy Mighty! Holy Immortal! Have mercy on us!

10. I and II Hymns from “Three Sacred Hymns for Choir” / I и II Хоры из “Три Духовных хора” (1984)

Alfred Schnittke

- a. **Хор I Bogoroditse devo / Hymn I - Hail Mary / “Богородице Дево”**
Hail Mary, full of grace...
- b. **Хор II Gospodi Iisuse / Hymn II - Lord Jesus / “Господи Иисусе”**
Lord Jesus, son of God...

11. Utushka / Little Duck / “Утушка”. Russian folk song

A little duck was swimming and splashing in a sea. “How can I leave my home, how can I leave the sea? Cruel frosts will come, deep snows will fall. It is hard to say goodbye to my native banks.” A young Fyokla was crying with hot tears. “How can I say goodbye to my mother and separate from my father? Naum will come soon with his guests and will pick me by the right hand and lead me to get wed before God. Then he will take me to his house...”

12. Heidi, Nani. Romanian / Moldovan lullaby

Come, hush-a-bye, hush, hush, come, hush, with mama. Mama is rocking you and from her mouth she sings to you. Come, hush, hush little one, your mother will be fine. With bread and with olives, come, hush, mama's little darling.

13. More Solok Pie / A Falcon is Drinking / “Море Сокол Пие”. Bulgarian / Macedonian folk song from 1830s

A falcon drinks water from Vardar. Jane, Jane white throat, Jane, Jane gentle lamb. Hey falcon, you brave bird. Did you see a hero passing by, with nine deep wounds? Nine deep wounds, all made by bullets, and the tenth wound made by a knife. Jane, Jane white throat, Jane, Jane gentle lamb.

14. Mury / Walls / “Стены”. Belorussian / Ukrainian / Polish/ Russian

He was inspired and young, they were beyond count. His song gave them strength, he sang that the dawn is near. Thousands of candles they lit for him, smoke rose above the heads. He sang that it's time for the wall to fall. They all sang with him: "Tear out the bars, those teeth of walls. Cast off the shackles, break the whip and the walls will fall, fall, fall. And bury the old world" - until they saw how many they were, felt their strength and their time and with the song that dawn is near, they marched through city streets. They felled monuments and tore out cobblestones - "This one with us!"; "This one against!"; "Who stands alone is our worst enemy!" And the singer, too, stood alone. Tear out the bars, those teeth of walls... He watched the even march of the crowds. He was silent, listening to the clap of the steps and the walls grew, grew, grew. The chain swayed at the feet...

15. Mesec̑ina / Moon. Serbian Roma song

There is no more sun, there is no more moon. You are no more; I am no more. There is nothing anymore. Darkness of war has covered us and I wonder, my dear, what will happen with us? The sun is shining. From above it breaks through. No one knows where the shining is coming from.

Slavic Voices is a choir in London and Brighton & Hove for singers of all backgrounds. It presents music of all styles from the Slavic world: Orthodox chants, classics by Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninov, Schnittke and others, XVIII-XIX-centuries Art songs and folklore from the far corners of Siberia to the banks of the Black Sea. The repertoire is sung in Russian, Polish, Ukrainian, Croatian, Bulgarian, Macedonian, Belorussian, adding a guest visit by a song in Yiddish or Romanian. Slavic Voices opened in September 2023 and now has about 90 singers. Apart from the choir's own concerts, the collective has performed joint concerts with a Macedonian Folk Duo Filip Arilon & Stojan Stojanov (Macedonia), Maspindzeli Georgian choir (London), Bulgarian dance group Vezanitsa (Brighton) and Buffo's Wake - a UK Klezmer-punk carnival chaos band. The choir is non auditioned and always welcomes new members.

Slavic Voices on Facebook



www.polinashpherd.co.uk/choirs/slavic-voices/

Slavic Voices on Instagram

