

JĀNIS ZĀLĪTS (1884-1943)

kopotas kora dziesmas
complete choral songs

LATVIJAS RADIO KORIS / LATVIAN RADIO CHOIR
SIGVARDS KĻAVA, DIRIĢENTS / CONDUCTOR

CD1

DZIESMAS JAUKTAJAM KORIM / SONGS FOR MIXED CHOIR

1. Anužu himna / Hymn of Anuži (Milda Zālīte) / 2:36
2. Apsveikums jubilāram / Birthday Greeting (Jānis Kārklīņš) / 1:37
3. Ādolfam Kaktiņam / For Ādolfs Kaktiņš (Antons Austrīņš) / 2:10
4. Biķeris miroņu salā / The Goblet on the Isle of the Dead (Jānis Poruks) / 4:44
5. Bīrtzaliņa / Birch Grove (Kārlis Jēkabsons) / 2:14
6. Ceļš uz dzimteni / The Way to My Homeland (Pēteris Blaus) / 1:48
7. Cildinām šodien varenos garus / Today We Praise the Mighty Souls (Jānis Akuraters) / 1:33
8. Darbadaiņa / Work Song (Latvian folk song text) / 1:28
9. Dārgās ēnas / Cherished Souls (Anna Brigadere) / 4:09
10. Dziesma Tautas Vienotājam / A Song for Him Who Unified the People (Vilis Plūdons) / 1:56
11. Jau no bērnu dienām / From Early Childhood (Antons Austrīņš) / 3:03
12. Kad nakts / At Night (Rainis) / 2:16
13. Kā oši šalc / The Rustling Ash Trees (Kārlis Jēkabsons) / 3:59
14. Kā sniegi kalnu galotnēs / Like Snow on Mountain-Tops (Jānis Jaunsudrabiņš) / 2:24
15. Lai zemei sāpes nav / May the Earth Feel No Pain (Fricis Bārda) / 1:55
16. Lieldienu dziesma / Easter Song (Anna Brigadere) / 3:47
17. Lielo pļaujas svētku noslēguma koris /
The Great Harvest Festival Finale Choral (Leonīds Breikšs) / 2:21
18. Līgo / Midsummer (unknown) / 1:15
19. Līgo virkne / Midsummer Songs / 1:52
20. Pie koklētāja kapa / By the Bard's Grave (Antons Austrīņš) / 2:09
21. Preses himna / Press Anthem (Kārlis Skalbe) / 1:28
22. Profesoram J. Vītolam / To Professor J. Vītols (Antons Austrīņš) / 0:33
23. Pūšat taures! / Blow Your Horns! (Edvarts Virza) / 0:50
24. Rainim un Aspazijai / For Rainis and Aspazija (Antons Austrīņš) / 1:50

TT: 54:07

CD2

1. Sirds tik grūta / The Heart is So Heavy (1915. g. red. / 1915 edition) (Rainis) / 2:29
2. Sirds tik grūta / The Heart is So Heavy (1917. g. red. / 1917 edition) (Rainis) / 2:42
3. Tautas himna Vadonim / People's Song for the Leader (Leonīds Breikšs) / 2:30
4. Tā vēsma / The Divine Spirit (Jānis Poruks) / 4:14
5. Tev šie lauki / These Are Your Fields (Kārlis Jēkabsons) / 3:10
6. Tevi sveicam / We Greet You (Roberts Vizbulis) / 1:47
7. Vadoņa suminājums / Praise the Leader (Edvarts Virza) / 2:23
8. Varoņu dziesma / Heroes' Song (Antons Austrīņš) / 2:11
9. Vasara / Summer (Kārlis Skalbe) / 2:31
10. Vasaras nakts / Summer Night (Rūdolfs Blaumanis) / 6:11
11. Vienības dziesma / Song for the Unit (Francis Alfons) / 2:19

DZIESMA SIEVIEŠU KORIM / SONG FOR WOMEN'S CHOIR

12. Kārsēju, vērpēju un audēju dziesma /
Song of the Carders, Spinners and Weavers (Rainis) / 1:05

DZIESMAS VĪRU KORIM / SONGS FOR MEN'S CHOIR

13. Kareivji drošie / Brave Soldiers (Kārlis Skalbe) / 2:26
14. Kareivju dziesma / Soldiers' Song (Augusts Saulietis) / 1:42
15. Katordznieku dziesma / Convicts' Song (Leons Paegle) / 3:38
16. Kārlim Skalbem / For Kārlis Skalbe (Antons Austrīņš) / 1:30
17. Pūšat, vēji! / Blow, Winds! (Atis Ķeniņš) / 5:26
18. Rīta sveiciens / Morning Greeting (Pēteris Aigars) / 1:26
19. Varoņa sirds / A Hero's Heart (Anna Brigadere) / 5:21

20. Sveiks, Vadon, sveiks! / Leader, We Salute You! / 0:31

TT: 55:41

Jānis Zālīts (1884–1943)
Kopotas kora dziesmas / Complete Choral Songs
Latvijas Radio koris / Latvian Radio Choir
Sigvards Kļava, diriģents / conductor
Kaspars Putniņš, diriģents / conductor CD1 [4]
Ieva Ezeriete, soprāns / soprano CD2 [9], [10]
Gundega Krūmiņa, soprāns / soprano CD2 [10]

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"In Zālīts' songs, the effort to use all means of modern harmony culminates in undeniable success. They capture the audience with their freshness, unobtrusive illustration and vibrant colour. Zālīts is the freshest and most mischievous among our composers, and not only among the younger generation," said Prof. Jāzeps Vītols in 1913 of **JĀNIS ZĀLĪTS'** (1884–1943) first compositions for choir, made while still a student. At that time, there were still no professional choirs in Latvia to serve as an experimental laboratory for composers seeking a new path. It was also a time when the German choral style was held in high regard. But Zālīts, a courageous innovator, strived for a breath of the contemporary in music, and this challenged many of his contemporaries to re-examine ingrained opinions and often also choir singers and conductors to radically step out of their comfort zones.

"My songs have one big fault: they are only any good when performed very well; otherwise they're worthless. And it is said that even quite capable musicians have a hard time getting a feel for them," contemplated Zālīts. For some, C# major and D# major are synonymous, but not for Zālīts. He measured enharmonic differences with extremely fine nuance. He often chose to write in keys with many sharps or flats, but he just as often intriguingly hid those keys behind unresolved chords and webs of alteration. Thus some of his scores balance on the border of legibility and challenge even professionally trained eyes and ears.

In both form and harmony, as well as almost all other means of musical expression, Zālīts took non-conventional paths for his time, bypassing classic formulas of composition. He hardly wrote at all for large formats, and even in his vocal music he avoided the usual stanza forms and three-part structure, instead "floating" his sound paintings as compact, seamless compositions influenced in part by the new Latvian lyrical poetry. The unpredictability and unexpected turns in his harmonies as well as its saturated tonal drama makes his choral music special and unique among his contemporaries. Zālīts drew inspiration not only from his own special aural feeling for colour but also from his careful and extremely numerous studies of scores by Russian and European modernist composers. He particularly appreciated and enjoyed the symphonic works of Alexander Scriabin and the French masters of impressionism, but he himself took a unique path in the global context of music as an impressionist specifically in choral music.

Although Zālīts encouraged Latvians to create and develop their musical culture with its "distinctive, unique colour, because only then can it be considered full-fledged and co-creative," his music does not contain elements of folklore or a similar code of national traits. Instead, Latvianness flows through his music by means of its content and the images and scenes it conjures, which embody and reflect the worldview of the Latvian people. Zālīts' mastery is a thorough knowledge of the richness of music in the world and at the same time the ability to protect his own work from obvious signs of influences. It is the skill in subtly weaving the Latvian code into his work as well as preserving the integrity of his stylistic expression from his very first composition to his last.

Zālīts' oeuvre has only three facets in relation to genre – solo song, choral song and music for piano – but his contribution to music is impossible to quantify in numbers. The reason for this is rooted in his own need to re-edit seemingly completed works and rewrite them in new versions; he also abandoned compositions halfway through as soon as he lost confidence in the development of their ideas. Most of his compositions were not dated, which makes it difficult to arrange them in chronological order. He wrote only about one hundred works over a career spanning nearly forty years (since beginning his studies at the Saint Petersburg Conservatory in 1904). Works for piano make up the smallest number – approximately ten pieces composed while still a student. Some of these were edited and completed by Mart Humal, an Estonian musicologist and scholar of modernist currents in the music of early-20th-century Baltic composers. These as yet unknown masterpieces by Zālīts were brought to light by Prof. Sergey Osokin, pianist who recorded almost all of them for the album *Three Osokins in Latvian Piano Music* (LMIC 060, 2017).

Zālīts' collection of vocal chamber music consists of about fifty solo songs, including nine arrangements of folk songs for voice and piano. He composed almost half of these songs while still a student, and some of them also include an accompaniment by symphony orchestra.

Likewise, Zālīts wrote about fifty titles for choir. This album contains all of those choral songs with fully completed scores, forty-four in all: thirty-six songs for mixed choir, seven compositions for men's choir and one song for women's choir. Among his choral songs are several songs of congratulation, hymns and celebratory songs dedicated to notable contemporaries in the art world and which, due to their simpler artistic content and volume, are usually not included among Zālīts' gems of choral music.

This increased focus on the vocal genre is rooted in Zālīts' belief that a composer is able to maintain a truer and more vivid bond with his nation through song. His preconditions for selecting poetry to set to music were noble: it needed to contain "a flood of the deepest feelings, the deepest essence of things in their first framing, the rhythm of the soul". He found this most often in the poetry of his contemporaries Jānis Poruks and Antons Austrīņš as well as the work of Kārlis Skalbe and Kārlis Jēkabsons. In all, he used the poems of approximately thirty authors for his songs, both solo and choral, authors whose names are written in indelible ink in Latvian literature.

Zālīts wrote relatively little music in part due to his extensive work in other fields of creative activity. Having become the first director of the Latvian National Opera in 1919, in the ensuing years his own creative work often gave way to the administrative needs of the opera. According to statistics, he was successful in this work – for example, a record number of premieres (nine operas and one ballet) were staged in the 1926/27 season. This season has gone down in history not only as the high point of Zālīts' own career at the opera; it was unfortunately also his last season in that position.

The approximately two thousand units of music criticism Zālīts wrote also put a strain on his creative work as a composer. According to musicologist Vizbulīte Bērziņa, "Zālīts failed to write quite a number of songs due to his work as a music critic and commentator, especially in the last decades of his life, when criticism became his main occupation. (...) For Zālīts, like Dārziņš, criticism was much more than just a way to make a living. At the time, it was the way in which he felt most useful to his people; it was the only way he felt he could bring the riches of the human spirit, which had revealed themselves to him, closer to the Latvian listener."

Writing about music served as a platform in which Zālīts could advocate for the new and progressive trends in music that excited him and which he so passionately also applied in his own creative work. Drafts of his music reviews show that his judgments were well thought out, almost without corrections or revisions. Zālīts' contemporaries emphasised his ability to express himself calmly and in a balanced manner, one in which "the hyperbole of excitement is as rare as explicit condemnation". His day-to-day work for seventeen years as a music opinion maker with the *Jaunākās Ziņas* newspaper meant being present at all the events in Riga's musical life; moreover, he had to submit finished reviews to the editor already by the next morning.

Listening to and evaluating the music of others left less and less time for his own music. This artist's tragedy is vividly illustrated by the composer and music critic Jēkabs Graubiņš: "The artist and his muse love undisturbed oblivion. (...) An undisturbed half an hour, hour or even several hours are not enough; days are needed. Where is the critic Zālīts to get such amounts of time? Zālīts, who, like it or not, must attend a concert or opera in the evening, write a review about it the next morning, bring it to the editorial office and spend three to four hours there, thus loses the creator's most valuable morning hours." Zālīts' modest nature also played a significant role: he avoided extensive public appearances, emphasised his lack of greed for fame, and in his considerable oeuvre as a music critic mentioned his own compositions in no more than ten sentences, and even then only through his words of gratitude to the singers.

In 1920 Zālīts was offered a position leading a special instrumentation and music history class at the Saint Petersburg Conservatory. But he declined this as well as all subsequent offers of pedagogical work until the very last year of his life. In the winter of 1942/43, after much thought, he accepted a position in the administration of the Riga State Music School and teaching the compulsory piano class. But he died soon after, two months before his 60th birthday.

Zālīts' first compositions reached audiences under the care and support of his friend, composer and folklorist Emīlis Melngailis. It seems impossible to surpass the poetry Melngailis used to describe the essence and core of the young composer's work: "While the errors and delusions of my young days can be equated with a traveller who, having walked long roads, has failed to find the imagined blue of a brilliant overseas flower, but, after returning to the birch groves of his native land, seems to see the blissful, golden glimmer of the birch leaves for the first time, Jānis Zālīts observes the trembling of those leaves in the silver moonlight, at the same time also comprehending the depth of the sky beyond the starry paths, the entire glassy span forming the foundation of this painting. Given a cursory glance, a scene thus observed possesses something of the exotic nature of a blue overseas flower; however, as we delve into the wonderful essence of this landscape, we see that this dreamer does not thirst for overseas brilliance at all, but that he recognises full well the mightiness of nature in the beauty of his own land."

Elīna Selga,
translation by Amanda Zaeska



THE LATVIAN RADIO CHOIR (LRC) is a unique musical group in the domain of choral music – here is a chamber choir able to perform the widest repertoire from early music to the most sophisticated scores created by modern composers. The Latvian Radio Choir is a creative lab insistently encouraging composers to write music that challenges the scale of vocal possibilities – from traditional singing to overtones and quarter tones.

Since 1992, LRC has two conductors: music director and principal conductor Sigvards Kļava and conductor Kaspars Putniņš. Over the past 20 years, LRC has developed an unprecedented notion of a choir – every chorister has his or her own mission and individual contribution. As a result, the blend of all these timbral qualities define the choral ensemble's sound. The expertise of the singers has made LRC a remarkably flexible ensemble able to deal with a wide variety of musical genres: vocal and instrumental music as well as opera performances, multi-media projects, intimate a cappella conversations and theatrical shows in which the singers express themselves as versatile soloists, talented actors and instrumentalists.

The Latvian Radio Chamber Singers were founded in 1994 as an initiative of Kaspars Putniņš. It is a group of eight to 16 singers that focuses on ensemble singing, exploring the range of the human voice and seeking out novel forms of expression. Along with regular concert programmes of 20th/21st-century music written by contemporary composers and the performance of experimental contemporary scores, the group is also involved in stage productions. It has enjoyed a successful collaboration with the Danish installation/performance theatre Hotel Pro Forma and director Kirsten Dehlholm resulting in three multimedia choral operas in ten years. Their first work was the much-acclaimed Operation: Orfeo (2007), which was followed by War Sum Up (2011) and NeoArctic (2016).

The choir has been invited to perform at top international musical forums including the Salzburg and Lucerne festivals, BBC Proms, Radio France Montpellier Festival, Baltic Sea Festival, Printemps des Arts de Monte-Carlo, Klangspuren Festival, White Light Festival (USA), Klangvokal Dortmund, Musikfest Erzgebirge and Soundstreams (Canada) and at renowned concert halls such as the Concertgebouw and Muziekgebouw in Amsterdam, Elbphilharmonie, Théâtre des Champs-Élysées and Cité de la Musique in Paris, Walt Disney Concert Hall, Konzerthaus Berlin, Lincoln Centre in New York City and the Dresden Frauenkirche.

The Latvian Radio Choir has worked with many outstanding guest conductors, including Heinz Holliger, Riccardo Muti, Riccardo Chailly, Gustavo Dudamel, Lars Ulrik Mortensen, Esa-Pekka Salonen and Peter Phillips. The choir has also enjoyed partnerships with the Lucerne Festival Orchestra, Ensemble Intercontemporain, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Camerata Salzburg, Concerto Copenhagen and others.

The Latvian Radio Choir records on a regular basis, and its recordings have been released on such labels as Ondine, Hyperion Records, Deutsche Grammophon, ECM, BIS and Naïve. In 2015, a new series of recorded Latvian choral music was initiated by the Skani national record label. LRC also participated on Arvo Pärt's Grammy Award-winning album Adam's Lament (ECM) in a performance conducted by Tõnu Kaljuste. One of the choir's most acclaimed recordings is of Sergey Rachmaninov's All-Night Vigil; it was praised by the renowned music magazine Gramophone as the best recording in February 2013 and ranked as one of the 25 best albums of the year by American radio NPR. In the summer of 2017, LRC debuted at the famous BBC Proms Festival with Rachmaninov's All-Night Vigil.

LRC is a member and one of the four founders of Tenso, the European network for professional chamber choirs. The choir has repeatedly received the Latvian Grand Music Award (the highest national award for professional achievement) as well as the Latvian Cabinet of Ministers Award and other awards.

Lauma Malnace, translation by Ieva Kolmane

SIGVARDS KĻAVA has been the artistic director of the Latvian Radio Choir (LRC) since 1992. As a result of his steady efforts, the LRC has become an internationally recognised, vocally distinctive musical group welcome at the top music festivals and invited to collaborate with the most outstanding composers and conductors.

Kļava studied conducting at the Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music (JVLMA), the Bachakademie Stuttgart, the St. Petersburg Conservatory and masterclasses at the Oregon Bach Festival. He has been a professor in the conducting department at JVLMA since 2000.

Kļava's LRC projects are deliberate narratives, musical expeditions involving exploration of the phenomenon of singing and voice and seeking bridges between the archaic and contemporary, the eternal and mundane, via inspiring thematic concert programmes. Churches have filled with audiences eager to listen to the choir's highly regarded programmes Litany, Prayer of Mother Teresa and Evening Conversations at St. John's Church. It was Kļava's idea to cooperate with prominent representatives of academic and non-academic music, the clergy and contemporary musicians to fuse contemporary music experiments with cultural heritage and broaden the view of the possibilities of the human voice. The choir's theatrical programmes Imants and Ziedonis, The Poet and the Mermaid, Vācietis: Piano Concerto and Atlantida (composers Imants Kalniņš and Arturs Maskats) have been particular favourites with audiences. Kļava has also directed tributes to Latvian heroes and cultural giants by preparing music for the filmed epic poem Lāčplēsis (Bear Slayer) and Writer, a stage production dedicated to poet Bronīslava Martuževa.

In 2014 Kļava initiated the project Bach. Passion. Rīga, through which Johann Sebastian Bach's passions were performed in Riga's churches by the LRC along with outstanding interpreters of Baroque music from Latvia and abroad.

Under Kļava's guidance, the choir has been privileged to engage in creative cooperation with the most notable Latvian contemporary composers – Maija Einfelde, Ēriks Ešenvalds, Arturs Maskats, Kristaps Pētersons, Santa Ratniece, Juris Karlsons, Andrejs Selickis, Pēteris Vasks – as well as many composers from abroad, resulting in a range of premieres and recordings.

Kļava has received the Latvian Grand Music Award several times. He is also a recipient of the Latvian Cabinet of Ministers Award and the Order of the Three Stars. He has been a principal conductor of the Latvian Song Festival since 1990.

Kļava has conducted concerts at the Royal Albert Hall in London, the Elbphilharmonie, the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, the Berlin Philharmonic and elsewhere. He takes part in international juries and educational projects. As a guest conductor, Kļava has performed with the Netherlands Radio Choir, the Netherlands Opera Choir, Netherlands Chamber Choir, Cappella Amsterdam, the Berlin RIAS Chamber Choir, the MDR Leipzig Radio Choir and many others.



COMMENTARY

SONGS FOR MIXED CHOIR

Anužu himna (Hymn of Anuži) – from the composer’s 1943 manuscript (Literature and Music Museum (LMM), inv. no. 7479671-2). Dedicated to music critic and choir conductor Ernests Brusubārda (1880–1968). Anuži is a village in Lube parish, Talsi district.

Apsveikums jubilāram (Birthday Greeting) – from the composer’s 1930 manuscript written in Zeikari, Vecpiebalga. Dedicated to publisher, journalist and writer Antons Benjamiņš (1860–1939).

Ādolfam Kaktiņam (For Ādolfs Kaktiņš) – from the composer’s 1928 manuscript (LMM, inv. no. 7479641-2). Dedicated to opera singer Ādolfs Kaktiņš (1885–1965) 25th work anniversary.

Bīķeris mironu salā (The Goblet on the Isle of the Dead) – published in *Dziesmu krājums jauktiem, sieviešu un vīru koriem, 10. burtnīca* (Collection of Songs for Mixed, Women’s and Men’s Choir, Vol. 10), Riga, 1914. Latvian musical directions missing in later editions taken from this edition; Italian directions taken from later editions.

Birtalīna (Birch Grove) – published in *Pirmais koru dziesmu krājums J. Vītola redakcijā* (Collection of Choir Songs I edited by J. Vītols), Riga, 1921. Lyrics from Kārlis Jēkabsons’ book of poetry *Dzīš miers* (Deep Calm), Riga, 1913.

Ceļš uz dzimteni (The Way to My Homeland) – published in *Pirmais koru dziesmu krājums J. Vītola redakcijā* (Collection of Choir Songs I edited by J. Vītols), Riga, 1921. The poem was written between 1914 and 1916.

Cildinām šodien varenos garus (Today We Praise the Mighty Souls) – also published as *Cildinājums* (Praise). Published by Edgars Rode, Riga, 1930 (LMM, inv. no. 713820\1-2).

Darbadaīņa (Work Song) – from the composer’s manuscript (LMM, inv. no. 653894\1-2), dedicated to the Jelgava Latvian Society Choir. Based on the words of a Latvian folk song.

Dārgās ēnas (Cherished Souls) – published as an appendix to the magazine *Mūzikas apskats*, 1934, no. 4, seen as the first edition. Song lyrics first published in the newspaper *Dzimtenes Vēstnesis*, November 22nd, 1914, along with Anna Brigadere’s poem *Veļu laikā* (Spirit Season), all under the title *Mirušo piemiņai* (In Memory of the Dead).

Dziesma Tautas Vienotājam (A Song for Him Who Unified the People) – published in *Latvju dziesmas deviņi svētki III* (Ninth Latvian Song Festival III), Riga, Latvian Song Festival Society, 1936. From the composer’s manuscript (LMM, inv. no. 653895), he expressed a wish to use it as part of a vocal-symphonic performance alongside similar songs dedicated to the Latvian President of the time, Kārlis Ulmanis (1877–1942).*

Jau no bērnu dienām (From Early Childhood) – first published in the newspaper *Dzimtenes Vēstnesis*, December 24th, 1910, appendix 1. The lyrics were published at the same time. The alto D flat in bar 12 remains based on the manuscript and first edition.

Kad nakts (At Night) – first published in *Dziesmu krājums jauktiem, sieviešu un vīru koriem, 10. burtnīca* (Collection of Songs for Mixed, Women’s and Men’s Choir, Vol. 10), Riga, 1914. Text first published in Rainis’ collection of poetry *Gals un sākums* (The End and the Beginning), Saint Petersburg, 1914.

Kā oši šalc (The Rustling Ash Trees) – published in *Pirmais koru dziesmu krājums J. Vītola redakcijā* (Collection of Choir Songs I edited by J. Vītols), Riga, 1921.

Kā snīgi kalnu galotnēs (Like Snow on Mountain-Tops) – published in *Pirmais koru dziesmu krājums J. Vītola redakcijā* (Collection of Choir Songs I edited by J. Vītols), Riga, 1921. Text first published in the newspaper *Baltija*, September 10th, 1916, p. 1.

Lai zemei sāpes nav (May the Earth Feel No Pain) – first published in *Padomju Latvija dzied*, III (Soviet Latvia Sings, Vol. III), Riga, 1958. Text first published as *Lūgšana* (Prayer) as the fourth in *Mans Dievs* (My God), a collection of poems in the newspaper *Lidums*, 1917, no. 45, February 22nd, appendix.

Lieldienu dziesma (Easter Song) – published in *Pirmais koru dziesmu krājums J. Vītola redakcijā* (Collection of Choir Songs I edited by J. Vītols), Riga, 1921. The song was first published in the appendix of the newspaper *Latvija*, 18th April 1914. The text was first published on page 1 of the newspaper *Latvija*, on 28th April 1910, as the third of a collection of three poems entitled *Lielā Piekta*. There, the first line begins with “Ak, tumšā stunda,” (Oh, dark hour) while the song and the version of the poem published in volume three of *Anna Brigadere, Kopoti raksti* (Anna Brigadere, Selected Works), 1938, Riga, page 145 begins with “Tu, tumšā stunda!” (You dark hour!). While composing, the word *dziedinošs* (healing) in line 4 was changed to *spirdzinošs* (refreshing, bar 25). In his handwritten drafts, the composer gave the piece the title *Lieldienu ausmā* (Easter Dawn).

Lielo plaujas svētku noslēguma koris (The Great Harvest Festival Finale Choir) – published by *Pagalms*, 1934, Riga (LMM, inv. no. 713825\1-2). *

Līgo (Midsummer) – published in an unknown edition, 1930s (LMM inv. no. 713827). The composer changed the title from *Līgo* to *Līgai* (To Līga).

Līgo virkne (Midsummer Songs) – first published in an unknown edition, 1930s (LMM inv. no. 713826\1-2), edition includes composer’s notes written in ink on his preferred order, although here it remains as in the first edition.

Pie koklētāja kapa (By the Bard’s Grave) – first published in *Dziesmu krājums jauktiem, sieviešu un vīru koriem, 10. burtnīca* (Collection of Songs for Mixed, Women’s and Men’s Choir, Vol. 10), Riga, 1914. The Latvian musical directions in this edition are taken from the first edition. A mistake in the soprano part, bar 26, included in later editions, has been corrected. The dynamics from bar 29 to the end are based on Vizbulīte Bērziņa’s 1984 collection of Zālīts’ choral works. The song text (first published in *Latvija*, page 1, 14th September 1913) and music were written in memory of composer Emīls Dārziņš (1875–1910), and it was premiered at the unveiling ceremony of his grave memorial on September 15th, 1913.

Preses himna (Press Anthem) – premiered at the commencement ceremony for the 1930 press ball. From the composer’s manuscript (LMM, inv. no. 578125). In an unknown edition (no year, LMM, inv. no. 713828/1-2), the composer made several corrections in pencil, adding “Change text (remove “press”) to keep it relevant. J. Z.” The first line of the text is written as “Gaiši raugās viņas skats” (Her eyes gaze brightly), but the poem, first published in *Vidzemes Šveice*, Vol. 4, 5th March 1931,

starts “Gaiši raugās mūsu skats” (Our eyes gaze brightly, see bar 17).

Profesoram J. Vitolam (To Professor J. Vītols) – also known as *Suminājums Vitolam* (Celebrating Vītols). Dedicated to composer Jāzeps Vītols (1863–1948), who became a professor at the Saint Petersburg Conservatory in 1911. Published in a handwritten edition by musicologist Vizbulīte Bērziņa (LMM, inv. no. 653897), and possibly intended as a fragment from Zālīts’ choral piece *Grimst bāru saule* (The Sun of the Forsaken Sets). The song uses a fragment (the last 3 lines) of Antons Austrīņš’ poem J. Vitolam (To J. Vītols), written November 5th, 1911. The poem was included in Austrīņš’ poetry collection *Klusuma gavīles* (Quiet Jubilation), published by Vaiņags, Riga, 1921.

Pūšať taures! (Blow Your Horns!) – published by *Pagalms*, Riga, 1930s (LMM inv. no. 713829).

Rainim un Aspazijai (For Rainis and Aspazija) – published in *Pirmais koru dziesmu krājums J. Vītola redakcijā* (Collection of Choir Songs I edited by J. Vītols), Riga, 1921, page 28. Composed for poets Rainis (1865–1929) and Aspazija (1865–1943) on their return to Latvia from exile; this was performed at a concert organised in their honour at the Opera.

Sirds tik grūta (The Heart is So Heavy) – 1915 edition first published in *Jāņa Zālīša dziesmas* (Jānis Zālīts’ Songs), Petrograd. 1917 edition published in *Pirmais koru dziesmu krājums J. Vītola redakcijā* (Collection of Choir Songs I edited by J. Vītols), Riga, 1921. The poem was first published in the magazine *Mājas Viesa Mēnešraksts*, 1902, edition 12.

Tautas himna Vadonim (People’s Song for the Leader) – from the composer’s manuscript, archived at the Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music (inv. no. L-3410). *

Tā vēsma (The Divine Spirit) – published in *Pirmais koru dziesmu krājums J. Vītola redakcijā* (Collection of Choir Songs I edited by J. Vītols), Riga, 1921. Text first published in the literary appendix of the journal *Mājas Viesis*, 1st January 1897, page 1, with the title *New Year*. The composer did not use line 18–24 of the poem.

Tevisie lauki (These Are Your Fields) – published in *Pirmais koru dziesmu krājums J. Vītola redakcijā* (Collection of Choir Songs I edited by J. Vītols), Riga, 1921.

Tevisie sveicami (We Greet You) – from the composer’s manuscript (LMM inv. no. 747960\1-2). Dedicated to Jāzeps Vītols at the 10-year anniversary celebrations of the Saint Petersburg Latvian Singing Society.

Vadoņa suminājums (Praise the Leader) – published by *Pagalms*, Riga, date unknown (LMM inv. no. 713833\1-2). Archived edition includes the composer’s notes in red pencil: the incorrectly-written “mīl” in bar 1 was corrected to “mīl”. *

Varoņu dziesma (Heroes’ Song) – published in 1933 in *Dziesmu dienas 1873–1933* (Song Days 1873–1933), Riga, Latvian Song Festival Society. It is not known whether the poet collaborated in adapting the poem for this piece, or if changes were made by Jānis Zālīts and potentially confirmed with Antons Austrīņš.

Vasarā (Summer) – published in *Jānis Zālīts. Kora dziesmas* (Jānis Zālīts. Choir Songs), Riga, 1984, compiled by Vizbulīte Bērziņa.

Vasaras nakts (Summer Night) – published by *Largo*, Riga, 1939. Archived LMM, inv. no. 713835\1-3. Dedicated to the choir conductor Teodors Reiters (1884–1956).

Vienības dziesma (Song for the Unit) – published by *Pagalms*, Riga, 1934–1935. Archived LMM, inv. no. 713836\1-2.

SONG FOR WOMEN’S CHOIR

Kārsēju, vērpēju un audēju dziesma (Song of the Carders, Spinners and Weavers) – published in *Jānis Zālīts. Kora dziesmas* (Jānis Zālīts. Choir Songs), Riga, 1984, compiled by Vizbulīte Bērziņa.

SONGS FOR MEN’S CHOIR

Kareivji drošie (Brave Soldiers) – published in *Jānis Zālīts. Kora dziesmas* (Jānis Zālīts. Choir Songs), Riga, 1984, compiled by Vizbulīte Bērziņa.

Kareivju dziesma (Soldiers’ Song); Katordznieku dziesma (Convicts’ Song) – published in *Pirmais koru dziesmu krājums J. Vītola redakcijā* (Collection of Choir Songs I edited by J. Vītols), Riga, 1921.

Kārlim Skalbem (For Kārlis Skalbe) – from the composer’s 1921 manuscript (LMM, inv. no. 747961\1-2). Dedicated to poet, prosaist and politician Kārlis Skalbe (1879–1945).

Pūšať, vēji! (Blow, Winds!) – published in *Pirmais koru dziesmu krājums J. Vītola redakcijā* (Collection of Choir Songs I edited by J. Vītols), Riga, 1921.

Rīta sveiciens (Morning Greeting) – from the composer’s 1936 manuscript (LMM, inv. no. 653917\1-2).

Varoņa sirds (A Hero’s Heart) – published in *Latvju dziesmas deviņi svētki* (Ninth Latvian Song Festival), edited by Emīls Melngailis, Riga, 1938.

Sveiks, Vadon, sveiks! (Leader, We Salute You!) – from the composer’s manuscript, archived Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music (inv. no. L-3410). A note in the score states: *Transition music to “Tautas Himnu Vadonim” (People’s Song for the Leader) from verse 3 of the Finale Choir, “Lai mūsu pulki pāršalc zemi” (May our throngs fill the land) and the following spoken text: “Leader, we promise you our hearts. May God help you lead the Latvians to an Eternal Latvia. We know you came to lead us to a bright and sunny future. We salute you! We salute you! We salute you!”* *

Agnese Pauņiņa

* **Lielo plaujas svētku noslēguma koris (The Great Harvest Festival Finale Choir)**, is followed by the spoken text: “Leader, we promise you our hearts. May God help you lead the Latvians to an Eternal Latvia. We know you came to lead us to a bright and sunny future. We salute you! We salute you! We salute you!”, then an 8-bar transition to **Sveiks, Vadon, sveiks! (Leader, We Salute You!)**, then **Tautas himna Vadonim (People’s Song for the Leader)**, then **Vadoņa suminājums (Praise the Leader)**. This concert programme also included **Dziesma Tautas Vienotājam (A Song for Him Who Unified the People)**. Written for the Great Harvest Festival in Rēzekne, 1936. *Vadonis* (Leader) was the name given to the President of Latvia Kārlis Ulmanis (1877–1942).



JĀNIS ZĀLĪTS

*Zāliša dziesmās centieni pielietot visus modernās harmonijas līdzekļus vainagojas ar neapstrīdamiem panākumiem. Tās ar savu svaigumu un nepiespiesto ilustrāciju, ar dzīvajām krāsām iekaro klausītājus. Zālīts – vissvaigākais un visnerātākais ne tik vien mūsu jaunāko autoru starpā. – tā 1913. gadā sava tolaik vēl studenta **Jāņa Zāliša** (1884–1943) pirmos pieteikumus kormūzikā vērtē profesors Jāzeps Vītols. Tas ir laiks, kad Latvijā vēl nav profesionālu koru, kas varētu kalpot par daiļrades laboratoriju jaunu ceļu meklētājiem. Tas arīdzan ir laiks, kad augstā godā vēl tiek turētas *vācu korāju stila* tradīcijas. Bet Jānis Zālīts ir drosmīgs novators, kas tiecas pēc laikmetīgas elpas mūzikā. Daudzus viņa laikabiedrus tas izaicina uz iesīkstējušu uzskatu pārskatīšanu, kā arī kordziedātājus un dirigentus – uz nereti radikālu izkāpšanu no komforta zonas.*

Manām dziesmām piemīt liela vaina: tās tikai labā, ļoti muzikālā izpildījumā kam der, citādi itin nekam. Un laikiem pat arī diezgan spējīgam mūziķim grūti tajās iejusties. – pārdomās grimst komponists. Ja citam *Cis dur un Des dur* var šķist sinonīmi, tad tikai ne Jānim Zālītim. Viņš enharmonismu atšķirību mēra ārkārtīgi smalkās skaņu krāsu niansēs. Vizbiežāk savām dziesmām izvēlējies daudzziņu tonalitātes, bet tikpat bieži tās intriģējoši slēpis pat līdz pēdējai taktij aiz neatrisinātiem akordiem un alterāciju mežģinēm. Tādējādi dažs viņa skaņdarbs balansē uz notācijās salasāmības robežas un kļūst par izaicinājumu arī profesionāli trenētai acij un ausij. Gan formveidē, gan harmonijā, gan teju visos citos mūzikas izteiksmes līdzekļos Zālīts iet savam laikam vēl neierastus ceļus, apiedams klasiskus skaņdarbu konstrukciju trafaretus. Tikpat kā nav pievērsies lielām formām, arī no vokālajai mūzikai tik ierastās pantu formas un trijdaiļības variāijes, bet savas skaņu gleznas pludinājis kā kompakts vienlaidu kompozīcijas, kuru likumbas noklausījies jaunajā latviešu lirikā. Zāliša kormūziku īpašu un laikabiedru vidū savrupu dara harmonijas neparedzamība, tās negaidītie pavērsieni, kā arī piesātinātā tonālā dramaturģija. Tam ierosme gūta ne tik vien savā īpašajā krāsu dzirdes izjūtā, bet arī rūpīgās un ārkārtīgi daudzskaitlīgās Krievijas un Eiropas komponistu modernistu partitūru studijās. Ar īpašu sajūsmu un atzinību vērtējis Aleksandra Skrjabinu un franču impresionisma meistarū simfoniskos darbus, taču pats gājis unikālu ceļu pasaules mūzikā kā impresionists tieši kormūzikā.

Lai arī Zālīts aicina latviešus savu mūzikas kultūru veidot un attīstīt ar tās *īpatnējo, sev vien piemītošo krāsu, jo tikai tad tā varēs skaitīties par pilntiesīgu un līdzraudošu*, viņa mūzikā neatradisim folkloras elementu lietojumu vai līdzīgu nacionālās specifikas kodējumu. Latviskums tajā strāvo caur satura tēliem un ainām, kas iemieso un spoģoju latviešu tautas dzīves izjūtu. Jāņa Zāliša meistarība ir pasaules mūzikas bagātību tuva pazišana, spējot savu daiļradi nosargāt no uzkrītošiem ietekmju nospiedumiem. Tā ir prasme netverami savā jaunradē ieaut latvisko kodu, kā arī saglabāt stilistiskās izteiksmes viengabalainību no savas pirmās dziesmas līdz pēdējai.

Komponista daiļrades žanru satvaram ir vien trīs šķautnes – solodziesma, kordziesma un klaviermūzika, taču precīzos skaitļos Jāņa Zāliša muzikālo devumu nav iespējams izteikt. Iemesls tam sakņojas komponista iekšējā nepieciešamībā atkal no jauna koriģēt šķietami jau pabeigtus darbus un veidot tiem jaunas redakcijas, kā arī pārtraukt jaunrades darbu pusceļā, kolīdz zudusi pārliecība par idejas attīstības potenciālu. Vairumam skaņdarbu nav datēts tapšanas laiks, līdz ar to apgrūtināta ir arī iespēja darbus sarindot hronoloģiskā secībā. Nepilnos 40 savas jaunrades gados (kopš studiju uzsākšanas Pēterburgas konservatorijā 1904. gadā) Jāņa Zāliša daiļrades apcirkni pildījuši vien ap simt skaņdarbu. Skaitliski mazāko vietu tajā aizņem klaviermūzika – ap desmit darbu, kas tapuši studiju laikā. Dažus no tiem rediģējis un pabeidzis Marts Hummāls – īgaunu muzikologs, modernisma strāvotāju pētnieks 20. gs. sākuma Baltijas komponistu mūzikā. Šos latviešu mūzikā vēl neatklātos Zāliša šedevrus saulītē izcēlis pianists profesors Sergejs Osokins, teju visus no tiem ieskaņojot albumā “Trīs Osokini latviešu klaviermūzikā” (LMIC 060, 2017).

Zāliša vokālās kameramūzikas krājumu veido ap 50 solodziesmu, tostarp arī deviņas tautasdziesmu apdares balsij un klavierēm. Gandrīz puse dziesmu sarakstītas jau studiju gadu laikā, turklāt daļai no tām pavadījums instrumentēts arī simfoniskajam orķestrim. Apmēram tikpat liels ir Jāņa Zāliša devums kormūzikas žanrā – ap 50 nosaukumu. Šajā albumā ieskaņotas visas tās kordziesmas, kopskaitā 44, kuru partitūras vēsture glabā kā pilnīgi pabeigtas – 36 dziesmas jauktajam korim, septiņi vīru kora skaņdarbi un vienīgā dziesma sieviešu korim. Kordziesmu skaitā ietilpst saviem laikabiedriem – ievērojamiem mākslas pasaules darboņiem vēltītas vairākas apspeikumu dziesmas, himnas un suminjumi, kas sava vienkāršotā mākslinieciskā satura un apjoma dēļ netiek pieskaitītas pie Zāliša kordziesmu pērlēm.

Pastiprināta pievēršanās tieši vokālajiem žanriem sakņojas Zāliša pārliecībā, ka komponists tieši caur dziesmu spēj uzturēt patiesāku un dzīvāku saikni ar tautu. Cēli ir komponista dzejas izvēles priekšnoteikumi: lai tajā būtu *visdziļāko jūtu šalts, lietu dziļākā būtība visā to pirmreizējā satvarā, dvēseles ritms*. To viņš visbiežāk atradis savu laikabiedru Jāņa Poruka un Antona Austrīņa dzejā, skaitliski tikai nedaudz retāk izvēloties Kārļa Skalbes un Kārļa Jēkabsona vārsmas. Kopumā Zāliša komponēto dziesmu (gan solo, gan kora) teksti pieder ap 30 autoriem, kuru vārdi latviešu literatūrā ierakstīti neizdzēšamiem burtiem.

Daiļrades saīdzinošo mazskaitlīgumu sekmējusi viņa lielā noslogotība citos radošās darbības virzienos. Kļūstot par pirmo Latvijas Nacionālās operas direktoru 1919. gadā, turpmākos gadus jaunradei it bieži nākas piekāpties prioritārajam administratīvajam darbam. Tas, kā vēsta statistika, vainagojies ar raženiem panākumiem – 1926./1927. gada sezonā ir rekordīste pirmuzvedumu skaits ziņā – deviņas operas un balets. Tā iegājusi vēsturē ne tik vien kā spoža virsotne Jāņa Zāliša darbam operas direkcijā - diemžēl izraīdījies viņam pēdējā šajā amatā.

Cits nozīmīgs jaunrades laika atņēmējs ir – 2000 vienībā izsakāms darbs mūzikas kritikas laukā. *Publicistikas dēļ paliek neuzrakstīta ne viena vien Jāņa Zāliša dziesma, it sevišķi mūža pēdējos gadu desmitos, kad kritika kļūst par viņa pamatnodarbošanos. (...) Zālītim, tāpat kā Dārziņam, kritika ir kaut kas daudz vairāk nekā tikai piespiedu maizes darbs. Tajā viņš tobrīd jūtas visvairāk noderīgs savai tautai, tā ir vienīgā iespēja, kā latviešu klausītājam tuvināt cilvēces gara bagātības, kas atklājušās viņam pašam. –* muzikoloģe Vizbulīte Bērziņa. Raksti par mūziku bija platforma, kurā iestāties par sev tik tuvajiem jaunajiem un progresīvajiem strāvotājiem mūzikā, kurus pats kritiķis kaismīgi iedzīvināja arī savā daiļradē. Recenziju uzmetumos redzams, ka spriedumi top nosvērti, tikpat kā bez labojumiem un izteiksmes variantu meklējumiem. Viņa laikabiedri uzsver Zāliša prasmi izteikties mierīgi un līdzsvaroti, kur *sajūsmas hiperbolas tikpat retas kā kategoriski nopēlumi*. Sabiedrības muzikālo uzskatu veidotāja ikdienas darbs 17 gadu garumā laikrakstā “Jaunākās Ziņas” nozīmēja klātbūtni visos Rīgas mūzikas dzīves notikumos, turklāt recenzijām bija jābūt gatavām un iesniegtām redakcijā uz karstām pēdām - jau nākamajā rītā. Klausoties un vērtējot citu mūziku, arvien mazāk laika atlika savējai. Šo mākslinieka traģēdiju spilgti ilustrē komponists un kritiķis Jēkabs Graubiņš: *Mākslinieks un viņa mūza mīl netraucētu aizmiršanos. (...) Nepietiek netraucētas pusstundas, stundas vai vairāk stundu, bet vajadzīgas dienas. Kur tās lai ņem kritiķis Zālīts, kam vakarā jāklasās koncerts vai opera, patkami tas vai nepatkami, nākamā rītā jāuzraksta par to atsauksme, jāaiznes uz redakciju, tur jānodedzūrē 3-4 stundas, tā pazaudējot radītāja darba spraigākās rīta stundas*” Nozīmīgu lomu te spēlē arī ar komponista pieticīgā daba: vienmēr vairījies plašu publisku uzstāšanos, uzsvēris slavaskāres trūkumu un ietilpīgajās mūzikas kritikas mantojumā savu mūziku piemēņjis labi ja desmit teikumos, turklāt vien caur pateicības vārdiem dziedātājiem.

1920. gadā Jānim Zālītim tika piedāvāta speciālās instrumentācijas un mūzikas vēstures klases vadība Pēterburgas konservatorijā. Bet kā no šī, tā arī turpmākiem aicinājumiem strādāt pedagoģisko darbu komponists atteicās līdz pat sava mūža pēdējam gadam. 1942./1943. gada ziemā pēc ilgākām pārdomām viņš lemj par labu darbam Rīgas Valsts mūzikas skolas vadībā un obligāto klavieru klasē. Šis gaitas tomēr drīz pārtrauc komponista aiziešana mūžībā divus mēnešus pirms viņa 60. dzimšanas dienas.

Jāņa Zāliša pirmās kompozīcijas pasaulē izgāja ar viņa drauga, komponista un folklorista Emija Melngaiļa gādību un labvēlību. Šķiet, nav iespējams pārspēt poēziju, ar kādu viņš vārdos ietērpis Zāliša būtību un jaunrades kodolu: *Kamēr manu jaunu dienu maldi pielīdzināmi ceļavīra gaitai, kas, tālus takus staigādams, nav atradis aizjūras brīnumpukes zilumu cerētā noskaņā, bet, atgriezdamies dzimtās zemes bērzu bīrzēs, šķiet, pirmo reizi ieraudzījis šo bērzu zeltīto lapu tvīksmi, tomēr Jānis Zālīts vēro šo lapu trīsoņu mēnesnīcas sudrabā, izprotot arī debess dziļumu aiz zvaigžņu ceļiem, visu šo glāžaino tāli, kas nogūlusies gleznas pamatā. Tādūkart skatāmai ainei piemīt kaut kas no aizjūras zilās puķes eksotisma, ja acis uzmetam pavīrsi, bet, kolet iedzīlīnāties ainas brīnišķīgā būtībā, tad pārliecināties, ka šim saņņotājam nemaz tie prāti nenesas pēc aizjūras košuma, bet, ka tas labi redz visu dabas dziļumu pašu zemes dailē.*

Elīna Selga



LATVIJAS RADIO KORIS ir unikāla vienība kormūzikas pasaulē, kamerkoris ar spēju izcili atskaņot visplašāko repertuāru no senās mūzikas līdz mūsdienu komponistu sarežģītākajām partitūrām. Latvijas Radio koris ir kā radoša laboratorija, regulāri mudinot komponistus rakstīt opusus, kas pārsniedz klasiskā vokāla arsenālu – no tradicionālās dziedāšanas manieres līdz virstoņu un ceturtdaļtoņu dziedāšanai.

No 1992. gada Latvijas Radio kori strādā divi diriģenti – mākslinieciskais vadītājs, galvenais diriģents Sigvards Kļava un diriģents Kaspars Putniņš. Divdesmit gadu laikā Latvijas Radio koris ir radījis jaunu izpratni par kori, kurā katram dalībniekam ir savs uzdevums un personīgais pienesums. Radio kora mākslinieku balsu tembrālās buketes sakausējums tiek uzlūkots par kora ansambļa skanējuma etalonu. Dziedātāju spēja orientēties dažādu laikmetu, žanru un stila mūzikā ļauj Latvijas Radio korim uzstāties vokāli instrumentālu darbu atskaņojumos un operizrādēs, multimedālos un performanču projektos, intīmās a cappella muzikālās sarunās, kā arī teātrālos uzvedumos, kur kora dziedātāji atklājas kā daudzpusīgi solisti, līdztekus dziedāšanai spēlējot arī dažādu mūzikas instrumentus.

Kopš 1994. gada pēc diriģenta Kaspara Putniņa iniciatīvas Latvijas Radio kora ietvaros darbojas arī kora grupa, tās sastāvam variējoties no 8 līdz 16 dziedātājiem. Viņu uzmanības centrā ir dziedāšana ansambļi, cilvēka bals iespēju pētīšana un jaunu izteiksmes formu meklēšana. Līdzās laikmetīgās mūzikas koncertprogrammām un eksperimentālu mūsdienu partitūru pirmatskaņojumiem, kora grupa piedalās arī skatuves uzvedumos. Latvijas Radio kora grupas veiksmes stāsts ir kopdarbs ar dāņu instalāciju un performanču teātri Hotel Pro Forma un režisori Kirstenu Dēlholmu, kas 12 gadu laikā vainagojies trīs multimedialās kora operās. Pēc pirmā kopdarba “Operācija: Orfejs” (2007) panākumiem tapa izrādes War Sum Up (Kara daba, 2011) un NeoArctic (2016).

Latvijas Radio koris ir uzstājies Zalcburgas un Lucernas festivālos, BBC Proms, Radio France festivālā Monpeljē, Baltic Sea Festival Stokholmā, Printemps des arts Montekarlo, Klangspuren Austrijā, White Light festival ASV, Dortmundes Klangvokal, Musikfest Erzgebirge Vācijā, Soundstreams Kanādā un tādās koncertzālēs kā Amsterdams Concertgebouw, Elbas filharmonija, Losandželosas Walt Disney Concert Hall, Berlīnes Konzerthaus, Parīzes Elizejas lauku teātris, Linkolna centrs Ņujorkā, Drēzdenes Frauenkirche u. c.

Korim bijusi veiksmīga sadarbība ar tādiem izciliem diriģentiem kā Heincs Holligers, Rikardo Muti, Rikardo Šaiji, Gustavo Dudamels, Larss Ulriks Mortensens, Esa Peka Salonens, Piters Filipss u. c. Latvijas Radio kori uz sadarbību aicinājuši Lucernas festivāla orķestris, Ensemble intercontemporain, “Losandželosas filharmonīķi”, Camerata Salzburg, Concerto Copenhagen u. c.

Latvijas Radio kora ieskaņojumi izdoti sadarbībā ar ierakstu namiem Ondine, Deutsche Grammophon, ECM, BIS, Hyperion Records, Naive. 2015. gadā aizsāka latviešu kormūzikas albumu sērija nacionālajā ierakstu kompānijā “Skani”. Latvijas Radio koris ir piedalījies Grammy balvas ieguvušā Arvo Perta mūzikas albuma Adam’s Lament (ECM) ierakstā, kas ieskaņots diriģenta Tenu Kaljustes vadībā. Pasaulē lielu atziņību guvis Latvijas Radio kora veiktais Sergeja Rahmaņinova Vesperu ieskaņojums, nonākot žurnāla Gramophone un ASV raidstacijas NPR topos. 2017. gada vasarā Latvijas Radio koris ar lieliem panākumiem debitēja slavenajā BBC Proms festivālā, atskaņojot tieši Rahmaņinova Vesperes.

Latvijas Radio koris ir Eiropas profesionālo koru asociācijas Tenso biedrs, kā arī bija viens no četriem Tenso dibinātājiem.

Koris vairākkārt saņēmis Latvijas Lielo mūzikas balvu – valsts augstāko apbalvojumu par sasniegumiem profesionālajā mākslā, kā arī Ministru kabineta balvu un citus apbalvojumus.

Lauma Malnace

SIGVARDS KĻAVA ir Latvijas Radio kora mākslinieciskais vadītājs kopš 1992. gada. Viņa mērķtiecīgā darba rezultātā Latvijas Radio koris ir izveidojies par starptautiski atpazīstamu, vokāli spilgtu vienību, kuru vēlas dzirdēt slavenākajos festivālos, un kuru uz sadarbību aicina pasaules izcilākie mūziķi.

Sigvards Kļava studējis diriģēšanu Jāzepa Vītola Latvijas Mūzikas akadēmijā, Štutgartes Baha akadēmijā un Oregonas Baha festivāla meistarklasēs, kā arī Sanktpēterburgas konservatorijā. Kopš 2000. gada viņš ir Jāzepa Vītola Latvijas Mūzikas akadēmijas kordiniģēšanas nodaļas profesors.

Sigvarda Kļavas veidotie Latvijas Radio kora projekti allaž ir rūpīgi izauklēti vēstījumi, muzikālas ekspedīcijas, pētot dziedāšanas un balsis fenomenu, meklējot tiltus starp arhaisko un mūsdienu, apcerot pārļaicīgo caur tematisku koncertprogrammu atklāsmju ceļu. Atzinību guvušās programmas “Litānija”, “Mātes Terēzes lūgšana”, “Vakara sarunas Sv. Jāņa baznīcā” vienmēr ir piepildījušas dievnamus ar klausītājiem. Pēc Sigvarda Kļavas ierosinājuma Latvijas Radio koris veidojis kopīgus projektus gan ar tradicionālās un neakadēmiskās mūzikas spilgtiem pārstāvjiem, gan garīdzniekiem un mūsdienu skaņražiem, sintezējot laikmetīgās mākslas eksperimentus ar kultūras mantojumu un paplašinot redzējumu uz cilvēka balsis iespējām. Sevišķu publikas mīlestību iemantojuši koncertuzvedumi ar Imanta Kalniņa (“Imants un Ziedonis”, “Dzejnieks un Nāra”) un Artura Maskata (“Vācietis. Klavierkoncerts”), “Hotel “Atlantīda”” mūziku. Viņa vadībā tapuši arī vēltījumi latviešu tautas dižgariem un varoņiem – mūzika filmai “Lāčplēsis” un uzvedums “Rakstītāja” par Broņislavu Martuževu.

Pēc Sigvarda Kļavas iniciatīvas 2014. gadā istenojās projekts “Bahs. Pasija. Rīga”, kad pirmslieidņu laikā Rīgas dievnamos tika atskaņotas Johana Sebastīana Baha pasijas – kopā ar Latvijas Radio kori uzstājās latviešu un ārzemju mūziķi, izcili baroka interpreti ar pasaules mēroga vārdu.

Viņa vadībā korim izveidojusies radoša sadarbība ar ievērojamiem latviešu un ārvalstu komponistiem, kas vainagojusies ne-skaitāmos pirmatskaņojumos un ierakstos. Sigvards Kļava ir vairākkārtējs Lielās mūzikas balvas laureāts, Latvijas Republikas Ministru kabineta balvas ieguvējs un Triju Zvaigžņu ordeņa kavalieris. Kopš 1990. gada – Dziesmu svētku virsdiriģents.

Diriģējis nozīmīgākajās koncertzālēs un festivālos visā pasaulē, tai skaitā Londonas Karaliskajā Albertā zālē, Elbas filharmonijā, Amsterdams Concertgebouw, Berlīnes filharmonijā. Piedalījies starptautisku žūriju darbā un izglītības projektos. Kā viesdiriģents uzstājies ar Nīderlandes Radio un operas kori, Nīderlandes kamerkori, Cappella Amsterdam, RIAS kamerkori, Leipcigas MDR kori un daudziem citiem izciliem korim.

