

LINERNOTES, MILA VOCAL ENSEMBLE

V GRADINATA

Final draft

10/09/05

Anne Lies

INSIDE COVER

V Gradinata (To The Garden) is a collection of some of our favorite Bulgarian songs.

In Bulgaria's mountains, having a flat piece of earth to call a garden is a great fortune. Many of these songs are set in gardens, but such a place need not be literal. It might be a forest or a state of mind, but it is a place of origin, a hand into natural world. Here is where the everyday intersects the extraordinary in a setting that breathes stories of the past and embodies trust in the future.

Though some are arresting and others more lyrical, these songs convey the profound and universal power of everyday rituals. Their themes of love, loss, seduction, betrayal, joy and sorrow are carried like seeds and understood from culture to culture.

V Gradinata is a project that we have held close to our hearts for a long time. With our passion for Bulgarian folk music, we came to this endeavor more by intuition than by design, and these ornate melodies and distinctive harmonies have challenged and inspired us every step of the way. We are honored to sing these songs, and we hope you enjoy them as much as we have.

TRACKS/SUMMARIES

1. Begala e Vena (Sop) Vena regrets leaving her parents with no one to care for them. Her young man assures her that she can care for his parents, instead!
2. Sop Medley I Two silly songs from the Sop region. The first is about a grandma who eats far too much; the second is a teasing song about what one has and does not have.
3. Trgnala e Malka moma (Thrace) A young man stops a maiden and asks to have a word with her. They sit down and talk sweetly until the moon rises in the trees.
4. More Sokol Pie (Pirin) "O, Falcon, have you seen a young hero? He was so strong that he withstood nine wounds, but the tenth was deadly."
5. Sto Si Goro (Thrace) "Forest, what is wrong with you?" "Last night I watched as the young heroes, then the young maidens, and finally the young brides, were taken from me, leaving the young children behind. My sorrow is what you see."

6. Moma Bega Prez Livage (Sop) A young man calls out to a young woman to wait for him because he has something important to ask her. She teases him and runs—but admits that she does not have a sweetheart.
7. Radina Maika (Dobrudza) Rada tells her mother that her love, Ivan, has two sisters who are giving her trouble.
8. Dva Konja (Sop) Two old babas argue who has the better gossip about beautiful Neda, who is the talk of the village.
9. Oi Ela Mi Felidze (Pirin) Felidze’s friends ask her to join them, but she tells them she wants to go by herself to be with her love.
10. Dimco Ljo Gajdardzice Le (Thrace) Dimco has decorated his bagpipes out of happiness and love for Rada. As they share lover’s talk, Rada teases Dimco that he had better ask her to marry him, or she will silence his bagpipes forever.
11. I Dumaj Zlato (Western Pirin) “Tell your parents that I will go off to make my fortune. When I return, we will be together.”
12. Jano Jano (North Bulgaria) A shepherd flirts with Jana, bragging about his flock.
13. Zumruhnala (North Bulgaria) Jana seeks her loved one, the leader of the heroes who are fighting the Turks.
14. Sop Medley II Another medley of playful songs from the Sop region, which tells of weddings, planting and horses.
15. Dragana i Slaveja (Thrace) A nightingale challenges beautiful Dragana to a singing contest. Dragana wins but refuses her reward: the bird’s wings.
16. Zaspala e Fida (Sop) Fida awakens suddenly after falling asleep in the garden to find that her necklace was taken! What will she tell her mother and father?
17. Janka Prez Gora Vurvese (Western Thrace) Janka, goes into the forest seeking life-giving herbs for her love, who has fallen ill.
18. I Tri Mi (Sop) Three stars sing out as they rise up from behind the mountain.
19. Prehvrunkna Ptichka (Thrace) A bird flies over the garden calling to the household, “Wake up! Wake up! I bring you wonderful news! All is well and joyful!”
20. Zaplakala e Gorata (Thrace) A song of remembrance for the 500-year Ottoman occupation of Bulgaria. The forest mourns the deaths of a young hero and his 500 warriors who sought shelter in its trees.
21. Procula Se Moma Nedelja (Thrace) While the wedding party is distracted, beautiful Nedelja’s groom steals a kiss.
22. Ela Mome Ela Duso (Pirin) A family calls to their beloved daughter who is suffering from a broken heart.

PERSONNEL

Mila Vocal Ensemble

Carol Bauer

Andrea Christy

Anne Lies

Natalie Nowytski

Kathryn Ream

Alana Rogers
Jana Stow
Gabriela Sweet
Aleksandra Veriga

Special guests
Nikolay Gueorguiev, Band Director, gadulka
Pete Mathison, upright bass
Nikola Nikolov, gaida
Tim O'Keefe, dumbek, tapan
Jim Parker, tambura

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Minnesota

Recording and Post-production by Reid J. Kruger for Waterbury Music and Sound
Assisted by Matt Burr
Produced by Mila Vocal Ensemble
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Design by Renaissance Jane
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CONTACT INFORMATION

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