



About Svitanya

SVITANYA is a women's vocal ensemble whose moving performance of Eastern European folk music has captivated audiences since 2001. Our mission is to bring this beautiful music to a wide range of audiences – from those who are familiar with it through their ancestral roots to those who are encountering it for the first time.

Svitanya's repertoire is drawn from the entire region of Eastern Europe. Some songs are modern arrangements of traditional folk tunes, some are original compositions in the folk tradition, and others are sung as they have been for generations. They range from strong and strident field-working songs to traditional dance tunes to lush and emotive arrangements, all evoking the timbres, rhythms, and harmonies indigenous to the region.

All songs are sung in their original languages—fifteen or so, including Bulgarian, Ukrainian, Macedonian, and many others—so Svitanya's performances include entertaining stories and translations that make the music accessible and relevant to English-speaking audiences. Many pieces are sung a cappella, but a variety of ethnic instruments may accompany others. Eye-catching costumes include brightly colored, hand-embroidered blouses from different Eastern European countries. Two of our singers are a mother-daughter pair, appropriate in a genre where songs have been passed through generations from mother to daughter.

Svitanya offers several workshops in addition to its performances. These include singing, of course, but we can enhance the experience with traditional dances to accompany the songs, and can include instrumentalists as well as singers. We can tailor workshops to many ages and abilities.

Svitanya has been presented in many venues including Philadelphia's Kimmel Center, the Philadelphia Folk Festival, New Jersey Folk Festival, Musikfest in Bethlehem, PA, Middfest in Middletown OH, Randolph County Arts Center in Elkins, WV, and the Ambassador Theater International Culture Club in Alexandria, VA, as well as several venues in Bulgaria. We have performed in collaboration with the singers of Orfeia and Divi Zheni, both under the direction of Tatiana Sarbinska, the dancers of ContempraDance Theatre, with famed Ukrainian singer Mariana Sadovska, repeatedly for Southern Tier Celebrates in Binghamton, NY, and also with Yara Arts Group of La MaMa Experimental Theater in New York, NY, directed by Virlana Tkacz.

In 2005, we released our first full-length CD, *First Light*, which has been played on radio stations in at least twelve countries to date. In September 2012 we released our second CD, *Our Village*.