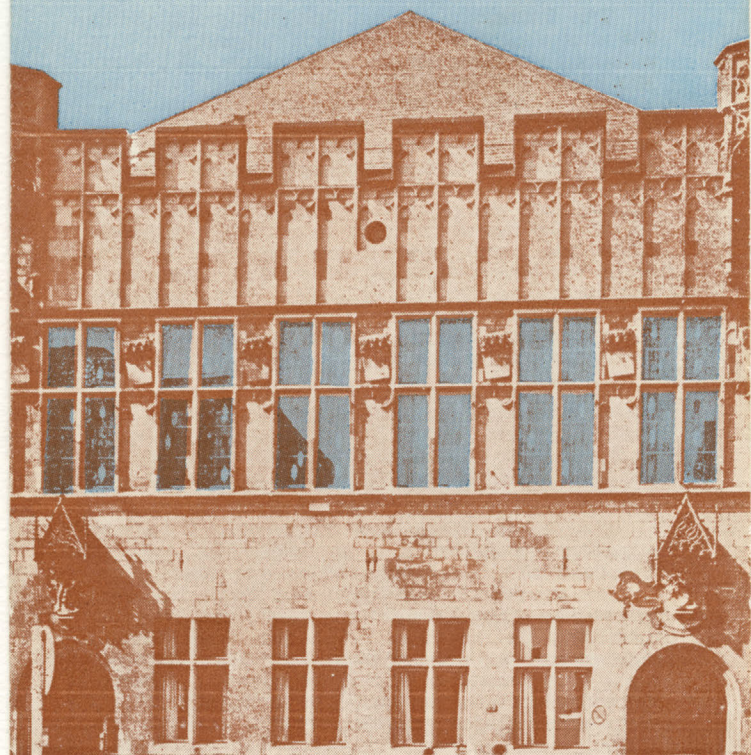
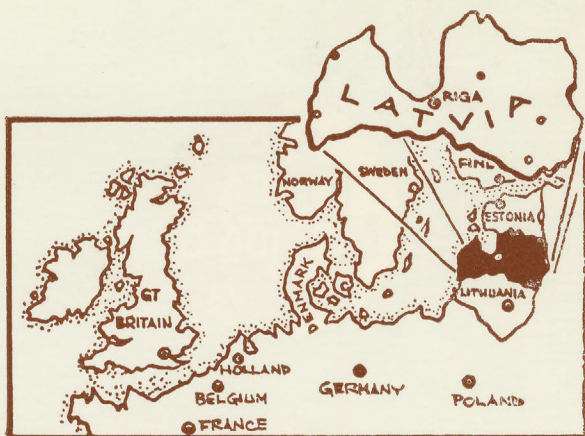


The 3rd Latvian Song Festival in Europe



Gürzenich

Cologne, 19. 7. – 22. 7. 1973



LATVIA

The Latvian nation has lived for millennia on the shores of the Baltic which historians call "a gathering place for the storms of history." A yeoman way of life has helped this people to preserve their identity — that is their language and culture — in spite of the conquerors and colonizers who continuously have criss-crossed their land. Throughout the centuries of their turbulent history, Latvians have struggled for their freedom. An independent Latvian state was established in 1918. An agricultural country the size of Denmark, it achieved remarkable economical, social, and cultural progress. The three Baltic republics — Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania — had the highest standard of living in Eastern Europe, a modern welfare system already in the thirties, and they shared first place for the highest percentage of academically educated people in Europe.

After the notorious Molotov-Ribbentrop pact (1939) in which the two dictators — Hitler and Stalin — divided Eastern Europe, Latvia was occupied by Soviet forces. Today, thirty-three years after the beginning of World War II, Latvia is still an occupied country without independence or freedom.

The Soviet regime has destroyed the Latvian peasantry by deportation. By artificially enforced urbanisation and industrialization the Soviets are flooding the country with masses of Russian workers in order to make Latvians a minority in their own land. But the Latvians, numbering still 1,400,000, plus approximately 150,000 compatriots in the West, are a living example of the never ending struggle for individual freedom and the democratic rights of national self-determination.

THE FESTIVAL CALENDAR

Thursday, 19th July

- 10.00 OPENING of the Festival, Gürzenich
DM 20; 12; 7
- 15.00 PROCESSION to the Dom
- 15.30 OECUMENICAL CHURCH SERVICE,
Dom
- 20.00 CONCERT of contemporary Latvian
music, Gürzenich
DM 20; 15; 10; 5

Friday, 20th July

- 15.00 THEATRE
DM 25; 20; 15; 10
- 20.00 CONCERT OF LATVIAN OPERATIC
MUSIC, Messe, Congresshall
DM 30; 22; 15; 10

Saturday, 21st July

- 10.30 YOUTH CONCERT, Gürzenich
DM 8; 5
- 15.00 THE GRAND CONCERT. Massed choirs,
Messe, Congresshall
DM 30; 25; 20; 15; 8
- 20.00 THEATRE
DM 25; 20; 15; 10
- 20.00 CONCERT OF POP-MUSIC, Gürzenich
DM 20; 15; 10

Sunday, 22nd July

- 10.00 POETRY READING, Gürzenich
DM 8; 6; 4
- 15.00 LATVIAN FOLK DANCES
DM 10; 6; 4
- 19.00 FESTIVAL BALL, Messe, Congresshall
DM 10; 6; 4

Advance booking (including the payment and self-addressed stamped envelope) from the Honorary Treasurer Mr. J. Kiploks, 5 Köln, Severin-str. 140., W. Germany.

Patrons booking all 9 main events will receive 20 per cent remission. For adolescents under 16 and war invalids — half prices.

For booking of accommodation please write direct to:

Verkehrsamt der Stadt Köln, Kongressabteilung,
5000 Köln 1, Am Dom.

Information: Mr. V. Lemanis, 29 Oldenburg i.
Oldb., Idar-Obersteiner Str. 15, W. Germany.



The Second Latvian Song Festival in Hanover, 1968.

A CENTENARY OF LATVIAN SONG FESTIVALS

An important part of Latvian cultural heritage has been the folksong of which close to three million have been collected. They can be said to constitute a veritable encyclopaedia which faithfully registers Latvian life in earlier centuries, since the folksong reflects all the events of human life from birth to death, its joys and sorrows.

Out of the folksong developed in recent times a tradition of choral singing, leading in 1873 to the first countrywide Latvian Song Festival. Until the eve of World War II, there have been held in Latvia nine such Song Festivals. Their culmination was the Ninth Song Festival of 1938 in which 400 choirs with more than 16,000 singers participated, performing to an audience of 100,000.

The tradition of song festivals has been continued also after the occupation of Latvia in 1940. Until 1970, six song festivals have been held in Latvia. Regardless of the unavoidable political orientation demanded by the present regime, they have been definite manifestations of pride in the cultural heritage of the Latvian nation. Latvians living abroad have also enthusiastically cultivated the song festival tradition. The 3rd Latvian Song Festival in Europe, held in 1973 in Cologne, also marks the centenary year of song festivals. Nine Latvian song festivals have been held in Britain, five in the U.S.A., and five in Canada. The Latvians in Australia call their song festival Days of Culture, and these have been held already twenty-one times.

Latvian song festivals are not limited only to concerts of massed choirs. There are concerts by instrumental and vocal soloists, theatre productions, poetry readings, performances of folk dances, art and crafts exhibitions.

Through the contemporary forms of artistic expression one senses the spirit of a millennia old people who have inhabited a land which once furnished the Roman empire with amber. Latvians in Cologne will furthermore mark the centenary of their national anthem when they come together to pray fervently with its words,

"God, bless Latvia!"

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