

Yale Russian Chorus--One Of Greatest

CHRONICLE

By Dean Wallace

The Yale Russian Chorus is a man's glee club from Yale University, comprised mostly of young Americans who are adept at the Russian language.

While it is true that the Cold War sometimes adds interest to art, it is not language alone that makes this group unique. These men could sing in Urdu, Swahili or Old High German and still be one of the finest male choruses in the world.

Their appearance yesterday at Masonic Auditorium was the second in about a year, and it is this reviewer's personal hope that they come back here every spring.

I do not pretend to understand Russian; therefore, they represent to me an entirely musical, rather than a poetic, experience. But it is a musical experience so richly rewarding that, as the old song goes, "you don't have to know the language."

It is also obvious that director Denis Mickiewicz has not chosen his members for linguistic ability alone. The voices are superbly balanced, with deep resonant contrabassos contrasted against clear high tenors with those peculiar head tones so dear to Eastern Europe, and a gratifyingly strong section of baritones.

Further, there is no doubt that Mickiewicz is a musician of the first order. His handling of the vocal forces is masterful, and his arrangements of folk, liturgical and traditional material show a complete knowledge of the dynamic spirit and technical resources of Russian choral music.

But these are critical considerations. The chorus can be thoroughly enjoyed by anyone who has ever taken pleasure in hearing good songs well sung.