



Smithsonian Associates

Classical Sounds of Christmas

with *Dr. Rachel Franklin*

Tuesday, December 19, 2023 - 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. ET

DEC. 19 Sacred Glories of the Season

Whether it's the intimacy of a medieval carol or the mighty choirs of *The Messiah*, this sacred music opens a portal to nostalgic past experiences and taps into our deepest cravings for connection with the divine. Approaching Christmas itself, travel across Europe sampling inspiring and achingly beautiful music written to celebrate this most spiritual time of the year. Included are ancient and Renaissance contemplations by Hildegard and Palestrina, exquisite arrangements of carols by English composers Vaughan Williams and Benjamin Britten, modern interpretations by Messaien and Menotti, and the most beloved seasonal choral works such as Bach's *Magnificat*, Berlioz's *L'Enfance du Christ* and Handel's *Messiah* among others.

Works explored, media used:

Sing Today of Joy, *Personent Hodie*

- Martin Best Ensemble

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4RzoXGo1EmU>

Riu riu chiu, the river bank protects it, *Riu riu chiu la guarda ribera*

- Ensemble Obsidienne, Emmanuel Bonnardot

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EJl6nSVVrlg>

Béla Bartók, 1881-1945

Romanian Christmas Carols, Sz.57, adapted 1915

- SONOS, Rachel Franklin, Christian Tremblay, Jonathan M Brown

Ralph Vaughan Williams,

Fantasia on Christmas Carols, 1912

- John Barrow, Guildford Cathedral Choir & Orchestra, conductor Barry Rose

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wl9T3r8UyGA>

Benjamin Britten, 1913-1976

A Ceremony of Carols, Op. 28, 1942

- The Choristers of Wells Cathedral Choir

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O6tWZbu9ArM>

Hildegard von Bingen, c. 1098-1179

O viridissima virga

- Marie Macklin

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5n1TDKJWA8>

Olivier Messaien, 1908-1992

La Nativité de Seigneur: Les Bergers (the Shepherds), 1935

- Bernhard Schneider

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xg31RMqpUdE>

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, 1525-1594

O Magnum Mysterium, 1569

- Choir of King's College, Cambridge, Philip Ledger

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tu3RDTXwn38>

Arcangelo Corelli, 1653-1713

Concerti Grossi, Op. 6, No. 8; Concerto in G minor, "*Fatto per la Notte di Natale*"

(Christmas Concerto) 1714

- Musica Amphion, director Pieter-Jan Belder

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gy2PNewPcXM>

Georg Frederic Handel, 1685-1759

Messiah, HWV 56 / Pt. 1 - Pifa (Pastoral Symphony), 1741

- Academy of Ancient Music, Christopher Hogwood
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zRbbHUgezMk>

Franz Schubert, 1797-1828

Ave Maria, Op. 52, "Ellens dritter Gesang" (Ellen's Third Song) 1825

- Marion Anderson
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BtWLZYFfbis>

Hector Berlioz, 1803-1869

L'Enfance du Christ, Shepherds' Farewell, 1854

- Monteverdi Choir, Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique, John Eliot Gardiner, conductor
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3oYPHY_LV5s

Camille Saint-Saëns, 1835-1921

Oratorio de Noël, Op. 12, 1858

- Deutsche Radio Philharmonie, conductor Christoph Poppen
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sr7WiMBYzAE>

Gian Carlo Menotti, 1911-2007

Amahl and the Night Visitors, 1951

- Amahl- Bill McIver, Mother- Rosemary Kuhlmann, members of the Symphony of the Air, Thomas Schippers

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nVF4MbFKMfU>

Charles Villiers Stanford, 1852-1924

Magnificat in G, Op. 81, 1902

- Choir of St. John's College, Cambridge

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g7UorDdRg60&t=5s>

J. S. Bach, 1685-1750

Magnificat, BWV 243, 1723

- Jos van Veldhoven, Netherlands Bach Society

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EsUWG2axB3w>