



Smithsonian Associates

Classical Sounds of Christmas

Dr. Rachel Franklin

Thursday, December 12, 2024 - 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. ET

Dec. 12 Sacred Glories of the Season

Whether it's the intimacy of a medieval carol or the mighty choirs of the *Messiah*, sacred music opens a nostalgic portal 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 exquisite works by Gian Carlo Menotti, Gustaf Nordqvist and Francisco Guerrero, arrangements of carols by Benjamin Britten, and the most beloved seasonal choral masterpieces such as Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* and Vivaldi's *Gloria*.

Works explored, media used:

Sing Today of Joy, *Personent Hodie*

- Martin Best Ensemble

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

Béla Bartók, 1881-1945

Romanian Christmas Carols, Sz.57, adapted 1915

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

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PObO6G33wh8>

Francisco Guerrero, 1528-1599

Pastores, Si Nos Queréis, from Canciones y Villanescas Espirituales, pub. 1589

- Musica Ficta, Ensemble Fontegara

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4f2UEXtLkYo&list=OLAK5uy_n7h6DI-eLQY3momfrkz5aVBkP-J4SmwZs&index=20

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>

Gustaf Nordqvist, 1886-1949

Jul, jul, strålande jul (Christmas, Christmas, glorious Christmas), 1921

- Svanholm Singers, Sofia Söderberg

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JA1yDSB3Dvk>

Hildegard von Bingen, c. 1098-1179

O viridissima virga

- Marie Macklin

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5n1TDKJWAv8>

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>

Antonio Vivaldi, 1678-1741

Gloria, RV. 589, around 1715

- Schola Pietatis Antonio Vivaldi, Richard Vendome

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cgaOVV4JQHA>

- Also, "Vivaldi and the Women of the Pieta"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Leq78JuKw0M>

Arcangelo Corelli, 1653-1713

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

(Christmas Concerto) 1714

- Camerata RCO

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

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>

Olivier Messaien, 1908-1992

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

- Bernhard Schneider

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

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>

J. S. Bach, 1685-1750

Christmas Oratorio, Cantata 1, Jauchzet, frohlocket! BWV 248, 1734

- Shunske Sato, Netherlands Bach Society

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PhhRDst_110