

HOMETOWN CHRISTMAS AT GRACE 2015 CONCERT PROGRAM

O Little Town of Bethlehem	traditional, arr. Virgil Fox	Robert Lambe, organ 3
The Little Drummer Boy	Davis/Onorati/Simeone, arr. Mark Hayes	Grace Concert Chorus 3
Christmas Eve, Ellis Island	Coulter	Jennifer Lambe, flute 4:30 Robert Lambe, piano
Ave Maria	Giulio Caccini	Deborah Whelan, soprano 4 Jennifer Lambe, flute
Midnight Noel	traditional, arr. Mark Hayes	Thomas May, baritone 3:30
Bring a Torch, Jeannette Isabella	traditional, arr. Chip Davis/ Mannheim Steamroller	Jennifer Lambe, flute 3 Robert Lambe, piano
Gesu Bambino	Pietro Yon, arr. Mark Hayes	Kerry Azzu 4
Baby It's Cold Outside	Frank Loesser, arr. Kirby Shaw	Sheila Deffely, soprano 3 Paul Deffely, baritone
White Christmas	Irving Berlin, arr. Ed Lojeski	Grace Concert Chorus 2

INTERMISSION

Good King Wenceslas	traditional, arr. Virgil Fox	Robert Lambe, organ 2
O Holy Night	traditional, arr.	Kay Standifer, soprano 4
A Gaelic Rose Jennifer Lambe, flute	traditional, arr. Mark Hayes	Grace Concert Chorus 3
We Three Kings	traditional	Grace Church Sunday School
Hark the Herald Angels Sing	traditional	Grace Church Sunday School
Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas	Martin/Blane, arr. Mark Hayes	Grace Concert Chorus 3
Carol of the Bells	traditional, arr. Chip Davis/ Mannheim Steamroller	Jennifer Lambe, flute 3 Robert Lambe, piano
The Wondrous Story	traditional, arr. Don Besig	Grace Concert chorus 3
Carol Sing-a-long	traditional	Grace Concert chorus 6 Grace Church Sunday School

PROGRAM NOTES

Two pieces on today's program were arranged for organ by Virgil Fox. Virgil Keel Fox (May 3, 1912 - October 25, 1980) was an American organist, known especially for his flamboyant "Heavy Organ" concerts of the music of Bach. These events appealed to audiences in the 1970s who were more familiar with rock 'n' roll music and were staged complete with light shows. Despite (or perhaps because of) his controversial approach to organ music, Virgil Fox attained a celebrity status not unlike that of Leonard Bernstein and Glenn Gould. The New York Times said of him, 20 years after his death, "Fox could play the pipe organ like nobody's business, but that is not all that made him unforgettable to so many people across the country. He made classical organ music appeal even to audiences that normally wouldn't be expected to sit still for it. His arrangements of "O Little Town of Bethlehem" and "Good King Wenceslas" are notable for their very unusual registrations and use of rhythmic elements.

"The Little Drummer Boy" (originally known as "Carol of the Drum") is a popular Christmas song written by the American classical music composer and teacher Katherine Kennicott Davis in 1941.[1] It was recorded in 1955 by the Trapp Family Singers[2] and further popularized by a 1958 recording by the Harry Simeone Chorale. This version was re-released successfully for several years and the song has been recorded many times since.[3] In the lyrics the singer relates how, as a poor young boy, he was summoned by the Magi to the nativity where, without a gift for the infant Jesus, he played his drum with the Virgin Mary's approval, remembering "I played my best for Him" and "He smiled at me."

Phil Coulter (born 19 February 1942) is an Irish musician, songwriter and record producer. He has collaborated with well-known flautist James Galway on several CDs, including one titled "Winter's Crossing". This album is a dramatic presentation in musical form that depicts the story of a group of Irish who left their homeland in 1866 and came to America. It describes the heart wrenching separation of family members with somber music, and the coming together of different Celtic groups in tunes that begin tentatively and become lively and so full of emotion that it makes any listener want to join in the dance that was surely accompanying the players. The piece "Christmas Eve, Ellis Island" is self-explanatory from the title.

Giulio Caccini was born in 1551 in Italy. He was a composer, teacher, singer, instrumentalist and writer of the very late Renaissance and early Baroque eras, was one of the founders of the genre of opera and also one of the single most influential creators of the new Baroque style. His Ave Maria was unknown to most music lovers in the 20th century but has achieved remarkable popularity in the last 20 years and is often performed at weddings and other church services, as well as in concert.

Mannheim Steamroller is an American music group, founded by Chip Davis, that is known primarily for its series of Fresh Aire albums, which blend classical music and rock, and for its modern recordings of Christmas music. Two of the pieces on today's program ("Bring a Torch, Jeannette Isabella" and "Carol of the Bells") were arranged by Chip Davis, and are unique interpretations of classic Christmas songs. Gesù bambino is an Italian Christmas carol composed by Pietro Yon in 1917. The melody was used by Frederick H. Martens in his English language carol "When Blossoms Flowered 'mid the Snows". The melody and lyrics of the chorus are derived from "Adeste Fideles" (O Come All Ye Faithful). The music historian Salvatore Basile notes: "The song would achieve the near-impossible feat of surviving in the standard holiday repertoire, with important performances, innumerable recordings, and every kind of vocal and instrumental arrangement." [1]

"Baby, It's Cold Outside" is a song written by Frank Loesser in 1944.[1] It is a call and response duet in which one of the singers (usually performed by a male voice) attempts to convince a guest (usually performed by a female voice) that they should stay together for a romantic evening because the weather is cold and the trip home would be difficult. Originally recorded for the film Neptune's Daughter, it has been recorded by a number of artists since its original release.

In the early part of its history, the song was seen as presenting a liberal stand for women because the guest decides to stay despite what the neighbors might say about her reputation; however recent critiques of the song have highlighted other parts of the lyrics such as "what's in this drink?" and his unrelenting pressure to stay despite her repeated statement of her desire to go home.[2]

Irving Berlin composed "White Christmas" in 1954 for a movie musical of the same name. Starring Bing Crosby, Danny Kaye, Rosemary Clooney and Vera-Ellen, the movie is set at a Vermont resort during December. The song has become a holiday standard. Its images of sleigh rides, falling snow and eager children portray an idealized American Christmas.

"O Holy Night" ("Cantique de Noël") is a well-known Christmas carol composed by Adolphe Adam in 1847 to the French poem "Minuit, chrétiens" (Midnight, Christians) by a wine merchant and poet, Placide Cappeau (1808–1877). In Roquemaure at the end of the year 1843, the church organ was recently renovated. To celebrate the event, the parish priest asked Cappeau, native from this town, to write a Christmas poem. Cappeau did it, although being a professed anticlerical and atheist.[1]

Soon after, Adam wrote the music. The song was premiered in Roquemaure in 1847 by the opera singer Emily Laury. Unitarian minister John Sullivan Dwight,[2] editor of Dwight's Journal of Music, created a singing edition based on Cappeau's French text in 1855. In both the French original and in the two familiar English versions of the carol, the text reflects on the birth of Jesus and of humanity's redemption.

"Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas," a song written by Hugh Martin and Ralph Blane, was introduced by Judy Garland in the 1944 MGM musical Meet Me in St. Louis. Frank Sinatra later recorded a version with modified lyrics. The song was In 2007, ASCAP ranked "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas" the third most performed Christmas song during the preceding five years that had been written by ASCAP members.[3] In 2004 it finished at #76 in AFI's 100 Years...100 Songs rankings of the top tunes in American cinema.