



As the wheel of days turns into darkness,
it reveals the light and hope of spring.

Tandis que tourne la roue
du temps, les jours s'abîment dans les nuits.
Puis revient le printemps porteur de
lumière et d'espoir.



Während uns das Rad der Tage in
die dunkle Jahreszeit führt, wendet es sich
wieder zum Licht und zur Hoffnung
des Frühjahrs.

Así como la rueda de los días gira hasta
la oscuridad, vuelve a la luz y a la esperanza
de la primavera.

A Midwinter Night's Dream

Introduction

The seasons have always held their mysteries and wonders, and we mere mortals have been fascinated by them and driven to understand our inter-relationship with the natural world, as we try to discover the spiritual and religious significance of it all.

Over the centuries, music has become a conduit for that reflection as it strives to capture the interweave of our existence. This recording is one modest rendering of that fascination, a kind of discovery chest of musical merry making, inspired by some traditions I have encountered along the way.

May the spirit of love, joy and renewal be yours. ~ LM



Les saisons sont depuis toujours sources d'émerveillement et de mystère. En tant que simple mortel, nous entretenons forcément toujours une relation avec elles. Subjugués, nous ne cessons de chercher à nous situer par rapport à ce phénomène naturel, lui-même transcendé par son sens spirituel et religieux.

Au fil des siècles, la musique a ouvert une voie à cette recherche en permettant de représenter avec sensibilité le fin tissu de la vie. Dans cet album, nous approfondissons humblement cette question en vous proposant une sorte de sympathique cabinet de curiosité musical s'inspirant de nombreuses traditions rencontrées en cours de route.

Puisse la grâce de l'amour, de la félicité et de la reviviscence vous accompagner. ~ LM

1. The Holly & The Ivy

Music: Loreena McKennitt

Lyric: Traditional adapted by Loreena McKennitt

The holly and the ivy
When they are full grown,
Of all the trees in the wood
The holly bears the crown.

The rising of the sun
The running of the deer,
The playing of the organ
Sweet singing in the choir.

The holly wears a blossom
As white as any flower,
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
To be our Saviour.

The rising of the sun,
The running of the deer,
The playing of the organ,
Sweet singing in the choir.

The holly bears a berry
As red as any blood,
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
To do sinners good.

The rising of the sun,
The running of the deer,
The playing of the organ,
Sweet singing in the choir.

The holly bears a prickle
As sharp as any thorn,
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
On Christmas Day in the morn.

The rising of the sun,
The running of the deer,
The playing of the organ,
Sweet singing in the choir.

The holly bears a bark
As bitter as any gall,
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ,
To redeem us all.

The rising of the sun,
The running of the deer,
The playing of the organ,
Sweet singing in the choir.

The holly and the ivy,
When they are full grown,
Of all the trees in the wood,
The holly bears the crown.

The rising of the sun,
The running of the deer,
The playing of the organ,
Sweet singing in the choir.

2. Un Flambeau, Jeannette, Isabelle

Music: Traditional

arranged by Loreena McKennitt

3. The Seven Rejoices of Mary

Music & Lyric: Traditional
arranged by Loreena McKennitt

The first good joy that Mary had
It was the joy of one.

The first rejoice that Mary had
Was to see her new born son.

To see her new born son good man,
And blessed may he be.
Sing Father, Son and Holy Ghost,
To all eternity.

The next good joy that Mary had
It was the joy of two.
To see her son Jesus,
Make the lame to go.

The next rejoice that Mary had,
It was the joy of three.
To see her own son Jesus,
To make the blind to see.

To make the blind to see good man,
And blessed may he be.
Sing Father, Son and Holy Ghost,
To all eternity.

The next good joy our lady had,
It was the joy of four.
It was the rejoice of her dear son,
When he read the bible o'er.

The next good joy that Mary had,
It was the joy of five.
To see her own son Jesus,
To make the dead alive.

To make the dead alive good man,
And blessed may he be.
Sing Father, Son and Holy Ghost,
To all eternity.

The next rejoice our lady had,
It was the rejoice of six.
To see her own son Jesus,
To bear the crucifix.

The next good joy that Mary had,
It was the joy of seven.
To see her own son Jesus,
To wear the crown of heaven.

To wear the crown of heaven good man,
And blessed may he be.
Sing Father, Son and Holy Ghost,
To all eternity.

And glory may he be,
And blessed now be she.
And those who sing the seven long verses,
In honour of our lady.

4. Noël Nouvelet !

Lyric: 16th Cent French
Music: Traditional 16th Cent French
– arranged by Loreena McKennitt

Noël nouvelet! Noël chantons icy;
Dévotés gens, rendons à Dieu merci;
Chantons Noël pour le Roi nouvelet;
Noël nouvelet! Noël chantons icy!

En Bethléem, Marie et Joseph vy,
L'asne et le boeuf, l'Enfant couché
parmy;
La crèche était au lieu d'un bercelet.
Noël nouvelet! Noël chantons icy!

L'estoile vint qui le jour esclaircy,
Et la vy bien d'où j'étois départy
En Bethléem les trois roys conduisaient.
Noël nouvelet! Noël chantons icy!

L'un portait l'or, et l'autre myrrhe aussi,
Et l'autre encens, que faisait bon senty:
Le paradis semblait le jardinet.

Noël nouvelet! Noël chantons icy!

Noël nouvelet! Noël chantons icy!

En douze jours fut Noël accomply;
Par cinq vers sera mon chant finy,
Par chaque jour j'en ai fait un couplet.
Noël nouvelet! Noël chantons icy!

5. Good King Wenceslas

Music & Lyric by John Mason Neale (1818-1866)
Music arranged and adapted by Loreena McKennitt

Good King Wenceslas looked out
On the Feast of Stephen
When the snow lay 'round about
Deep and crisp and even
Brightly shone the moon that night
Though the frost was cruel
When a poor man came in sight
Gath'ring winter fuel

"Hither, page, and stand by me,
If thou know'st it, telling
Yonder peasant, who is he?
Where and what his dwelling?"
"Sire, he lives a good league hence,
Underneath the mountain
Right against the forest fence
By Saint Agnes' fountain."

"Bring me flesh and bring me wine
Bring me pine-logs hither
Thou and I shall see him dine
When we bear them thither."
Page and monarch, forth they went
Forth they went together
Through the rude wind's wild lament
And the bitter weather.

"Sire, the night is darker now
And the wind blows stronger
Fails my heart, I know not how
I can go no longer."
"Mark my footsteps, my good page
Tread thou in them boldly
Thou shall find the winter's rage
Freeze the blood less coldly."

In his master's step he trod
Where the snow lay dinted
Heat was in the very sod
Which the Saint had printed
Therefore, Christian men, rejoice
Wealth or rank possessing
Ye, who now shall bless the poor
Shall yourselves find blessing.

6. Coventry Carol

Traditional
Music Arranged & Adapted
by Loreena McKennitt

Lullay lullu, thou little tiny child
By by, lullay, lullay

O sisters too, how may we do
For to preserve this day
This poor youngling
For whom we sing
By by, lullay lullay?

Lully, lullay, thou little tiny child
By by, lully lullay

Herod, the king
In his raging
Chargeth he doth this day
His men of might
In his own right,
All young children to slay

Lully, thou little tiny child
La la, lullay lully

That woe is me
Poor child for thee!
And every morn and day,
For thy parting
Neither say nor sing
By by, lully lullay!

Lully, lullay, thou little tiny child
By by, lully lullay



7. God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen (Abdelli version)

Music arranged and adapted by Loreena McKennitt
Lyric: Traditional English (18th cent)

God rest ye merry, gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay
Remember Christ our Saviour
Was born on Christmas Day
To save us all from Satan's powers
When we were gone astray.

O tidings of comfort and joy,
comfort and joy;
O tidings of comfort and joy!

"Fear not," then said the angel
"Let nothing you affright
This day is born a saviour
Of a pure virgin bright
To free all those who trust in him
From Satan's pow'rs and might"

The shepherds at those tidings
Rejoiced much in mind,
And left their flocks a-feeding
In tempest, storm and wind
And went to Bethlehem straightaway
This blessed babe to find



But when to Bethlehem they came
Whereat this infant lay
They found him in a manger
Where oxen feed on hay
His mother Mary kneeling
Unto the Lord did pray

Now to the Lord sing praises
All you within this place
And with true love and brotherhood
Each other now embrace
The holy tide of Christmas
All others doth deface

8. Snow

Music: Loreena McKennitt
Lyric: Archibald Lampman (1861-1899)

White are the far-off fields, and white
The fading forests grow;
The wind dies out along the heights,
And denser still the snow
A gathering weight on roof and tree,
Falls down scarce audibly

The meadows and far-sheeted streams
Lie still without a sound;
Like some soft minister of dreams
The snow-fall hoods me around;
In wood and water, earth and air
Silence is everywhere

Save when at lonely spells
Some farmer's sleigh, urged on,
With rustling runners and sharp bells
Swings by me and is gone;
From the empty space I hear
A sound remote and clear
The barking of a dog,
To cattle, is sharply pealed,
Borne echoing from some wayside stall
Or barnyard far afield;
Then all is silent and the snow falls
Settling soft and slow

The evening deepens and the grey
Folds closer round the sky
The world seems so shrouded,
so far away.
Its noises sleep, and I as secret as
Yon buried stream plod dumbly on
and dream.

I dream. . . .

9. Breton Carol

Music: Traditional
Arranged by Loreena McKennitt

10. Seeds of Love

Music: Loreena McKennitt
Lyric: Traditional

I sowed the seeds of love
I sowed them in the spring
I gathered them up in the morning so soon
When the small birds so sweetly sing
When the small birds so sweetly sing

The gardener was standing by
I asked him to choose for me
He chose for me the violet, the lily and the pink
But those I refused all three
But those I refused all three

The violet I did not like
Because it bloomed so soon
The lily and the pink I really over-think
So I thought I would wait till June
So I thought I would wait till June

11. Gloucestershire Wassail

Music & Lyric: Traditional
Arranged by Loreena McKennitt

Wassail! Wassail all over the town!
Our toast it is white and our ale it is brown;
Our bowl it is made of the white maple tree;
With the wassailing-bowl, we'll drink to thee!

So here is to Cherry and to his right cheek!
Pray God send out master a good piece of beef,
And a good piece of beef that we all may see;
With the wassailing-bowl we'll drink to thee!
And here is to Dobbin and to his right eye!

In June there was a red rose bud
That is the flower for me
I often times have plucked that red rose bud
Till I gained the willow tree
Till I gained the willow tree

The willow tree will twist
The willow tree will twine
I oftentimes I've wished I was in the young man's arms
Who once had the heart of mine
Who once had the heart of mine

I sowed the seeds of love
I sowed them in the spring
I gathered them up in the morning so soon
When the small birds so sweetly sing
When the small birds so sweetly sing

Pray God send our master a good Christmas pie,
And a good Christmas pie that we may all see;
With our wassailing-bowl, we'll drink to thee!

So here is to Broad May and to her broad horn!
May God send our master a good crop of corn,
And a good crop of corn that we may all see;
With the wassailing-bowl we'll drink to thee!
And here is to Fillpail and to her left ear!
Pray God send our master a happy new year,

12. Emmanuel

Music & Lyric: Traditional
Arranged by Loreena McKennitt

And a happy new year as e'er he did see;
With our wassailing-bowl we'll drink to thee!

And here is to Colly and to her long tail!
Pray God send our master he never may fail
A bowl of strong beer, I pray you draw near,
And our jolly wassail it's then you shall hear.

Then here's to the maid in the lily-white smock
Who tripped to the door and slipped back the lock;
Who tripped to the door and pulled back the pin,
For to let these jolly wassailers in.

Wassail! Wassail all over the town!
Our toast it is white and our ale it is brown;
Our bowl it is made of the white maple tree;
With the wassailing-bowl, we'll drink to thee!

Drink to thee, drink to thee,
With the wassailing-bowl we'll drink to thee.

Veni, veni, Emanuel:
Captivum solve Israel,
Qui gemit in exilio,
Privatus Dei Filio

Gaude! Gaude! Emanuel
Nascetur pro te, Israel.

Veni veni, O Oriens;
Solare nos adveniens;
Noctis depelle nebulas,
Dirasque noctis tenebras.
Gaude! Gaude! Emanuel
Nascetur pro te, Israel.

Veni, Clavis Davidica;
Regna reclude celica;
Fac iter tutum superum,
Et claude vias inferum.

Gaude! Gaude! Emanuel
Nascetur pro te, Israel.

Veni, veni, Adonāi,
Qui populo in Sināi
Legem dedisiti vertice
In maiestate glorie.

Gaude! Gaude! Emanuel
Nascetur pro te, Israel.

Credits

Producer: Loreena McKennitt
Assistant Producer: Brian Hughes

Mastered by: Bob Ludwig at Gateway
Mastering Studios, Inc., Portland, ME

Business Affairs: Ian Blackaby,
Ardent Music

Production Coordination:
Su Hutchinson

Tracks 1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 11, 12, 13 Recorded
and mixed at Real World Studios, Box,
England June 15 to June 25th, 2008

Recording & Mixing Engineer:
Stuart Bruce

Assistant Engineers: Robin Baynton,
Greg Freeman, Adam Daniels

Graphic Design:
De St. Croix & Associates Ltd.

Cover Image: John Nobrega
Tracks 5, 7, 8, 10 Recorded at
Real World Studios, Box, England
July 20 to 22nd, 1995

Recording Engineer: Stuart Bruce
Mixed at Metalworks Studios,
Mississauga, Ontario

Mixing Engineer: Jeff Wolpert
Assistant Engineers: Russel Kearney, Brad
Nelson, Mark Peters

Track 10 "Seeds Of Love" additional
mixing & editing Stuart Bruce

Track 6 "Coventry Carol" performed
live on KCRW- FM's Morning Becomes
Eclectic on December 2, 1994, in
Santa Monica, CA. Hosted by Chris
Douridas. Recorded by Theo Mondle
using M Sound. Additional recording
& mixing by Jeff Wolpert.

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Musicians

Loreena McKennitt: vocals (1, 3, 4, 5, 6,
7, 8, 10, 11, 12), harp (3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 13)
keyboards (10,12), piano (1),
accordion (2, 3, 4)

Abdelli: vocal (7), mandola (7)

Waiel Abo Baker Ali: violin (5, 7)

Bob Berry: vocal (11)

Gill Berry: vocal (11)

Dan Ar Braz: acoustic guitar (5)

Aidan Brennan: acoustic guitar
(5, 8, 10)

Bernard Coulter: vocal (11)

Simon Edwards: acoustic and electric
bass (1, 3, 9, 13), marimbula (2),
sentir (4)

Ben Grossman: hurdy gurdy, (1, 2, 4)
percussion (2, 4, 9)

Brian Hughes: acoustic and electric
guitars (1, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13), guitar
synthesizer (1, 4, 6, 7,8, 12), Celtic
bouzouki (2, 3, 4)

George Koller: acoustic bass
(5, 7, 8, 10)

Caroline Lavelle: cello (1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9,
10, 12, 13) Appears courtesy of Ringing
Tree Records

Rick Lazar: percussion (2, 4, 5, 7, 8)

Hugh Marsh: violin (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8,
9, 10, 12, 13)

Stratis Psaradellis: Greek lyra (4),
Greek lute (3, 4)

Donald Quan: tabla (4, 7), viola (1, 2,
3,, 9, 10,12, 13), accordion (5, 8)

Hossam Ramzy: percussion (5, 7)

Ellen Robotham: vocal (11)

Philippa Toulson: vocal (11)

Eddie Upton: vocal (11)

Robert A. White: shawm (7), uilleann
pipes (5, 10), whistle (5, 8, 10)

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13. In the Bleak Midwinter

Music: Gustav Holst (1874-1934)
Arranged and adapted by Loreena McKennitt



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