





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

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



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

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.

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

To make the dead alive 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 our lady had,  
It was the rejoice of six.  
To see her own son Jesus,  
To bear the crucifix.

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

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

To wear the crown of heaven 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.

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 Nouvellet!

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

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

En Bethléem, Marie et Joseph vy,  
L'asne et le bœuf, l'Enfant couché  
parmy;

La crèche était au lieu d'un bercelet.  
Noël nouvellet! Noël chantons icy!

L'estoile vint qui le jour esclairy,  
Et la vy bien d'où j'étois départy  
En Bethléem les trois roys conduisaient.  
Noël nouvellet! 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 jardin.

Noël nouvellet! Noël chantons icy!

Noël nouvellet! 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 nouvellet! 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

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

## 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!  
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!

## 12. Emmanuel

Music & Lyric: Traditional  
Arranged by Loreena McKennitt

And here is to Fillpail and to her left ear!  
Pray God send our master a happy new year,  
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, Adonai,  
Qui populo in Sinai  
Legem dedisti 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, 6, 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 8 "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  
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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)



## 13. In the Bleak Midwinter

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

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