

NOV/DEC 2020



nso
NORTHAMPTON
SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA

UPCOMING
EVENTS

CHRISTMAS
LISTENING

FESTIVE
CROSS WORD





A Word from the Chair

CHRISTMAS

Welcome to our third newsletter. In it you will find some recommendations for Christmas listening , a listing of upcoming events (including our free NSO online quiz open to everyone), and a festive NSO crossword.

It is hard to believe that the last concert we were able to share was in February. I know many of you will share my feeling that the year has both sped by and at times felt stuck in treacle. I am very glad to report that the orchestra is still vital, with online activities, rehearsals, socials, and quizzes keeping us going.

As always, the committee is engaged with reviewing guidance for community music making regarding venues, rehearsals, and concerts with a view to resuming some of these activities as soon as we can. Please keep an eye on our website and social media for any updates.

I can only apologise that this newsletter is covering two months—November and December. As you may be able to appreciate, new and unexpected pressures associated with the changes we are all experiencing can sometimes intrude on the best laid plans! We will be aiming to continue a monthly newsletter in the new year. If anyone would like to contribute an article or has suggestions for this newsletter please contact me by e-mail at chair@nso.org.uk .

In the meantime, keep yourself and your family safe and have a merry Christmas and happy New Year.

In friendship and music,

Frank Jordan – Chair, Northampton Symphony Orchestra



What's On



Wednesday Evenings 7:30 pm

**NSO Virtual Playing (8:00) and Zoom Social (9:15)
for Members of the NSO**
Orchestra Members contact Robin Simpson

January 30 2021—7:30 pm

NSO Monthly Quiz

**Free to members of the Orchestra, Friends, and
anyone who would like to participate.**

**Contact chair@nso.org.uk for details or register
interest on our Facebook event**

**Do you have an idea or wish to host a
virtual event for the orchestra during this
time? Please contact Frank Jordan at
chair@nso.org.uk**





Some recommendations for listening during the festive season.

The NSO's Christmas Concert is a high point of the year for many members of the orchestra and our audience. Several of these concerts stand out for me, including our Christmas at the Movies Cracker, where we performed the John Williams Star Wars Suite, Alan Bell's entertaining and energetic narration of Scrooge, Poulenc's Babar the Elephant, our brilliant tubist Nicholas Tollervey's solo turn as Tubby the Tuba—and so many more .

Music is a vital part of our holiday tradition, and we are all feeling the loss of sharing what is usually our most popular concert of the year. Until we see each other again in concert, I invite you to enjoy some recorded festive music that I hope you will find enjoyable and interesting.

William Henry Fry
Santa Claus Symphony (1853)

William Henry Fry was one of the earliest American born composers to achieve some level of success. Dubbed “the PT Barnum of classical music” years after his death, his compositions were frequently performed in elaborate manner, with costumes, actors, and even performing animals. His music is often programmatic in nature, and the Santa Claus Symphony is no exception. Several instruments in the orchestra portray Christmas characters and events - a solo double bass as a lost traveller in the snow, violins as angels, a soprano saxophone as a mother singing “Rock a Bye Baby” to her child, and finally a solo bassoon as Father Christmas himself. The piece closes with a rousing arrangement of “Adeste fideles” for a festive Christmas morning.

Recommended recording : Tony Rowe conducting the Royal Scottish National Orchestra



Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov

Christmas Eve Suite (1894)

Rimsky-Korsakov composed his supernatural opera with a spooky story about a widow conspiring with the Devil to steal the moon on Christmas Eve. Despite the strange goings on in the opera, the suite from this opera provides some delightful music for a Christmas Eve listening. The Suite features big Russian brass choruses, delicate snowfalls of woodwind trills, sparkling percussion and harp; and ends with a beautiful setting of a Russian Christmas hymn.

Recommended recording : Neeme Järvi conducting the Royal Scottish National Orchestra



Bryan Kelly

Scrooge (2010)

This distillation of the famous Charles Dickens tale was first performed by the Northampton Symphony Orchestra in our 125th season with compere and narrator Alan Bell. It is an effective and accessible version, with the first half of the piece devoted to Scrooge's ghostly visitations, and the second half a festive setting of Mr Fezziwig's Christmas Ball featuring a solo violin tuning up and starting off a joyous setting of "Sir Roger de Coverley".

Recommended recording: Gavin Sutherland conducting the RTE Concert Orchestra, with Simon Callow narrating – the disc includes several other delightful Christmas selections.

Imani Winds

This Christmas with the Imani Winds (2008)



The Grammy award nominated wind quintet (flute, oboe, clarinet, horn, and bassoon) Imani Winds was formed in the late 1990s to promote the participation of black and Latino people in classical music. Founding members Jeff Scott (horn) and Valerie Coleman (flute), composers in their own right, contribute several fun, interesting, and jazzy settings of Christmas standards. The entire disc is worth frequent Christmas listening, but I particularly enjoy the settings of “Bring a Torch Jeanette Isabella”, “Go Tell It On the Mountain”, “Silent Night”, and an energetic and fun “Jingle Bells” with the odd 5/8 bar thrown in.

P.I. Tchaikovsky

The Nutcracker (1892)



No recommendation of classical Christmas music would be complete without the Nutcracker. While the famous Dances are arguably over familiar, a listen through of the entire ballet or, better yet viewing a full performance is a delightful experience. Many numbers in the ballet outside those selected for the Suite are perfect listening for the Christmas season, including Mother Ginger, Waltz of the Snowflakes, the famous Pas de deux, and the opening Christmas party scenes. Of course, if tried and true is your taste, then nothing says “Christmas” like the Sugar Plum Fairy, the Trepak, and of course Waltz of the Flowers.

Recommended recording: Simon Rattle conducting the Berlin Philharmonic

What are your classical Christmas favourites? Let us know on our Facebook page, or by tagging us in a Tweet

NSO CROSSWORD



ANSWER KEY FOR OUR LAST CROSSWORD

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NSO CROSSWORD



A blank crossword puzzle grid consisting of a 15x15 grid of squares. Numbered squares are provided for clues:

- 1 (down): A tall vertical column of 6 squares.
- 2 (down): A column of 4 squares.
- 3 (down): A column of 4 squares.
- 4 (down): A column of 4 squares.
- 5 (across): A row of 5 squares.
- 6 (across): A row of 4 squares.
- 7 (down): A column of 4 squares.
- 8 (down): A column of 4 squares.
- 9 (down): A column of 4 squares.
- 10 (down): A column of 4 squares.
- 11 (down): A column of 4 squares.
- 12 (across): A long row of 10 squares.
- 13 (down): A column of 4 squares.
- 14 (down): A column of 4 squares.
- 15 (across): A row of 7 squares.
- 16 (down): A column of 5 squares.
- 17 (down): A column of 4 squares.
- 18 (across): A row of 6 squares.
- 19 (across): A row of 7 squares.
- 20 (across): A row of 7 squares.

The grid contains many empty squares for the player to fill in with letters.



NSO CROSSWORD



Across

5. Dun Che Lao Ren rules over Christmas here
6. Here, it was always winter but never Christmas
9. She saw mommy kissing Santa Claus
11. Mele Kalikimaka is Merry Christmas here
12. Scrooge's first name
14. Don't get them wet or feed them after midnight
15. German Christmas Tree
16. Scrooge's boss
18. Composer of a Christmas Concerto
19. He had a wonderful life
20. Wrote a jazz version of the Nutcracker with Billy Strayhorn

Down

1. This ocean contains Christmas Island
2. Kept time for the little drummer boy
3. Saint Nicholas' country
4. Hangs from a turkey's neck
7. Romantic reindeer
8. Clara's nutcracking godfather
10. He sang about chestnuts roasting on an open fire
13. First British monarch with a Christmas tree
17. Brought to England from the Middle East during the Crusades- representing the gifts of the Magi



KEEPING IN TOUCH

Facebook — Northhamptonsymphonyorchestra

Twitter — @NtonSymphOrch

Instagram - Northhamptonsymphonyorchestra

Website - NSO.org.uk

**What would you like to see
in our newsletter?**

**What else would you like to see? Please
contact the Chair, Frank Jordan at
chair@nso.org.uk with suggestions.**

**We are particularly keen to hear from
members of the orchestra, our Friends, and
members of our audience who would be
interested in writing a short article for
inclusion.**

**Until next time, stay safe, healthy and
musical!**

