

Loyola University New Orleans
School of Music and Theatre Arts

Presents

University Chorus

with

Dr. Louise LaBruyère, Director

Sofia Riggio, Assitant Director

Andrew Fath, Piano



Tuesday, December 3, 2019, 7:30 p.m.
Louis J. Roussel Performance Hall

Program

Good King Wenceslas Piae Cantiones

God Rest You Merry Traditional English

Away in a Manger James R. Murray

Angels We have Heard on High Traditional French

While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night William Horne

Breanna Guggenheim, soloist
Sofia Riggio, conductor

A Child's Christmas in Wales Matthew Harris

I. One Christmas was So Much Like Another

II. Fire!

Placido Valdes, Ava Coffin, Nora Cullinan, Madeline Ringwald,
Antonio Domino, Angel Carrasquillo-Mencia

III. Years and Years Ago

Antonio Domino

IV. The Useful Presents

V. The Useless Presents

VI. The Uncles

Noah Stein, Placido Valdes, Jon Marc Olivier, John Tolentino, Ava Lipford,
Breanna Guggenheim, Nora Cullinan
Sofia Riggio, conductor

VII. Always on Christmas Night there was Music

Jocie Purcell, Ava Lipford, Ryan Reynolds, Garrin Mesa
Sofia Riggio, conductor

Notes

A Child's Christmas in Wales

I. One Christmas was So Much Like Another

One Christmas was so much like another, in those years around the sea-town corner now and out of all sound except the distant speaking of the voices I sometimes hear a moment before sleep, that I can never remember whether it snowed for six days and six nights when I was twelve or whether it snowed for twelve days and twelve nights when I was six.

All the Christmases roll down toward the two-tongued sea, like a cold and headlong moon bundling down the sky that was our street; and they stop at the rim of the ice-edged, fish-freezing waves, and I plunge my hands in the snow and bring out whatever I can find. In goes my hand into that wool-white bell-tongued ball of holidays resting at the rim of the carol-singing sea, and out come Mrs. Prothero and the firemen.

II. Fire!

"Fire!" cried Mrs. Prothero, and she beat the dinner-gong.

And we ran down the garden, with the snowballs in our arms, toward the house; and smoke, indeed, was pouring out of the dining-room, and the gong was bombilating, and Mrs. Prothero was announcing ruin like a town crier in Pompeii.

Something was burning all right; perhaps it was Mr. Prothero, who always slept there after midday dinner with a newspaper over his face. But he was standing in the middle of the room, saying, "A fine Christmas!" and smacking at the smoke with a slipper. "Call the fire brigade," cried Mrs. Prothero as she beat the gong.

"They won't be there," said Mr. Prothero, "it's Christmas."

There was no fire to be seen, only clouds of smoke and Mr. Prothero standing in the middle of them, waving his slipper as though he were conducting.

"Do something," he said.

And we threw all our snowballs into the smoke - I think we missed Mr. Prothero - and ran out of the house to the telephone box.

"Let's call the police as well," Jim said.

"And the ambulance."

"And Ernie Jenkins, he likes fires."

But we only called the fire brigade, and soon the fire engine came and three tall men in helmets brought a hose into the house and Mr. Prothero got out just in time before they turned it on. Nobody could have had a noisier Christmas Eve. And when the firemen turned off the hose and were standing in the wet, smoky room, Jim's Aunt, Miss. Prothero, came downstairs and peered in at them. Jim and I waited, very quietly, to hear what she would say to them. She said the right thing, always. She looked at the three tall firemen in their shining helmets, standing among the smoke and cinders and dissolving snowballs, and she said: "Would you like anything to read?"

III. Years and Years Ago

Years and years ago, when I was a boy, when there were wolves in Wales, and birds the color of red-flannel petticoats whisked past the harp-shaped hills, when we sang and wallowed all night and day in caves that smelt like Sunday afternoons in damp front farmhouse parlors, when we rode the daft and happy hills bareback, it snowed and it snowed. But here a small boy says: "It snowed last year, too. I made a snowman and my brother knocked it down and I knocked my brother down and then we had tea."

"But that was not the same snow," I say. "Our snow was not only shaken from white wash buckets down the sky, it came shawling out of the ground and swam and drifted out of the arms and hands and bodies of the trees; snow grew overnight on the roofs of the houses like a pure and grandfather moss, minutely ivied the walls and settled on the postman, opening the gate, like a dumb, numb thunder-storm of white, torn Christmas cards."

IV. The Useful Presents

"And then the presents?"

"There were Useful Presents: engulfing mufflers of the old coach days, and mittens made for giant sloths; zebra scarfs of a substance like silky gum that could be tug-o'-warred down to the galoshes; blinding tam-o; shanters like patchwork tea cozies and bunny-suited busbies and balaclavas for victims of head-shrinking tribes; from aunts who always wore wool next to the skin there were moustached and rasping vests that made you wonder why the aunts had any skin left at all; and once I had a little crocheted nose bag from an aunt now, alas, no longer whinnying with us. And pictureless books in which small boys, through warned with quotations not to, *would* skate on Farmer Giles' pond and did and drowned; and books that told me everything about the wasp, except why."

V. The Useless Presents

"Go on to the Useless Presents."

"Bags of moist and many-colored jelly babies and a folded flag and a false nose and a tram-conductor's cap and a machine that punched tickets and rang a bell; never a catapult; once, by mistake that no one could explain, a little hatchet; and a celluloid duck that made, when you pressed it, a most unducklike sound, a mewling moo that an ambitious cat might make who wished to be a cow; and a painting book in which I could make the grass, the trees, the sea and the animals any colour I pleased, and still the dazzling sky-blue sheep are grazing in the red field under the rainbow-billed and pea-green birds.

Hardboileds, toffee, fudge and allsorts, crunches, cracknels, humbugs, glaciers, marzipan, and butterwelsh for the Welsh. And troops of bright tin soldiers, who, if they could not fight, could always run. And Snakes-and-Families and Happy Ladders. And Easy Hobbi-Games for Little Engineers, complete with instructions.

Oh, easy for Leonardo! And a whistle to make the dogs bark to wake up the old man next door to make him beat on the wall with his stick to shake our picture off the wall.

And a packet of cigarettes: you put one in your mouth and you stood at the corner of the street and you waited for hours, in vain, for an old lady to sold you for smoking a cigarette, and then with a smirk you ate it.”

VI. *The Uncles*

“Were there Uncles like in our hours?”

“There are always Uncles at Christmas.

“The same Uncles.”

For dinner we had turkey and blazing pudding, and after dinner the Uncles sat in front of the fire, loosened all buttons, put their large moist hands over their watch chains, groaned a little and slept. Mothers, aunts and sisters scuttled to and fro, bearing tureens. Auntie Bessie, who had already been frightened, twice, by a clock-work mouse, whimpered at the sideboard and had some elderberry wine. The dog was sick. Auntie Dosie had to have three aspirins, but Auntie Hannah, who liked port, stood in the middle of the snowbound back yard, singing like a big-bosomed thrush. I would blow up balloons to see how big they would blow up to; and, when they burst, which they all did, the Uncles jumped and rumbled. In the rich and heavy afternoon, the Uncles breathing like dolphins and the snow descending, I would sit among festoons and Chinese lanterns and nibble dates and try to make a model man-o'-war, following the Instructions for Little Engineers, and produce what might have been mistaken for a sea-going tramcar.

Or I would go out, my bright new boots squeaking, into the white world, on to the seaward hill, to call on Jim and Dan and Jack and to pad through the still streets, leaving huge deep footprints on the hidden pavements.

“I bet people will think there’s been hippos.”

“What would you do if you saw a hippo coming down our street?”

“I’d go like this, bang! I’d throw him over the railings and roll him down the hill and then I’d tickle him under the ear and he’d wag his tail.”

“What would you do if you saw *two* hippos?”

Iron-flanked and bellowing he-hippos clanked and battered through the scudding snow toward us as we passed Mr. Daniel’s house.

“Let’s post Mr. Daniel and snow-ball through his letter box.”

“Let’s write things in the snow.”

“Let’s write, ‘Mr. Daniel looks like a spaniel’ all over his lawn.”

Or we walked on the white shore.

“Can the fishes see it’s snowing?”

We returned home through the poor streets where only a few children fumbled with bare red fingers in the wheel-rutted snow and cat-called after us, their voice fading away, as we trudged uphill, into the cries of the dock birds and the hooting of ships out in the whirling bay. And then, at tea the recovered Uncles

would be jolly; and the ice cake loomed in the centre of the table like a marble grave. Auntie Hannah laced her tea with rum, because it was only once a year.

And I remember that we went singing carols once, when there wasn't the shaving of a moon to light the flying streets. At the end of a long road was a drive that led to a large house, and we stumbled up the darkness of the drive that night, each of us afraid, each one holding a stone in his hand in case, and all of us too brave to say a word. The wind through the trees made noises as of old and unpleasant and maybe webfooted men wheezing in caves. We reached the black bulk of the house.

"What shall we give them? Hark the Herald?"

"No," Jack said, "Good King Wenceslas. I'll count three."

One, two three, and we began to sing, our voices high and seemingly distant in the snow-felted darkness round the house that was occupied by nobody we knew. We stood close together, near the dark door.

Good King Wenceslas looked out.

On the Feast of Stephen...

And then a small, dry voice, like the voice of someone who has not spoken for a long time, joined our singing: a small, dry, eggshell voice from the other side of the door: a small dry voice through the keyhole. And when we stopped running we were outside *our* house; the front room was lovely; balloons floated under the hot-water-bottle-gulping-gas; everything was good again and shone over the town.

"Perhaps it was a ghost," Jim said.

"Perhaps it was trolls," Dan said, who was always reading.

"Let's go in and see if there's any jelly left," Jack said. And we did that.

VII. Always on Christmas Night there was Music

Always on Christmas night there was music. An uncle played the fiddle, a cousin sang "Cherry Ripe," and another uncle sang "Drake's Drum." It was very warm in the little house. Auntie Hannah, who had got on to the parsnip wine, sang a song about Bleeding Hearts and Death, and then another in which she said her heart was like a Bird's Nest; and then everybody laughed again; and then I went to bed. Looking through my bedroom window, out into the moonlight and the unending smoke-colored snow, I could see the lights in the windows of all the other houses on our hill and hear the music rising from them up the long, steadily falling night. I turned the gas down, I got into bed. I said some words to the close and holy darkness, and then I slept.

Text by Dylan Thomas

Personnel

Nereida Alvarenga
Anays Ayala
Molly Barclay
Giulia Barreto
Annemarie Bernard
Caroline Boudreaux
Krisin Bradley
Skylar Broussard
Ian Brown
William Brown
Kai Buie
Charlotte Dresser
Angel Carrasquillo-Mecia
Hubert Chason
Ava Coffin
Finley Coover
Shelbi Copain
Nora Cullinan
Antonio Domino
Lucinda Ealey
Raine Faulk
Amber Filippone
Josefina Gautier
Analia Giralá
Quinn Gleeson
Allie Golson
Mynthia Gonkpala
Kayla Gonzales
Kelesha Gray
Allison Greutzner
Breanna Guggenheim
Grace Hawkins
Piper Hillerich
Peter Paul James
Johanna Jeter
Drew Johnson
Cy Jones
Isaiah Jones

Jerold Knoll, III
Marina Kotscho
Alexis Langlois
Miranda Lassiter
Seth LeBlanc
Carmen LeJeune
Ava Lipford
Victoria Logwood
Garrin Mesa
Karissa Mooney
Talia Moore
Kelani Mueller
Linda Nibert
Jon Marc Olivier
Ryan Pennington
Joeclyn Purcell
Ryan Reynolds
Victoria Richard
Sofia Riggio
Madeline Ringwald
Amanda Rivers
Moresa Robinson
Julian Rubio
Alyssa Ruffini
Veronica Samiec
Franklin Sartain
Sabrina Smith
Nah Stein
Hayley Taylor
Blue Taylor
Vanessa Tetzlaff
John Tolentino
Riley Vagis
Placido Valdes
Jade Verret
Allison Waguespack
Charlotte Wheeler

Upcoming Events

ALSO & String Ensembles

Wednesday, Dec. 4, 7 p.m. | Roussel Hall

Free admission

Loyola Symphony Orchestra

Saturday, Dec. 7, 7:30 p.m. | Roussel Hall

Free admission

Christmas at Loyola

Sunday, Dec. 8, 3 p.m. | Holy Name of Jesus Church

Free admission

Senior Recital: Skiles Kelley, jazz guitar

Sunday, Dec. 8, 7:30 p.m. | Nunemaker Auditorium

Free admission

Senior Recital: Demetrio Castillo, composition

Sunday, Dec. 8, 7:30 p.m. | Roussel Hall

Free admission

Spring Choir Highlights:

Choir Festival

Mar. 29-31

Chanticleer

Tuesday, Mar. 31, 7:30 p.m. | Holy Name of Jesus Church

Ticket required

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