

The NAXOS logo is located in the top left corner, featuring the word "NAXOS" in white capital letters on a blue rectangular background. Above the text is a stylized icon of a classical building with columns.

NAXOS

A large, colorful stained glass tree is the central visual element, rendered in a mosaic style with various colors like red, purple, green, and yellow. The tree is set against a light blue background with a subtle, swirling pattern. The tree's branches extend across the top and left sides of the frame.

JOHN RUTTER

Brass at Christmas

arranged by Luc Vertommen

Black Dyke Band

**Sheffield Philharmonic
Chorus**

Nicholas Childs

Darius Battiwalla

- | | | |
|-----------|---|------|
| 1 | O Clap Your Hands (1973)
Text: Bible – Old Testament (Psalm 47). 'O Clap Your Hands' by John Rutter © Oxford University Press 1973, 2024.
This arrangement by permission of Oxford University Press. All rights reserved. | 3:15 |
| 2 | Angels' Carol (1988)
'Angels' Carol', words and music by John Rutter © Oxford University Press 1988, 2024.
This arrangement by permission of Oxford University Press. All rights reserved. | 3:25 |
| 3 | Carol of the Magi (2009)
'Carol of the Magi' by John Rutter © Collegium Music Publications 2010. Exclusively licensed worldwide to Oxford University Press. This arrangement, 2024, by permission. All rights reserved. | 4:50 |
| 4 | Rejoice and Be Merry (2004)
'Rejoice and Be Merry' by John Rutter © Collegium Music Publications 2004. Exclusively licensed worldwide to Oxford University Press. This arrangement, 2024, by permission. All rights reserved. | 2:09 |
| 5 | Be Thou My Vision (1989)
'Be Thou My Vision' by John Rutter © Oxford University Press 1989, 2024.
This arrangement by permission of Oxford University Press. All rights reserved. | 4:34 |
| 6 | Star Carol (1972)
'Star Carol' by John Rutter © Oxford University Press 1972, 2024.
This arrangement by permission of Oxford University Press. All rights reserved. | 2:34 |
| 7 | Dormi, Jesu (1999)
'Dormi, Jesu' by John Rutter © Oxford University Press 1999, 2024.
This arrangement by permission of Oxford University Press. All rights reserved. | 3:43 |
| 8 | Nativity Carol (1963)
'Nativity Carol', words and music by John Rutter © Oxford University Press 1967, 2024.
This arrangement by permission of Oxford University Press. All rights reserved. | 4:45 |
| 9 | Traditional English Carol: Here We Come a-Wassailing (arr. John Rutter, 1969)
'Here We Come a-Wassailing' arranged by John Rutter from 'Carols for Choirs 2' © Oxford University Press 1969, 2024.
This arrangement by permission of Oxford University Press. All rights reserved. | 3:19 |
| 10 | New Year (2006)
'New Year' by John Rutter © Collegium Music Publications 2007. Exclusively licensed worldwide to Oxford University Press. This arrangement, 2024, by permission. All rights reserved. | 4:05 |
| 11 | Shepherd's Pipe Carol (1965)
'Shepherd's Pipe Carol' by John Rutter © Oxford University Press 1967, 2024.
This arrangement by permission of Oxford University Press. All rights reserved. | 2:30 |
| 12 | Christmas Lullaby (1989)
'Christmas Lullaby' by John Rutter © Oxford University Press 1990.
This arrangement © 2000 Oxford University Press. All rights reserved. | 3:41 |
| 13 | Jesus Child (1973)
'Jesus Child', words and music by John Rutter © Oxford University Press 1974, 1993.
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|----|--|------|
| 14 | Candlelight Carol (1984)
'Candlelight Carol', words and music by John Rutter © Oxford University Press 1985, 2024.
This arrangement by permission of Oxford University Press. All rights reserved. | 3:34 |
| 15 | Te Deum (1988)
Text: Anonymous, 5th century. 'Te Deum' by John Rutter © Oxford University Press 1990, 2024.
This arrangement by permission of Oxford University Press. All rights reserved. | 7:41 |
| 16 | Traditional English Carol: We Wish You a Merry Christmas (arr. John Rutter, 1985)
'We Wish You a Merry Christmas' arranged for brass quintet by John Rutter © Oxford University Press 1985, 1992.
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John Rutter (b. 1945)

Brass at Christmas

The Black Dyke Band is among my all-time musical heroes, and this new album is a gem from start to finish. It will make many listeners' Christmases merry.
– John Rutter

John Rutter is probably the most celebrated and successful composer of carols alive today, and without doubt one of the most gifted composers of his generation. Rutter has composed a huge amount of popular sacred choral pieces to celebrate Christmas. His unerring sense of melody, combined with a rich harmonic palette, makes his music instantly accessible to both performers and audiences alike. Many of his choral anthems and hymns have been set using a variety of different instrumental ensembles and this new album brings together a selection of his most famous Christmas carols in beautiful new arrangements for brass band. Enjoy the festive spirit of this collection of uplifting carols that narrates, reflects and celebrates the Christmas story.

O Clap Your Hands was composed in 1973 and dedicated to Lionel Dakers and the Incorporated Association of Organists. Originally written for four-part choir and organ, Rutter also wrote a version with orchestral accompaniment that has been recorded several times. Using verses from Psalm 47, the syncopated bass line of the opening helps create the exuberance suggested by the title.

Written in the 1980s and using his own text, *Angels' Carol* has become one of the most popular of the composer's works. Originally composed to be performed by the winners of a now defunct choirboy and choirgirl competition, it exists in several forms including four-part mixed voice choir using different instrumental accompaniment and versions for upper voices only. The text refers to several elements of the Christmas story, including the refrain 'Gloria in excelsis Deo'.

Commissioned by Red Balloon, an organisation dedicated to the recovery of bullied children, *Carol of the Magi* tells the story of the Wise Men's journey to Bethlehem. An Epiphany carol, the beautiful melody originally scored for cello is wonderfully transcribed here to euphonium.

Published in 2004, *Rejoice and Be Merry* was composed for Dr J. Reilly and the Washington Cathedral Choral Society. The joyful music totally reflects the text and meaning of the Christmas story in this most uplifting carol.

Be Thou My Vision is a well-known hymn very often sung to the traditional Irish tune *Slane*. However, when writing this hymn for Dr Paul Thomas and the Oratorio Choir of St Michael and All Angels Church, Dallas, Rutter utilised the alternative melody published in 1912 by Eleanor Hull. The lyrics beautifully express the desire for a close and intimate relationship with God. The hymn begins with a desire for God to be the guiding force in our lives, acknowledging that nothing else matters but His presence. It primes the heart and mind to focus solely on Him and seek His will in all things, both day and night. It culminates in acknowledging God as the ultimate treasure and source of true richness. The hymn closes with a call to God to remain the vision and ruler of our hearts, regardless of the circumstances we face. Published in 2015, this setting displays Rutter's wonderful gift of writing beautiful melodies of deceptive simplicity.

Star Carol was composed for The Bach Choir and its then conductor Sir David Willcocks. It fulfilled the brief to write a piece that had a refrain that was memorable and able to be sung by children in the audience during the choir's popular Christmas concerts at the Royal Albert Hall.

Dormi, Jesu (also known as *The Virgin's Cradle Hymn*) was written in 1999 for performance by the choir of King's College Cambridge with conductor Stephen Cleobury, during the broadcast on Christmas Eve of the college's Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols.

One of Rutter's earliest and most endearing carols, *Nativity Carol* was composed in 1963. With its gentle, lullaby feel, warm melody, and existing in many different settings, it remains a firm favourite of choirs of all abilities.

Wassailing is a Twelfth Night tradition that has been practised in Britain, especially in the southern counties, for centuries. Originally thought to have been used as a way to encourage a good harvest by singing, drinking and dancing throughout apple and pear orchards, it also extends to passing from house to house and wishing good health for the following year to the occupants and offering a sup from the wassail bowl. Published in 1969, Rutter's setting of *Here We Come a-Wassailing* with its jaunty compound rhythms evokes the jocular spirit of this ancient tradition.

Commissioned by the organist and choir of Sandringham Church to celebrate the eightieth birthday of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, *New Year* was premiered with the Queen in attendance on New Year's Eve 2006. The warm lyricism echoes the carol's message of hope for the year to come.

Shepherd's Pipe Carol was John Rutter's first composition to be published. Written in 1965 while still a student at Clare College, Cambridge, it had its first performance at a Christmas concert given by the choir of Clare College with Rutter himself conducting. It came to the attention of David Willcocks, then director of the Choir of King's College, Cambridge, who asked for a copy of the manuscript. He then suggested to Oxford University Press that it should be published and also later for it to be recorded by the record company EMI. It was to be the start of a long and successful partnership between the two. The carol's lyrics tell the story of a shepherd boy playing his pipes as he follows the star to Bethlehem. The jaunty melody with its use of syncopation and the introduction of triple time metre in the refrain suggests the boy tripping along happily on his quest to play his pipes in the stable for the baby Jesus.

Christmas Lullaby was commissioned by The Bach Choir in 1989 to celebrate the seventieth birthday of David Willcocks and was premiered at the Royal Albert Hall. The carol has become extremely popular, thanks to its haunting melody and references to the Christmas story.

Jesus Child was written in 1973 for Simon Lindley and the choir of St Albans School. This lively carol, with its Caribbean inspired rhythms and narrative text about the birth of Jesus, will bring light to the darkest winter day.

In 1984, Rutter was commissioned by John Romeri, director of music at the Church of Assumption in Bellevue, Pennsylvania, to write a carol to celebrate the Virgin Mary and the love for her son. The result was *Candlelight Carol*, with the piece being recorded by the composer's group the Cambridge Singers.

Te Deum is a setting of 5th-century words, which, sung to a variety of chants, form part of the traditional Anglican service of Matins. Rutter's exuberant *Te Deum*, composed in 1988, was originally written with organ accompaniment for the Guild of Church Musicians for its Centenary Service in Canterbury Cathedral. The composer later expanded the accompaniment to include brass, timpani and percussion. There was also a later third version for orchestra. This version for brass band is perfect for the piece, recalling as it does the pageantry which for centuries has formed part of the English choral tradition.

Unquestionably, John Rutter is a master of taking well-known music and breathing new life and freshness into it. His brilliant setting of *We Wish You a Merry Christmas*, a traditional Christmas favourite, concludes this festive album.

Philip Goodwin

1 O Clap Your Hands

O clap your hands together all ye people
O sing unto God with the voice of melody
For the Lord is high and to be fear'd
He is the great King upon all the earth

He shall subdue the people under us
and the nations under our feet
He shall choose out an heritage for us
Even the worship of Jacob whom he loved

God is gone up with a merry noise
and the Lord with the sound of the trump

Oh sing praises, sing praises unto our God
Oh sing praises, sing praises unto our King
For God is the King upon all the earth
Sing ye praises with understanding

Bible – Old Testament (Psalm 47, vv. 1–7)

8 Nativity Carol

Born in a stable so bare
Born so long ago
Born 'neath light of star
He who loved us so

Far away, silent he lay
Born today, your homage pay
For Christ is born for aye
Born on Christmas Day

Cradled by mother so fair
Tender her lullaby
Over her son so dear
Angel hosts fill the sky

Far away, silent he lay
Born today, your homage pay
For Christ is born for aye
Born on Christmas Day

Wise men from distant far land
Shepherds from starry hills
Worship this babe so rare
Hearts with his warmth he fills

Far away, silent he lay
Born today, your homage pay
For Christ is born for aye
Born on Christmas Day

Love in that stable was born
Into our hearts to flow
Innocent dreaming babe
Make me thy love to know

Far away, silent he lay
Born today, your homage pay
For Christ is born for aye
Born on Christmas Day

John Rutter

'Nativity Carol', words and music by John Rutter.

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15 Te Deum

We praise thee, O God:
we acknowledge thee to be the Lord.
All the earth doth worship thee:
the Father everlasting.
To thee all angels cry aloud:
the heavens and all the Powers therein.
To thee Cherubin and Seraphin:
continually do cry,
Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth;
Heaven and earth are full of the Majesty of thy Glory.
The glorious company of the Apostles praise thee,
The goodly fellowship of the Prophets praise thee.
The noble army of Martyrs praise thee.
The holy Church throughout all the world doth acknowledge thee;
The Father of an infinite Majesty,
Thine honourable, true, and only Son;
Also the Holy Ghost, the Comforter.
Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ.
Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father.
When thou tookest upon thee to deliver man:
thou didst not abhor the Virgin's womb.
When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death:
thou didst open the Kingdom of heaven
to all believers.

Thou sittest at the right hand of God:
in the glory of the Father.
We believe that thou shalt come:
to be our Judge.
We therefore pray thee, help thy servants:
whom thou hast redeemed with thy precious blood.
Make them to be numbered with thy Saints:
in glory everlasting.
O Lord, save thy people: and bless thine heritage.
Govern them: and lift them up for ever.
Day by day we magnify thee;
And we worship thy Name:
ever world without end.
Vouchsafe, O Lord: to keep us this day without sin.
O Lord, have mercy upon us.
O Lord, let thy mercy lighten upon us:
As our trust is in thee.
O Lord, in thee have I trusted:
let me never be confounded.

Anonymous, 5th century

Recorded: 26 June 2023 at Morley Town Hall, Leeds 2-7, 9 November 2023 at Denshaw Village Hall, Oldham 9-14 16
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Engineer and editor: Phil Hardman

Assistant engineer: Ben Macdonald

Publishers: Band Press VOF 1-10 14 15, Winwood Music 11-13 16

Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus

Patrons: Petroc Trelawny and Samuel West



Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus is South Yorkshire's foremost large mixed-voice chorus, performing regularly with leading orchestras including the BBC Philharmonic, Royal Northern Sinfonia and Manchester Camerata, with internationally renowned conductors such as Gianandrea Nosedo, Markus Poschner and Nicholas Kraemer. Nominated for the 2024 Royal Philharmonic Society's Inspiration Award and for a Making Music Award in 2023, the Chorus has participated in the BBC Proms, appears on acclaimed recordings and regularly works with the Philharmonischer Chor Bochum and Ensemble Vocal Perigueux. Proud to be chorus in residence at Sheffield City Hall, the chorus performs with orchestra in residence The Hallé and acclaimed soloists as part of the Sheffield International Concert Season. The chorus enjoys a close relationship with the Black Dyke Band, with whom it has collaborated on a number of recordings and performances including two world premieres: Philip Wilby's *The Holy Face* with Halifax Choral Society and the Yorkshire Youth Choir, and Paul Mealar's *Paradise* at the 2018 Brass Band Festival broadcast on BBC Radio 3. www.sheffieldphil.org

Darius Battiwalla



Darius Battiwalla has been music director of the Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus since 1997. In addition to preparing it for visiting orchestras and conductors – including Mark Elder, Gianandrea Nosedo, Nicholas Kraemer and Paul Daniel – he has conducted the choir in performances with The Hallé, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic and Royal Northern Sinfonia, and directed from the harpsichord with the Manchester Camerata. Since he took over as music director, the choir has performed from memory for the first time, and has appeared at the BBC Proms and on recordings for Chandos. Battiwalla has worked regularly as guest chorusmaster or conductor with many other choirs including the Northern Sinfonia Chorus and Netherlands Radio Choir. Recent projects include working with the Lucerne Festival Academy in preparation for a performance of Berio's *Coro* conducted by Simon Rattle and conducting the BBC Philharmonic in an album of music for BBC Young Chorister of the Year. He recently directed the Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus with the Black Dyke Band in premiere recordings of the brass band arrangement of Rutter's *Gloria*, and Paul Mealar's *Paradise*. www.dariusbattiwalla.com

Black Dyke Band



Black Dyke Band holds the highest rank in the worldwide brass band community. It has continued to win significant competitions under its music director, Nicholas Childs, who took on musical leadership of the band in 2000, and in 2015 the band became European Champion Band for the 13th time – in 2014 the band, for the 30th time, was declared British Open Champions. The band has also been National Champion of Great Britain on 24 occasions, most recently in October 2023. In 2009, and again in 2011, 2012 and 2013, it became Champion Band at the English National Championships. Black Dyke Band is the most recorded band in the world, with over 370 recordings. Under Nicholas Childs, it has received multiple CD of the Year awards in the brass press. The band has appeared in major concert halls around the world from New York to Tokyo and has appeared at the BBC Proms. Its performing and recording schedule can be considered among the busiest and most productive of any British brass band. The band logo of the stag's head and Latin quotation are taken from the armorial bearings granted in 1857 to John Foster, founder of the band. The quotation translates to 'Act Justly and Fear Nothing.'

www.blackdykeband.co.uk

Nicholas Childs



Heralded as a leading figure in the worldwide brass community, Nicholas Childs has achieved the highest international reputation as a performer, teacher, conductor, interpreter and advocate of new music. He has been marked with continued contest success, including the British Open, National and European Brass Band Championships. Further acclaim has come for his many innovative concerts and world premieres, and his recordings with Black Dyke Band have been heralded as the very best in the brass band world. As one of the world's most recognised masters of the euphonium and brass specialist, Childs has performed and taught internationally, and has appeared with the BBC Philharmonic, The Hallé and Canadian Brass, among others. Professor Childs gives particular emphasis to the development of the brass band movement through his commitment to training outstanding young musicians, including within the Yorkshire Youth Brass Band, and the National Children's Brass Band of Great Britain, of which he is founder and music director. He currently serves as professor of music at the Royal Northern College of Music and Senzoku Gakuen College of Music, Tokyo.

John Rutter is probably the most acclaimed and successful composer of carols alive today. His large selection of popular sacred choral pieces in the genre reflect and celebrate the Christmas story. Rutter's unerring sense of melody combined with a rich harmonic palette makes his music instantly accessible to both performers and audiences alike. This recording brings together a selection of his most famous Christmas carols in beautiful new arrangements for brass performed by the Black Dyke Band.

**John
RUTTER**
(b. 1945)



- | | | | |
|--|-------------|--|-------------|
| 1 O Clap Your Hands (1973)* | 3:15 | 9 Traditional, arr. Rutter:
Here We Come a-Wassailing* | 3:19 |
| 2 Angels' Carol (1988)* | 3:25 | 10 New Year (2006)* | 4:05 |
| 3 Carol of the Magi (2009)* | 4:50 | 11 Shepherd's Pipe Carol (1965) | 2:30 |
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(2004)* | 2:09 | 12 Christmas Lullaby (1989) | 3:41 |
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You a Merry Christmas | 1:45 |

***WORLD PREMIERE RECORDING**

Black Dyke Band • Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus **1** **8** **15**

Nicholas Childs **2-7** **9-14** **16**,

Darius Battiwalla **1** **8** **15**, **Conductor**

Arranged by Luc Vertommen (b. 1968) **1-10** **14** **15**, Peter Graham (b. 1958) **11**,

John Clay (b. 1944) **12**, Eric Wilson (b. 1963) **13** **16**

A detailed track list and full recording and publishing details can be found inside the booklet

The sung texts are included in the booklet, and may also be accessed at www.naxos.com/libretti/574564.htm

Booklet notes: Philip Goodwin • Cover image by agsandrew (www.shutterstock.com)

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