



LINN



Yuletide Treats

DUO PLEYEL

ALEXANDRA NEPOMNYASHCHAYA & RICHARD EGARR

MENU

TRACKLIST

ENGLISH

BIOGRAPHIES



Yuletide Treats

DUO PLEYEL

ALEXANDRA NEPOMNYASHCHAYA primo

RICHARD EGARR secondo

Franz Liszt (1811–1886)

Weihnachtsbaum, S. 613

1. III. Die Hirten an der Krippe 'In dulci jubilo' 4:11
2. VII. Schlummerlied 3:35
3. IX. Abendglocken 5:43

George Frideric Handel (1685–1759)

arr. Carl Czerny (1791–1857)

Messiah, HWV 56

4. For unto us a child is born 3:38
5. Hallelujah 3:26

Johann Strauss II (1825–1899)

arr. Renaud de Vilbac (1829–1884) & Duo Pleyel

6. **An der schönen blauen Donau, Op. 314** 10:55

Johann Strauss I (1804–1849)

7. **Radetzky-Marsch, Op. 228** 3:07

Pyotr Tchaikovsky (1840–1893)

arr. Eduard Langer (1835–1905) & Duo Pleyel

The Nutcracker Suite, Op. 71a

8. I. Overture 3:23
9. II. March 2:20
10. III. Dance of the Sugar-Plum Fairy 1:56
11. IV. Russian Dance 'Trepak' 1:15
12. V. Arabian Dance 'Coffee' 3:32
13. VI. Chinese Dance 'Tea' 1:03
14. VII. Dance of the Mirlitons 2:09
15. VIII. Waltz of the Flowers 6:08

Total Running Time 56:36

Yuletide Treats

Yuletide celebration encompasses the entire period around mid-winter, from Hannukah, through Christmas, to the celebration of 'Twelfth Night'. Music has always played a special role during this time throughout many centuries. For recording artists and the recording industry, from the late 1950s through the 1980s, it was seemingly obligatory for every artist and group, from 'Crooners' to 'Punk', to make a 'Christmas' album. The LP covers created for these records often displayed questionable and 'cheesy' designs that has made them (in) famous and truly special. Many of these have become sought-after collectibles. However, musically they often contained remarkable and surprising material.

Duo Pleyel offers this recording in that spirit and tradition. We have found and arranged some of the greatest classical 'Yuletide' hits for your festive delight. We begin with 3 movements from Franz Liszt's 'Christmas Tree Suite', an original little-known four-hand masterpiece from his later years. The music is surprising, beautiful, transcendental, and almost minimalist. Then follows 'For unto us a child is born' and 'Hallelujah' from Handel's *Messiah*, expertly arranged by one of Duo Pleyel's heroes, Carl Czerny. No December would be complete without a bit of *Messiah*! Likewise, no New Year would be thinkable without the Strauss family's *Blue Danube* waltz and *Radetzky-March*. We felt that the arrangements of these needed some extra tinsel and glühwein, which we have hopefully provided. Finally, we present the wonderful seasonal spectacular that is Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker Suite*. This score is one of the most colourful and beloved in all music. The arrangement was made the same time as the original

ballet score's first appearance. Again we have added some additional Yuletide decorations, with Alexandra making her recording debut on the tambourine!

Duo Pleyel wishes you all a very happy, healthy and 'Kool Yool'. Put it on your Christmas Lis(z)t.

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The Chris Maene Straight Strung Concert Grand Piano

In the late nineteenth century, Steinway & Sons successfully brought to fruition the concept of the modern cross-strung grand piano. Ever since then, this construction concept has been imitated by all piano builders. It has resulted in a standardization of piano building and a uniformity of piano sound. As a reaction to this, the second half of the twentieth century witnessed an intense quest for performance practices using historical instruments that bring back the greater sound diversity and transparency of older times.

As part of this movement, the Chris Maene Factory soon began specializing in building harpsichords and fortepianos, based on Chris Maene's renowned and unique collection of more than 300 historical instruments. This gradually led to the desire to build his own grand piano with different sonorous properties, aiming to offer a valid artistic alternative to existing concert grands. To accomplish this, Chris Maene went back to the original basic principle of straight, parallel stringing, where the bass strings are not crossed over the other strings but run parallel to them.

In 2013 Daniel Barenboim commissioned Chris Maene to build 'the perfect parallel-strung concert piano'. He wanted to reconcile the unique, characteristic sonorous richness of the historical piano with the volume, clarity, power and playing comfort of the best modern concert pianos.

In May 2015 Daniel Barenboim inaugurated his new straight strung grand piano with Schubert recitals in Vienna, Paris and London. The sound of the unique instrument was very well received by press, audiences and musicians alike.

By now the Chris Maene Straight Strung Grand Piano is played all over the world by the best international concert pianists, and the Chris Maene Factory is building a full range of straight-strung grand pianos.

The Chris Maene Straight Strung Concert Grand Piano is regularly used for concerts and recordings by artists such as Martin Helmchen, Pierre-Laurent Aimard, Emanuel Ax, Éric Le Sage, Hannes Minnaar, Liebrecht Vanbeckevoort, Duo Pleyel, Jan Michiels, Julien Libeer, Jef Neve and Bram De Looze.

For more information, please visit [**www.chrismaene.be**](http://www.chrismaene.be)

Duo Pleyel

Named after their beautiful 1848 Pleyel piano, pianists Alexandra Nepomnyashchaya and Richard Egarr are known as Duo Pleyel. The Duo has been working for the past seven years to bring the rich and exciting repertoire for piano 4-hands to a wider public. It is particularly committed to providing programmes ranging from the earliest music by Johann Christian Bach and Mozart, mixed with that by lesser-known early Romantics such as Hummel and Dussek, through to the great popular works by Fauré, Debussy, Ravel and Stravinsky in the twentieth century.

Duo Pleyel records for Linn, and its releases of Schubert and Dussek have received excellent reviews. Its album *Mozart's Real Musical Father* was *BBC Music Magazine's* Instrumental Recording of the Month in January 2023. It explores the close musical and personal relationship between Johann Christian Bach and Mozart. May 2023 sees the start of a three-year recording project of the complete Beethoven Symphonies in extraordinary four-hand arrangements by his undervalued student Carl Czerny. These transcriptions are fascinating and hugely important for both historical and musicological reasons, as well as from a purely musical perspective. In addition to performing on its own 1848 Pleyel piano, Duo Pleyel is excited to collaborate with the Chris Maene Piano Collection, and uses several of its fabulous nineteenth-century instruments along with its Straight Strung Concert Grand Piano.

Born in Moscow, **Alexandra Nepomnyashchaya** studied piano and early keyboards in Moscow, Amsterdam and Munich. She has won top prizes at competitions held in Austria, Saint Petersburg, Prague and Leipzig. She appears regularly as a soloist and chamber partner at festivals all over Europe, Russia and Asia. She loves playing early keyboards, particularly with her Duo partner. She hates robots, and tries to avoid watching *Star Trek* whenever possible.

Born in Lincoln, **Richard Egarr** studied piano and early keyboards in Manchester, Cambridge, London and Amsterdam. He won the top prize at the 1988 Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach Competition in Hamburg. He appears regularly as a conductor, soloist and chamber musician all over the planet. He loves playing early keyboards, particularly with his Duo partner. He loves old recordings, and watching *Star Trek* whenever possible.

As a family, Duo Pleyel have two young daughters who enjoy playing and fighting with each other. They sometimes even play together on the piano. They love music, dancing, ice cream, and robots. As for *Star Trek*, they have yet 'to boldly go'.

Recorded in the Lutherse kerk, Haarlem, The Netherlands,
on 24–26 April 2024

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