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The Christmas Revels[®]

In Celebration of the Winter Solstice

A spirited theatrical production
celebrating the holiday season
featuring dance, poetry, and music
from English medieval and Renaissance traditions

Join us and be joyous

Recorded in the Marjorie Luke Theatre in December, 2020
Viewed at your leisure in the comfort of your home

From the Executive Director

To say that 2020 has presented unique challenges would of course be a dramatic understatement. Trying to produce any type of performing art in the world of COVID is extraordinarily difficult, and for that reason, we present this show to you with no small amount of pride.

Though this is certainly a different Revels experience than you will be used to, it is a true technical and artistic achievement. Our top priority was, of course, safety, so our plans began with the physician-recommended precautions and went from there. Our Music Director, Erin McKibben, hosted rehearsals via Zoom for the different choruses, who then recorded audio for the show, live and in person, outdoors, masked, and appropriately distanced. Then, this audio was married with the video for the show, recorded on stage at the Marjorie Luke Theatre using an ingenious distancing scheme devised by our Artistic Director, Susan Keller. This was all uncharted territory for us, and our staff and performers handled everything with aplomb.

In addition to everything else, we sadly had to say goodbye to two of our Revels family who passed away this year: William Schliefer and Ken Ryals. Bill was a staple in our shows for years – particularly the Abbots Bromley Horn Dance, and it is to him we dedicate this year's Horn Dance. Ken Ryals served as Santa Barbara Revels' music director for the first several years of our existence. His warm personality and skilled leadership helped to shape us in our early years, and we dedicate this year's show to Ken.

While we cannot wait for the day we can celebrate in person, we do hope you enjoy the Revelry of this virtual experience. Join us and be joyous!

Nicholas Jurkowski
Executive Director, Santa Barbara Revels



The Program

Part I

1. Overture – Pastime with Good Company

Composed by King Henry VIII, this work shows the sound education Henry received in music. Little is known of his early musical tuition, but it is well known that he was a competent player of a variety of keyboard, string, and wind instruments. This arrangement, by Matt Smith, of one of his most well-known works captures the lusty disposition of this uxoricidal monarch.

The Renaissance Trombone Quartet

2. Personent Hodie

A Christmas Carol first published in Finland in 1582, the melody probably dates to at least the mid 14th century from comparisons to similar manuscripts found in Bavaria. It became popular in England as a processional hymn after Gustav Holst arranged it in 1916. The accompaniment for this version transcribed for four trombones by Nicholas Jurkowski

The Solstice Singers
The Renaissance Trombone Quartet

3. Call to Celebration

An excerpt from the poem "Nativity," by W.R. Rogers, this short bit of verse is a Revels favorite.

Josh Jenkins

4. Deck the Hall

This Christmas chestnut has its roots in the Welsh tune "Nos Galen" ("New Year's Eve"). It was originally a dance carol from the Welsh canu penillion tradition, in which a ring of dancers surrounding a harper would take turns singing improvised phrases, to which the harper would respond (on the falala parts of the verse). The Welsh text first appeared in 1784 and the familiar English words in 1881.

The Solstice Singers
The Renaissance Trombone Quartet

4. The Holly and the Ivy

Listed as number 514 in the Roud Folk Song Index, this carol can be traced to the early 19th century, but the lyrics reference an association between holly and Christmas that dates to at least the medieval era.

Susan Keller
Erin McKibben
Meredith McMinn
Members of *The Revels Consort*

5. We've Been A-While A-Wandering

Also known as “Yorkshire Wassail,” this is a variant of the more popular “Here We Come A-Wassailing.” It appears in a number of folk song indices.

The Children's Christmas Chorus
Members of *The Revels Consort*

6. Dame Get Up and Bake Your Pies

Originally published in 1834 in the Bishoprick Garland, this English nursery rhyme became a popular children's Christmas song.

The Children's Christmas Chorus
Members of *The Revels Consort*

7. The First Nowell

A carol with 18th-century words and a 17th-century tune, harmonized in the 19th century by John Stainer. Accompaniment transcribed for four trombones by Nicholas Jurkowski.

The Solstice Singers
The Renaissance Trombone Quartet

8. Make We Joy

An old English carol attested to from around 1450 from the Selden Manuscript (held at the Bodleian Library, Oxford), this song appears here in a twopart setting.

The Yuletide Youth
Members of *The Revels Consort*

9. Remember

This poem by Susan Cooper was written for Cambridge Revels.

Susan Keller

10. Silent Night

Composed originally as *Stille Nacht*, this German carol was composed by Franz Gruber in 1818, and has gained popularity in 140 languages.

The Solstice Singers

Members of *The Revels Consort*

18. The Lord of the Dance

Sydney Carter's modern lyrics to the Shaker song "Simple Gifts," are here translated into a dance using a compilation of English Morris dance steps from various Cotswold village traditions. Choreography by Carol Langstaff, Martin Graetz, and Jonathan Morse, and transcribed for four trombones by Nicholas Jurkowski.

Josh Jenkins

Lord of the Dance Dancers

The Revels Company

The Renaissance Trombone Quartet

Intermission

Part II

19. Entr'acte: In the Bleak Midwinter

Originally a poem by English poet Christina Rossetti, Gustav Holst composed a setting in 1906 that serves as the basis for this instrumental version.

The Revels Consort

20. The Abbots Bromley Horn Dance

This ancient ritual dance for good luck in hunting the stag is still danced every year in the village of Abbots Bromley in England. Its supernumerary characters – the Folk Fool, the Man/Woman, the Hobby Horse, and the Boy Archer – link it with the mumming traditions of Old Christmas.

The Abbots Bromley Horn Dancers

– DANCED IN MEMORY OF WILLIAM SCHLEIFER –

21. What Child is This?

Composed to the tune of Greensleeves (a traditional English folk song often erroneously attributed to Henry VIII), this carol's lyrics were composed by William Chatterton Dix in 1865.

Josh Jenkins

Erin McKibben

Katie Mendenhall – Cello

22. From Hamlet

This passage, from Act 1, Scene 1, is Marcellus's musing to Horatio in the aftermath of seeing the ghost of Hamlet's father. Shaken by the sight of the specter, he repeats folk wisdom to Horatio about the power of the Christmas season to dispel ill-fates and malevolent powers.

Meredith McMinn

23. Alle Psallite Cum Luya

Thought to have originated in France in the early 14th century, this Latin motet is of uncertain provenance. While the tenor repeats the "Alleluia," the duplum and triplum voices sing successively longer and enthusiastic tropes, giving the piece a celebratory feel.

The Solstice Singers

Members of the Revels Consort

24. The Wren Song

“Wren Day” is celebrated on December 26th in many countries across Europe, and traditionally consists of “hunting” a fake wren and putting it on a pole. Wren-boys, as they are called, sing songs like this as they parade through town.

The Children's Christmas Chorus
Members of The Revels Consort

25. Lo How a Rose E'er Blooming

This hymn, originally from Germany, first appeared in print in 1599, and is likely older. Michael Praetorius composed the most popular setting, heard here, in 1609.

Erik Bell
Josh Jenkins
Susan Keller
Erin McKibben
Rebekah Scogin – Harp

26. Gloucestershire Wassail

A traditional English carol that dates from at least the 18th century. Its text makes it a close cousin to Gower Wassail, and a more distant cousin to Here We Come A Wassailing. This transcription for trombone quartet and chorus by Nicholas Jurkowski is based on an earlier arrangement by Brian Holmes.

The Solstice Singers
The Renaissance Trombone Quartet

27. Salutation

Fra Giovanni Giocondo was a Franciscan friar, as well as an accomplished architect and classical scholar. This passage is the salutation from a letter he wrote to Countess Allagia Aldobrandeschi on Christmas Eve, 1513.

Josh Jenkins

28. Rounds – Shalom Chaverim and Dona Nobis Pacem

Shalom Chaverim is a traditional Hebrew folk song. Dona Nobis Pacem is a popular setting of the Latin phrase, sung by Revels companies as a round for peace.

The Revels Company

29. The Shortest Day

Written for Revels by award-winning author Susan Cooper in 1977, this has become a traditional part of Christmas Revels performances throughout the country.

Susan Keller

30. Sussex Mummers' Carol

A traditional English carol sung as an ending to a folk play in Horsham, Sussex. In each of the nine cities where Revels is produced annually, this carol is sung with the audience at the conclusion of each performance. The brass arrangement on which this sackbut transcription is based is by Brian Holmes, with descant and final verse harmonization by Ralph Vaughan Williams.

The Revels Company

Welcome Yule!

Dedicated to the Memory of Ken Ryals



Performers

Recitations

Josh Jenkins
Susan Keller
Meredith McMinn

The Solstice Singers

Steve Baker
Erik Bell
Erin Dougherty
Risa Erskine
Alice Gleghorn
Kristine Marie Haugh
Josh Jenkins
Diva Johnson
Nicholas Jurkowski
Susan Keller
Gilbert Luna
Erin McKibben
Meredith McMinn
Luis Moreno
Huyen Nguyen
Khanh Nguyen
Tim Petit

The Yuletide Youth

Cosi Arthurs
Isabelle Garin
Shemsu James-Lefevre
Isael Negrete
Michelle Plascencia
Camille Tracy
Kate Wenzel

Abbots Bromley Horn Dancers

Shemsu James-Lefevre
Nicholas Jurkowski
Gilbert Luna
Khanh Nguyen
Gary Shapiro
George Williams
Kristine Marie Haugh – *The Fool*
Antonio Luna – *The Boy Archer*
Tresa McGettigan – *The Hobby Horse*
Tim Petit – *The Man/Woman*
Robert Winokur – *Whistle*

The Children's Christmas Chorus

Elizabeth Avila
Emmalie Avila
Kate Crowder
Emma Gibou
Antonio Luna
Maya Morrill

Lord of the Dance Dancers

Matthew Weitzel
Sara Weitzel

The Renaissance Trombones

Michael Dolin
Eric Heidner
Stephen Hughes
Lisa Price

The Revels Consort

Josh Jenkins – Mandolin
Erin McKibben – Flute
Kathryn Mendenhall – Cello
Rebekah Scogin – Harp

Production Staff

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Erin McKibben – **Music Director**

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Barbara Hirsch/Opus 1 – **Sound Recording & Editing**

Sara Beth Marvel – **Associate Producer**

Susan McNeill – **Costume Co-Ordinator**

Mark Johnson – **Technical Director**

Brad Spaulding & Michael Donahue – **Sound & Lighting**

Fred Perner & Gene Lerner – **Morris Dance Choreography**

Gary Shapiro – **Abbots Bromley Instruction**

Ginger Rose Brucker – **Production Assistant/COVID Monitor**

Diane Arnold – **Set Dressing**

Nicholas Jurkowski – **Program & Additional Graphics**

Anna Jensen – **Dramaturg**

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Karen Baltzley, Managing Director

For Santa Barbara Revels

Susan Keller, Artistic Director

Nicholas Jurkowski, Executive Director

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– *In honor of Susan Keller*

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We practice the art of participation.

We foster cultural exploration.

We create connections within our community.

We fulfill the human need for celebration.