

## SELECTED PROGRAM NOTES

Quincy Symphony Orchestra & Choruses  
December 6, 2024 Quincy, Illinois

Christmas time! We sing/hum/listen-to these melodies and are reminded of the joyous season. There's no need to introduce such carols as "Deck the Halls," "I Saw Three Ships," "Sleigh Ride," or many other songs you'll hear tonight. Participation makes the evening special -- not only of the performers, but also of the audience, tapping our feet, clapping our hands, and even singing along with the tunes we know and love.

The energetic ***Hot Santa!*** features Stephenson's original words and music telling a story from Mrs. Santa's point of view: She just wishes her husband would stay home from "work" one of these Christmas Eve's, like all the other husbands of the world!

In ***A Musicological Journey Through the Twelve Days of Christmas***, American composer Craig Courtney has set each individual verse in a specific musical style. As you listen, see how many styles you recognize:

A Partridge In A Pear Tree - Plainchant from the 6th Century  
Two Turtle Doves - the French Middle Ages in the style of Josquin de Prez  
Three French Hens – 16<sup>th</sup> Century Italian Renaissance and Palestrina  
Four Calling Birds -the 17<sup>th</sup> Century Italian High Baroque and Antonio Vivaldi  
Five Gold Rings - 18<sup>th</sup>-Century Germany in the style of Ludwig van Beethoven  
Six Geese a-Laying – 18<sup>th</sup> Century Austria in the style of Wolfgang A. Mozart  
Seven Swans a-Swimming - 19<sup>th</sup> Century France and Camille Saint-Saëns  
Eight Maids a-Milking” – 19<sup>th</sup> Century Germany and Wagnerian opera  
Nine Ladies Dancing – 19<sup>th</sup> Century Vienna and the music of the Strauss family  
Ten Lords a-Leaping – 19<sup>th</sup> Century Italy and Jacques Offenbach  
Eleven Pipers Piping – 19<sup>th</sup> Century Russia and Tchaikovsky's The Nutcracker  
Twelve Drummers Drumming – John Philip Sousa's Stars & Stripes March

Todd Goodman's ***Let's Celebrate Christmas!*** was originally written for brass band. The orchestra version is hot off the presses. Opening the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of our program, it's an exciting fanfare to catapult you into the holiday spirit. Brass and percussion fanfares are intermixed with teasers of traditional holiday melodies like "Angels We Have Heard on High," "Deck the Halls," "Jingle Bells," "O Holy Night," "Joy to the World," "Away in the Manger," and others.

In 1895, Edward Elgar wrote ***The Snow***, a musical setting of song text within an epic poem written by his future wife Caroline Alice Roberts 16 years earlier, before they met. The song achieved its own fame outside of the poem, and is a gorgeous, glorious work for soprano and alto voices. Originally accompanied by piano and two violins, Elgar later expanded to woodwinds, horn, timpani, harp and strings. The words of the poem are evocative and lush, with long vowels. The wonderful ending gives hope that the hearer's heart will endure throughout the years, and not melt away like the snow.

O snow, which sinks so light, Brown earth is hid from sight  
O soul, be thou as white as snow, O snow, which falls so slow,

Dear earth quite warm below; O heart, so keep thy glow  
Beneath the snow.

O snow, in thy soft grave Sad flow'rs the winter brave;  
O heart, so sooth and save, as does the snow.  
The snow must melt, must go, Fast, fast as water flow.  
Not thus, my soul, O sow Thy gifts to fade like snow.

O snow, thou'rt white no more, Thy sparkling too, is o'er;  
O soul, be as before, Was bright the snow. Then as the snow all pure,  
O heart be, but endure; Through all the years full sure, Not as the snow.