

„Vom Himmel hoch...“ – Christmas Carols

D. Fischer-Dieskau | R. Streich | E. Grümmer | E. Berger ...



Es blüh'n drei Rosen • Da droben auf dem Berge • Und unser lieben Frauen • Maria durch ein'n Dornwald ging • Maria auf dem Berge • Schlaf, mein Kindelein • Schlaf wohl, du Himmelsknabe du • Stille Nacht • Die Himmelsbotschaft ist erklingen • Joseph, lieber Joseph mein • Zu Bethlehem geboren • Christlied • Es wird schon gleich dunkel • Das himmlische Menuett • O Jesulein zart • Wiegenlied in der Weihnacht • Kommt all herein, ihr Engelein • O Jesulein mild, o Jesulein zart • Lobt Gott, ihr Christen allzugleich • Ich steh' an deiner Krippen hier • Gelobet seist du, Jesus Christ • Vom Himmel hoch, ihr Engel kommt • Es ist ein Ros' entsprungen • Ave Maria zart, du edler Rosengart • Süßer die Glocken nie klingen • Vom Himmel hoch

soprano: Erna Berger • Elisabeth Grümmer • Margot Guillaume • Ursula Lüders •
Lisa Otto • Maria Reith • Rita Streich • Gunthild Weber
alto: Josephine Varga • Annelies Westen
baritone: Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau
tenor: Walther Ludwig

Radio Orchester Berlin • RIAS-Unterhaltungsorchester • A RIAS Studioorchester • additional instrumentalists
Günther Arndt • Fried Walter • Hans Carste

Berlin, 1950-1964

Christmas carols for the drawing room: in the 1950s, RIAS produced Christmas carols with artists such as Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Rita Streich, Erna Berger and Elisabeth Grümmer. Without the slightest whiff of sentimentality, the performers transform these Christmas miniatures into small gems.

Producing atmospheric Christmas programmes in the 1950s fell into the remit of radio stations: records with festive music were not available during the early post-war years. For RIAS, the Berlin radio station under American control, the early 1950s were the heyday in this respect. Year after year, distinguished singers, including Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau and Rita Streich, Erna Berger, Elisabeth Grümmer and many others, were engaged to perform for these radio shows. This disc presents the impressive results of these recordings made between 1950 and 1964.

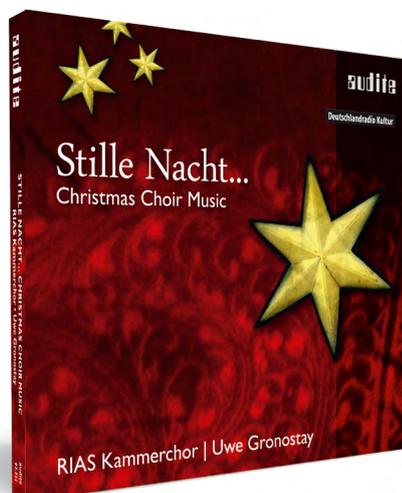


Most carols on this disc are folksongs or folk-like. Their simple, catchy tunes, setting words from Martin Luther's time through to the twentieth century, tell of naïve piety. Renowned composers and church musicians of the 1950s produced, mostly for such Christmas programmes, tasteful arrangements of these carols. The spectrum of arrangements on this disc stretches from sparing but emphatic lute dabs right up to the onomatopoeic expansion of orchestral sonorities which do not shy away from a nod towards Puccini. The fact that all these diverse Christmas offerings were produced without the slightest whiff of sentimentality is largely due to the performers who transformed these miniatures into little gems.

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