

SEVEN TIMES SALT *presents*

BANISH MISFORTUNE

A Solstice Celebration



MONDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2020 at 8PM

Filmed at Aldworth Manor, Harrisville, NH www.thealdworthmanor.com

and Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Boston, MA

and the artists' homes

Edited by Dave Jamrog Audio/Video

PROGRAM

Nutmigs and Ginger Hollis Berrie	Cambridge Consort Books (c.1588-1597) 17th-c. English
Lullabie Galliard Phillips Pavin As it Fell on a Holie Eve	Anthony Holborne (1545-1602) <i>First Booke of Consort Lessons</i> (1599) Anthony Holborne
“Blow, blow, thou winter wind”/Epping Forest Drive the Cold Winter Away The Leeds Waits Wassail	Wm. Shakespeare (1564-1616)/ <i>The Dancing Master</i> (1670) <i>The English Dancing Master</i> (1651) Trad. English, arr. STS
O Heyligh Zaligh Bethlehem Lo How a Rose e'er Blooming Swit Sant Nikola “So now is come our joyful feast”/Couranto The Boar's Head Carol	Jacob van Eyck (c.1590-1657) Speyer Hymnal (1599), har. M. Praetorius (1571-1621) Rowallen MS (c.1612-1628) George Wither (1588-1667)/Michael Praetorius 15th-c. English
“The Unconquered Sun”/Bransles de Village Long Cold Nights Da Day Dawn/“Winter Comes In” Da Caald Nights o Winter Sleep Soond ida Moarnin'	Steeleye Span/Jean-Baptiste Besard (1567-1617) <i>Apollo's Banquet</i> (1687), arr. D. Meyers Trad. Shetland/Jack Renwick (1924-2010) Trad. Shetland Trad. Shetland
The Solstice Maid from “The Cure at Troy” Travellers' Prayer	Jay Ungar (b. 1946) Seamus Heaney (1939-2013) John Renbourn (1944-2015)
Port na pBúcaí (The Fairies' Tune) Banish Misfortune A Cornish Wassail Branle l'Official Farewele Advent	Trad. Irish Trad. Irish Trad. Cornish, arr. K. Burciaga <i>Orchesographie</i> (1589) Trad. English, arr. M. Wright

SEVEN TIMES SALT

Karen Burciaga, *violin, harp, frame drum, alto*
Dan Meyers, *recorders, flutes, uilleann pipes, bodhrán, baritone*
Josh Schreiber Shalem, *bass viol, bass*
Matthew Wright, *archlute, bandora, tenor*
with
Matthew Leese, *baritone*

and

Michael Barrett, <i>tenor, lute</i>	Nathaniel Cox, <i>bandora</i>
Elizabeth Hardy, <i>alto</i>	Emily Noël, <i>soprano</i>
Camila Parias, <i>soprano</i>	Mark Rimple, <i>cittern</i>
Catherine Stein, <i>mezzo-soprano, recorder</i>	Matthew Stein, <i>baritone</i>

NOTES

Thank you for watching tonight's merry feast of music. We begin with a cup of wassail, the best we could brew: the delightful tune **Nutmigs and Ginger** is set here as a consort lesson, a popular genre in Elizabethan England written for the specific ensemble of violin, flute, lute, bass viol, cittern and bandora. Its spicy title conjures up a steaming mug of mulled cider or wine, which we hope you are enjoying as you watch the concert! Completing our appetizer is **The Hollis Berrie**, which comes from an early 17th-century English manuscript. Evergreens such as holly, ivy, mistletoe, and fragrant bay and rosemary were long considered sacred plants since they retained their color throughout the winter.

We offer the next set in memory of Julian Bream, champion of the lute and a pioneer of the early music movement of the 1950s. In 1960 he formed the Julian Bream Consort, whose performances of Elizabethan music on period instruments sparked audiences' interest and influenced later generations of musicians, including Seven Times Salt. Of the many unusual instruments Mr. Bream helped re-introduce to the world, the bandora may have been the most exotic! Its seven metal strings, angled frets, festooned shape, and above all its jangly, amazingly resonant sound are still peculiar and thought-provoking to many today. Matt chose to perform Holborne's beautiful **Lullabie Galliard** for solo bandora as a goodnight and farewell to Mr. Bream. A lutenist and Gentleman Usher to Queen Elizabeth I, Holborne was one of extremely few composers to write for the bandora, which was popular from around 1560 to 1650. This piece along with nearly all of his compositions for this rare instrument are found in the Matthew Holmes lute book from around 1590. A more famous collection is Thomas Morley's *First Booke of Consort Lessons* of 1599, whence comes Phillips Pavin, one of the first consort lessons we ever played. Rounding off the set is the lively galliard **As it Fell on a Holie Eve**. Whether or not the tune was intended for holiday use, its title and festive attitude seem to suit the occasion.

The evening brings with it a frosty north wind. "**Blow, blow thou winter wind**" surmises that even the biting winter wind is not as cruel as mankind can sometimes be. Fortunately, we evade such sorrow and enjoy a brief stop to warm our hands with **Drive the Cold Winter Away**, one of the most beloved tunes from Playford's *English Dancing Master*. It is sometimes sung as a carol under the title "All Hail To The Days"--with its upward leap of a tenth, it can help to have a bit of wassail on board before singing it! It's followed by our old favorite **The Leeds Waits Wassail**, one of many English luck-visit songs better known as "Here we come a-wassailing." The wassailing tradition saw singers travel from house to house to entertain the residents, be invited in to enjoy food, drink, and fire, then be paid in coins, cheese, or cider for their festive performance. After several hours of wandering in the cold, a warm drink by the fire must have been very welcome indeed. An equally ancient tradition is that of singing to apple trees in the orchard and pouring a bit of the previous year's cider into the roots to ensure a good harvest.

Now safely inside, we prepare a Christmas feast. Van Eyck's divisions on **O Heyligh Zaligh Bethlehem** are based on a Dutch Christmas song. The tune comes from an anonymous air de cour "Ayant aymé fidellement" and was first used to set the poem "O salich heylich" in 1609. The adjectives are reversed in various sources and use a wide variety of creative spellings. Ever since its publication, it has probably been the second most popular Dutch Christmas carol after "Een kindeken is ons geboren". It's equally popular among Catholics and Protestants in the Netherlands--no small feat--and apparently was included in every collection of Dutch carillon music printed in the 17th and 18th centuries. Another beloved carol, **Lo how a Rose e'er Blooming**, is a translation of "Es ist ein Ros entsprungen", a 15th-century German hymn found in the *Speierschen Gesangbuch* of 1599. Praetorius' well-known harmonization is among the more enduring of carols. We follow this with **Swit Sant Nikola**, a lute duet found in the Scottish Rowallen MS. The main hand in the book is that of Sir William Mure, a lutenist, writer and statesman who lived at the ancient Rowallen castle in Kilmaurs, Scotland. We decided to give it some Scottish flair by employing harp instead of the original second lute. Finally, we head to dinner! The dinner guests are urged to make merry in "**So now is come our joyful feast**" accompanied by an exuberant **Couranto**, one of numerous excellent dances by Praetorius. The tune has also been used to set another popular Dutch Christmas carol about shepherds. **The Boar's Head Carol** is a macaronic (multiple language) carol popular in England since the Middle Ages. Published by the wonderfully named Wynkyn de Worde in 1521, its subject may refer to ancient pagan celebrations of the winter solstice. We are the only ensemble we know who pair this carol with the traditional Irish tune The Merry Blacksmith.

Next we observe the shortest day and the longest night and joyfully celebrate the return of the sun. **“Unconquered Sun”** by the iconic English folk-rock band Steeleye Span has been a favorite ever since their album **“Winter”** came out in 2004. Steeleye singer Ken Nicol comments, “In the northern latitudes, midwinter's day, or mid winter solstice, has been an important time for celebration throughout the ages. On this shortest day of the year, the sun is at its lowest and weakest, a pivot point from which the light will grow stronger and brighter. This is the turning point of the year. The Romans called it Dies Natalis Invicti Solis, the Birthday of the Unconquered Sun.” The solstice is a notable bridge between the pagan and Christian worlds. Accompanying the text are **Bransles de Village**, rustic circle dances with an ostinato bass figure that evokes shepherds' bagpipes, expanded here from Besard's original lute duo to a trio. The evocative Scottish sounding tune **Long Cold Nights** is in fact English, published by John Playford in London during the late 17th-century craze for all things Scottish. His collection *Apollo's Banquet* offers a variety of tunes for the “Treble-Violin” including “Ayres, Jiggs, and several New Scotch Tunes.” We've opted for a fiddle-free setting for this evening's performance, but perhaps we can placate the spirit of Playford with some actual Scottish fiddle tunes. The Shetland Islands, far off the northern coast of Scotland, have a distinct Norse influence in their dialect and musical style; in fact, Norwegians and Icelanders can recognize many Shetland words. Shetlanders say that **Da Day Dawn** is among the very oldest tunes known on the islands and may date back as far as Viking times. Traditionally, on the morning of the winter solstice, a lone fiddler would walk from house to house playing the tune to welcome back the sun. This eerie call to daylight is paired with **“Winter Comes In,”** Shetland poet Jack Renwick's observations of the coming of winter to the North. The dialect rolls off the tongue wonderfully, although Karen has opted to read an English version for you this evening. We finish the longest night with **Da Caald Nights o Winter** leading to the driving **Sleep Soond ida Moarnin'** which, contrary to its title, would probably get you right out of bed even on a caald Scottish morning!

Revered fiddler and composer Jay Ungar wrote **The Solstice Maid** in 2010 in honor of both the winter and the summer solstices. Its beautiful, melancholy lilt seems to suit a cold clear night, when we perhaps look up at the December moon, or, in 2020, the conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn. Seamus Heaney's “The Cure at Troy” is a translation of the ancient Greek play “Philoctetes” by Sophocles, and this excerpt seems especially well suited to our current times. Among other references, Bill Clinton quoted it in his speech in Derry, Northern Ireland after he and George Mitchell brokered the Good Friday Agreement in 1998, which ended decades of violent civil war between Catholics and Protestants. Years ago, we asked English folk icon John Renbourn if we could perform his wonderful **Travellers' Prayer**. He was kind enough not only to immediately send us the score, but he also read all about us, listened to our sound clips, and infamously said, “You Salts sound wonderful. You should come over to the old country and shake us up.” Renbourn made Scotland his home for the last twenty years of his life; he based this piece on a traditional folk prayer called “The New Moon” collected in Scotland's Western Isles in the 19th century. It along with several hundred such folk blessings, charms, and incantations were published in 1900 in the multi-volume *Carmina Gadelica* (Gaelic Songs), a fascinating record of pre-Christian traditions in Scotland.

Tonight's celebrations conclude with a welcome luck-visit from the fairies. **Port na pBúcaí** (“The Fairies' Tune”) was originally collected or composed by the Blasket Islands fiddler and fisherman Seán Cheaist Ó Catháin. He claims that he heard the tune coming from the mist while he was out in his boat one day, and some have theorized that he might have been hearing whale songs. Whether by fairies or whales, Dan was inspired to play it after hearing that Fungie, the famous bottlenose dolphin who lived in Dingle Bay in West Kerry for the last 37 years, disappeared in October. Fungie's admirers in West Kerry are broken-hearted, and we offer this tune in his honor. This evening's theme song **Banish Misfortune** hardly needs explanation; Dan's version is influenced by the playing of the famous 20th-century piper Willie Clancy from County Clare, Ireland. Our tour of the Celtic regions brings us to Cornwall in far southwest England where we enjoy “a plenty of cider and a barrel of beer” in **A Cornish Wassail**. It's paired with The Night Tide, a jaunty waltz by Cornish fiddler Richard Trethewey. We end with a final bransle (whose cousin dance the En Dro is still danced in Celtic Brittany today), this one a familiar tune from Arbeau's *Orchesographie*. We hope it inspires you to get up and dance!

FOR ABSENT FRIENDS

John Joseph Wright, 1952-2020
Jug Bay forever

Kalen Ratzlaff, 1960-2020
treasured friend with a big laugh and an even bigger heart

Julian Bream, 1933-2020
maestro and trailblazer

TEXTS

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,

Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude;
Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.
*Heigh-ho! sing, heigh-ho! unto the green holly:
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly:
Then, heigh-ho, the holly!
This life is most jolly.*

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
That dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot:
Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remembered not.
*Heigh-ho! sing, heigh-ho! unto the green holly:
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly:
Then, heigh-ho, the holly!
This life is most jolly.*

—William Shakespeare, from "As You Like It" c.1599

The Leeds Waits Wassail

Here we come a-wassailing
Among the leaves so green,
Here we come a-wandering
So fair to be seen.
*Love and joy come to you,
And to you your wassail too,
And God bless you and send you
A happy New Year.*

Our wassail cup is made
Of the rosemary tree,
And so is your beer
Of the best barley.

We are not daily beggars
That beg from door to door,
But we are neighbours' children
Whom you have seen before.

Call up the Butler of this house,
Put on his golden ring;
Let him bring us a glass of beer,
The better we shall sing.

We have got a little purse
Of stretching leather skin;
We want a little money
To line it well within.

Bring us out a table,
And spread it with a cloth;
Bring us out mouldy cheese,
And some of your Christmas loaf.

God bless the Master of this house,
Likewise the Mistress too;
And all the little children
That round the table go.

Good Master and good Mistress,
As you're sitting by the fire,
Pray think of us poor children
Who are wandering in the mire.

Lo, how a rose e'er blooming,
From tender stem hath sprung.
Of Jesse's lineage coming,
As men of old have sung;
It came, a flow'ret bright,
Amid the cold of winter,
When half spent was the night.

Isaiah 'twas foretold it,
The Rose I have in mind,
With Mary we behold it,
The virgin mother kind;
To show God's love aright,
She bore to men a Savior,
When half spent was the night.

The shepherds heard the story,
Proclaimed by angels bright,
How Christ, the Lord of Glory,
Was born on earth this night.
To Bethlehem they sped
And in a manger found him,
As angel heralds said.

O Flower, whose fragrance tender
With sweetness fills the air,
Dispel with glorious splendour
The darkness everywhere;
True man, yet very God,
From Sin and death now save us,
And share our every load.

—Speyer Hymnal (1599), trans. Theodore Baker 19th c.

So now is come our joyful feast,
Let everyone be jolly;
Each room with ivy leaves is dressed,
And every post with holly.
Though some churls at our mirth repine,
Round your foreheads garlands twine,
Drown sorrow in a cup of wine,
And let us all be merry.

Now every lad is wondrous trim,
And no man minds his labor;
Our lasses have provided them
A bagpipe and a tabor.
Young men and maids, and girls and boys,
Give life to one another's joys;
And you anon shall by their noise
Perceive that they are merry.

(cont'd)
The wenches with their wassail-bowls
About the streets are singing;
The boys are come to catch the owls,
The wild mare in is bringing.
Our kitchen boy hath broke his box,
And to the dealing of the ox
Our honest neighbors come by flocks,
And here they will be merry.

Then wherefore in these merry days
Should we, I pray, be duller?
No, let us sing some roundelays
To make our mirth the fuller.
And whilst we thus inspired sing,
Let all the streets with echoes ring;
Woods, and hills, and everything
Bear witness we are merry.

—George Wither, from "A Christmas Carroll" 1622

The Boar's Head Carol

The boar's head in hand bear I,
Bedeck'd with bays and rosemary.
And I pray you, my masters, be merry
Quot estis in convivio. (As many as are in the feast)
Caput apri defero (The boar's head I offer)
Reddens laudes Domino. (Giving praise to the Lord)

The boar's head, as I understand,
Is the rarest dish in all this land,
Which thus bedeck'd with a gay garland
Let us *servire cantico. (serve with a song)*

Our steward hath provided this
In honour of the King of Bliss;
Which on this day to be served is
In Reginensi atrio. (In the hall of Queen's College, Oxford)

from **Unconquered Sun**

With solstice here we'll celebrate
This sacred time and have much cheer.
We will bring warmth, we will bring light
Into the darkest time of year.
The mistletoe will be cut down
With sickle from the sacred tree.
A kiss I'll give to you my love,
A pledge of friendship made to thee.
*For greater than the will of man
Or want of that which can be done;
It falls and shines on where we stand
Beneath the great unconquered sun.*

For this is now our turning point,
The shortest day, the longest night.
We'll look unto the months to come
When the sun will grow both strong and bright.
A versed crown all decked with green
That tells of winter's tales and mirth
Will bring great gladness and much joy
To all who walk upon this earth.
*And greater than the will of man
Or want of that which can be done;
It falls and shines on where we stand
Beneath the great unconquered sun.*

—Steeleye Span, from "Winter" 2004

Winter Comes In *The onset of winter at Bluemull Sound, Shetland*

Grey dawn brakkin ower troubled watters,
Da Soond laek a burn wi da rip o da tide;
Da Mull, black an grim, ida first o da daylight
Wi da sea brakkin white on his nortmast side.

Yowes kruggin closs ida lee o a daek-end,
Creepin frae a chill at bites ta da bon;
Solan an scarf aa wirkin inshore,
A sign at da best o da wadder is don.

Hail sheetin doon wi a Nort wind ahint it,
Blottin oot laand an sea frae da scene,
An iron coortin closin ower aa thing:
Winter has come ta da islands ageen.

—Jack Renwick, from "The Harp of Twilight" 2007

Grey dawn breaking over troubled waters,
The Sound like a river with the racing tide
The Mull*, black and grim, in the first of the daylight
With the sea breaking white on the northmost side.

Ewes crouched close in the shelter of a wall,
Creeping from a chill that bites to the bone;
Gannet* and cormorant all working inshore,
A sign that the best of the weather is done.

Hail shooting down with the North Wind behind it,
Blotting out land and sea from the scene,
An iron curtain closing over all things:
Winter has come to the islands again.

—transl. K. Burciaga

*The Mull - a promontory overlooking Bluemull Sound
gannet - a large white seabird*

from "**The Cure at Troy**"

Human beings suffer,
They torture one another,
They get hurt and get hard.
No poem or play or song
Can fully right a wrong
Inflicted and endured.

The innocent in gaols
Beat on their bars together.
A hunger-striker's father
Stands in the graveyard dumb.
The police widow in veils
Faints at the funeral home.

History says, don't hope
On this side of the grave.
But then, once in a lifetime
The longed-for tidal wave
Of justice can rise up,
And hope and history rhyme.

So hope for a great sea-change
On the far side of revenge.
Believe that a further shore
Is reachable from here.
Believe in miracles
And cures and healing wells.

Call the miracle self-healing:
The utter, self-revealing
Double-take of feeling.
If there's fire on the mountain
Or lightning and storm
And a god speaks from the sky

That means someone is hearing
The outcry and the birth-cry
Of new life at its term.

—transl. Seamus Heaney 1990,
based on "Philoctetes" 409 B.C.

Travellers' Prayer

Praise to the moon, bright queen of the skies,
Jewel of the black night, the light of our eyes,
Brighter than starlight, whiter than snow,
Look down on us in the darkness below.

If well you should find us then well let us stay,
Be it seven times better when you make your way,
Be it seven times better when we greet the dawn,
So light up our way and keep us from all harm.

Give strength to the weary, give alms to the poor,
To the tainted and needy five senses restore,
Give song to our voices, give sight to our eyes,
To see the sun bow as the new moon shall rise.

Cast your eyes downwards to our dwelling place,
Three times for favour and three times for grace,
Over the dark clouds your face for to see,
To banish misfortune and keep Trinity.

In the name of our Lady, bright maiden of grace,
In the name of the King of the City of Peace,
In the name of our Saviour, who hung on the tree,
All praise to the moon, for eternity.

—John Renbourn, from "Ship of Fools" 1988

A Cornish Wassail

O Mistress, at your door our Wassail begins,
Pray open the door, and let us come in,
With our Wassail, Wassail, Wassail, Wassail,
and joy come to our jolly Wassail!

O Mistress and Master, sitting down by the fire,
While we poor Wassailers are travelling thro' the mire.

O Mistress and Master, sitting down at your ease,
With their hands in their pockets to give what they please.

Come young men and maidens, I pray you draw near;
Come fill up our bowl with some cider or beer.

We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year,
A plenty of money and a barrel of beer.

from **Farewele Advent**

This time of Cristes feest natall
We will be mery, grete and small,
And thou shalt go oute of this halle;
Farewele, Advent; Cristemas is cum;
Farewele frō us both alle and sume.

—James Ryman, 15th c.

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Thank you!! —Karen, Dan, Matt, and Josh

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