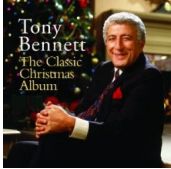


Tony Bennett – The Classic Christmas Album (2011)

Written by bluesever

Saturday, 17 December 2011 19:29 - Last Updated Tuesday, 02 June 2015 20:18

Tony Bennett – The Classic Christmas Album (2011)



*01 – Santa Claus Is Coming To Town 02 – My Favorite Things 03 – Christmas Time Is Here
04 – Deck The Halls 05 – The First Noel (with Placido Domingo) [play](#) 06 – The
Christmas Song (Chestnuts Roasting On An Open Fire) 07 – Silver Bells 08 – Have Yourself A
Merry Little Christmas 09 – O Little Town Of Bethlehem 10 – I Love The Winter Weather/I've
Got My Love To Keep Me Warm 11 – I've Got My Love To Keep Me Warm (with Antonia
Bennett) 12 – Christmas In Herald Square 13 – I'll Be Home For Christmas
[play](#)
14 – O Come All Ye Faithful 15 – What Child Is This [Previously Unreleased] 16 – Winter
Wonderland 17 – Silent Night 18 – White Christmas*

Tony Bennett's warm, inviting delivery would seem perfectly suited to seasonal music—and it is. You can hear the very best of his Christmas projects, from a seminal 1968 Yuletide release to this burst of holly-jolly projects in the 2000s, on this terrific new compilation.

Classic features five tracks from '68's *Snowfall: The Tony Bennett Christmas Album*, arranged and conducted with a sensitive joy by Robert Farnon—a frequent collaborator with Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald and Joe Williams, among others. That might be highlight enough, if not for the inclusion of five more tracks from 2008's aptly titled *A Swinging Christmas*, the Grammy-nominated, Bill Holman-arranged effort featuring the Count Basie Big Band.

From the first record, we have a memorable take on Mel Tormé's "The Christmas Song" as well as a note-perfect medley of "I Love the Winter Weather" and "I've Got My Love To Keep Me Warm." As expected, the collaboration with the late Basie's old group turns into a romp—with upbeat renditions of "Santa Claus is Coming to Town" and "Christmas Time is Here," from the Charles Brown Christmas special. (Monty Alexander sits in, doing his best banging imitation of

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the Count.)

Bennett returned to work alongside Farnon for 2001's Hallmark Presents: Christmas with Tony Bennett, an sleekly urbane project featuring the London Symphony Orchestra—and four bedrock standards appear from those sessions, including "O Come All Ye Faithful" and "Silent Night." Bennett's longtime collaborative foil Ralph Sharon and his quartet are showcased on two cuts from 2001's Our Favorite Things, including a duet with tenor virtuoso Placido Domingo; as well as the tune "Christmas in Herald Square" from 1998's Playground.

Finally, there is a brand-new, previously unreleased track, "What Child Is This," arranged and conducted by Marion Evans. Arriving as it does alongside work from four decades before, the song can't help but reveal the inevitable vocal fraying, but Bennett (always game, always approachable) remains the last of the great interpretive singers—and as winning as ever. ---
Nick DeRiso, somethingelreviews.com

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