

CC recommends: Choral Christmas music

selected by [Lynne Warfel](#) in the [December 13, 2011](#) issue

In Review



Christmas with Cantus

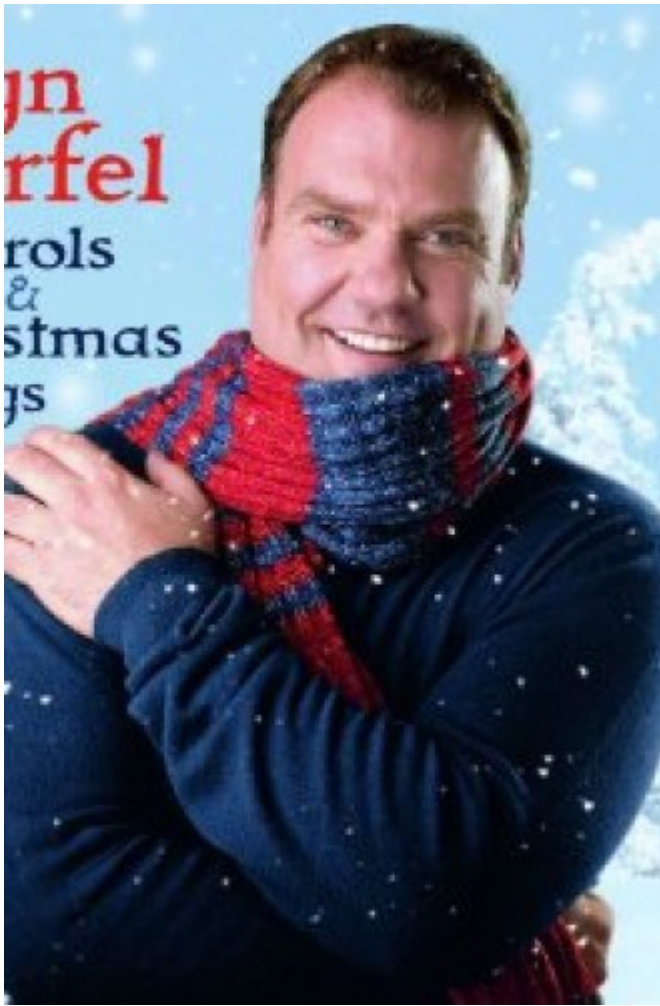
Cantus



Sing Noel!

By The Revels

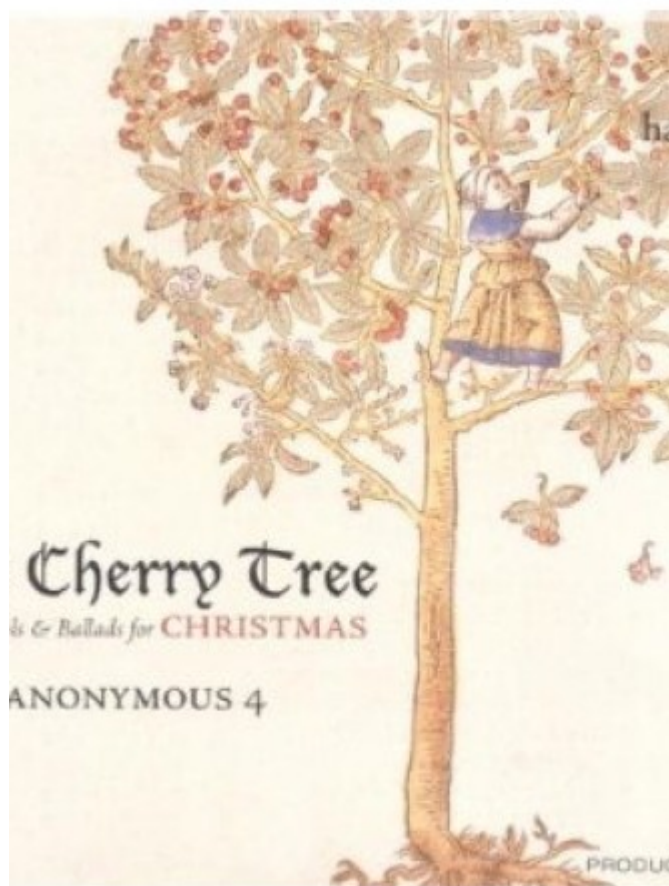
Revels



Carols & Christmas Songs

By Bryn Terfel

Deutsche Gramophon



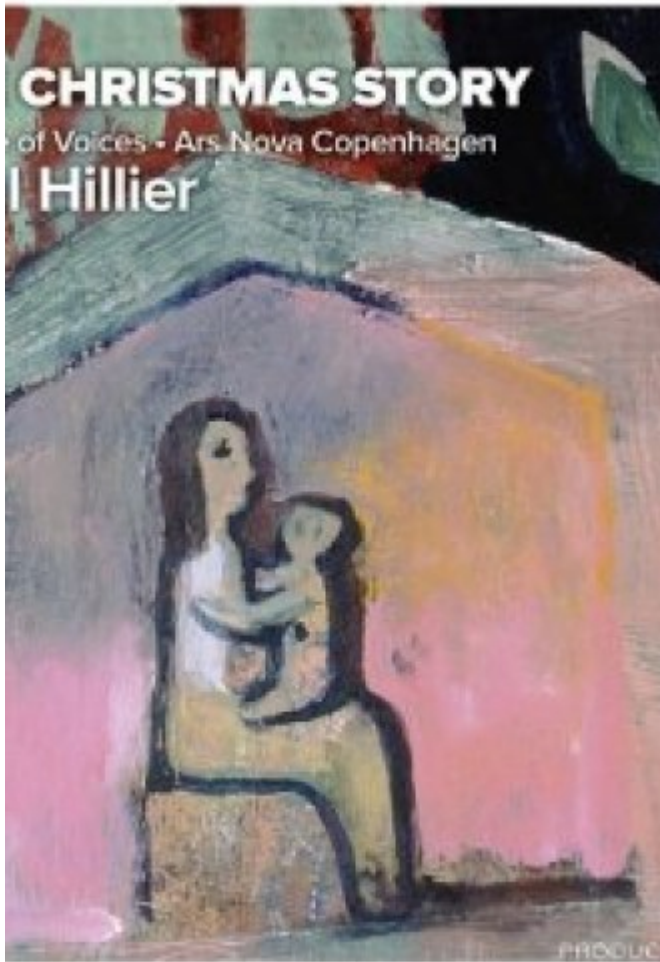
The Cherry Tree

By Anonymous 4
Harmonia Mundi



Our Favorite Carols

By Chanticleer
Chanticleer Records



The Christmas Story

By Theatre of Voices and Ars Nova Copenhagen, led by Paul Hillier
Harmonia Mundi

Christmas with Cantus, by Cantus. I'm partial to Cantus because the group started its musical life at St. Olaf College, where my husband, Tony Holt, taught singing for 20 years. It takes some of the best lesser-known carols and adds to them its own pristine interpretations and arrangements. Check out bass Timothy C. Takach's range on a couple of the Russian arrangements from "The All-Night Vigil."

Sing Noel! A European Christmas Revels, by The Revels. Early music buffs will rejoice in this collection of medieval and Renaissance music. Not only does it cover Christmas in Spain and France, but it adds some Arabic music to the mix. A lovely blend of voices, including children's.

Carols & Christmas Songs, by Bryn Terfel. One of the two CDs in this 2010 release is a beautiful showcase for Bryn Terfel, one of the great baritone voices of our time. Included are favorites: "O Come, All Ye Faithful," "Wexford Carol" and a duet with Bing Crosby on "White Christmas." As a second-generation Welsh woman, I find the second CD—with carols in Welsh—breathtaking. It's every bit as good as hearing Richard Burton read Dylan Thomas.

The Cherry Tree: Songs, Carols & Ballads for Christmas, by Anonymous 4. The ethereal, sterling, ice-castle sound of Anonymous 4 is well-suited for this collection of medieval carols and Anglo-American spirituals—all inspired by the famous "miracle" carol of the 15th century, "The Cherry Tree."

Our Favorite Carols, by Chanticleer. A collection of Chanticleer's best from "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen" to Gustav Holst's beautiful "This Have I Done for My True Love." This is a timeless collection sung to perfection by the Bay Area's favorite singing sons.

The Christmas Story, by Theatre of Voices and Ars Nova Copenhagen, led by Paul Hillier. Inspired by the Anglican tradition's Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, this CD presents the Nativity story in song, dialogue and folk carols. A lovely tradition with a twist.