

audite

Deutschlandradio Kultur

# Vom Himmel hoch...

Christmas Carols



Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau

Rita Streich | Elisabeth Grümmer | Erna Berger ...





# Vom Himmel hoch...

## Christmas Carols

Sopran: Erna Berger • Elisabeth Grümmer • Margot Guillaume •  
Ursula Lüders • Lisa Otto • Maria Reith •  
Rita Streich • Gunthild Weber

Alt: Josephine Varga • Annelies Westen

Bariton: Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau

Tenor: Walther Ludwig

  

Blockflöte: Jeannette Chemin-Petit • Linde Höffer von Winterfeld

Oboe / Englischhorn: Fritjof Fest

Fagott: Johannes Zuther

Laute: Gerhard Tucholski

Klavier: Charlotte Kaufmann • Michael Raucheisen • Eta Wickop

Orgel: Felix Schröder

  

Hendel-Quartett: Georg Friedrich Hendel, Violine • Gerd Gassen, Violine •  
Siegbert Ueberschaer, Viola • Rolf Dommisch, Cello

Streichquartett Berlin: Rudolf Schulz, Violine • Willy Kirch, Violine •  
Walter Brose, Viola • Walter Lutz, Cello

Dirigent: Günther Arndt • Fried Walter • Hans Carste

Orchester: Radio-Orchester Berlin • RIAS-Unterhaltungssorchester •  
Ein RIAS-Studioorchester...





Maria Reith

**Anonymus, arr. Gotthold Frotscher (1897-1967)**

**Es blüh'n drei Rosen auf einem Zweig 2:57**

**Da droben auf dem Berge, da weht der Wind 1:57**

**Und unser lieben Frauen, der träumete ein Traum 2:06**

**Maria durch ein'n Dornwald ging 2:01**

Annelies Westen, Alt • Hendel-Quartett

Aufnahme: 08-12-1952 • RIAS Funkhaus, Berlin – Studio 7

**Anonymus**

**Maria auf dem Berge 2:12**

Maria Reith, Sopran • Michael Raucheisen, Klavier

Aufnahme: 24-06-1950 • Kleistsaal, Berlin-Schöneberg

**Anonymus, arr. Georg Winter**

**Schlaf, mein Kindelein (Strassburg 1697) 1:59**

**Anonymus, arr. Heinrich Reimann (1850-1906)**

**Schlaf wohl, du Himmelsknabe du 2:04**

Text: Christian Friedrich Daniel Schubart (1739-1791)

Gunthild Weber, Sopran • Eta Wickop, Klavier

Aufnahme: 10-12-1958 • RIAS Funkhaus, Berlin – Studio 7

**Charlotte Kaufmann (20. Jahrhundert)**

**Stille Nacht 2:37**

Die Frucht ist längst ins Haus gebracht

Text: Hanns Korngiebel (1902-1969)

Rita Streich, Sopran • Charlotte Kaufmann, Klavier

Aufnahme: 08-12-1951 • RIAS Funkhaus, Berlin – Studio 7





**Charlotte Kaufmann** (20. Jahrhundert)

**Die Himmelsbotschaft ist erklungen** 2:48

Text: Max von Schenkendorf (1783-1817)

Rita Streich, Sopran • Charlotte Kaufmann, Klavier

Aufnahme: 08-12-1951 • RIAS Funkhaus, Berlin – Studio 7

**Anonymus** (14. Jh.), arr. **Albert Becker** (1834-1899)

**Joseph, lieber Joseph mein** 2:24

**Anonymus** (16. Jh.), arr. **Albert Becker**

**Zu Bethlehem geboren** 2:41

Text: Friedrich Spee (1591-1635)

**Johann Friedrich Reichardt** (1752-1814)

**Christlied** 2:17

Heilige Nacht, Nacht der unendlichen Liebe

Text: Luise Hensel (1798-1876)

**Anonymus**

**Es wird schon gleich dunkel** 2:12

Ursula Lüders, Sopran • Josephine Varga, Alt •

Felix Schröder, Orgel

Aufnahme: 16-12-1964 • RIAS Funkhaus, Berlin – Studio 7

**Mark Lothar** (1902-1985)

**Das himmlische Menuett** 3:50

Es tanzen die Englein im himmlischen Saal

Erna Berger, Sopran •

Radio-Orchester Berlin • Fried Walter, Dirigent

Aufnahme: 12-02-1962 • Siemensvilla, Berlin-Lankwitz





**Anonymus, arr. Hermann Schroeder (1904-1984)**

**O Jesulein zart, dein Kripplein ist hart 2:34**

**Anonymus**

**Wiegenlied in der Weihnacht 1:44**

*Kindelein zart von guter Art*

Margot Guillaume, Sopran • Gerhard Tucholski, Laute

Aufnahme: 11-11-1953 • RIAS Funkhaus, Berlin – Studio 7

**Anonymus, arr. Hans Chemin-Petit (1902-1981)**

**Kommt all herein, ihr Engelein 2:45**

Walther Ludwig, Tenor •

Johannes Zuther, Fagott • Fritjof Fest, Englischhorn •

Rudolf Schulz, Violine • Walter Brose, Viola • Walter Lutz, Cello

**O Jesulein mild, o Jesulein zart 3:18**

Walther Ludwig, Tenor • Streichquartett Berlin

Aufnahme: 19-12-1953 • RIAS Funkhaus, Berlin – Studio 7

**Lobt Gott, ihr Christen allzugleich 2:40**

*Text: Nikolaus Hermann (1480/1500-1561)*

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Bariton •

Fritjof Fest, Oboe • Streichquartett Berlin

Aufnahme: 22-12-1953 • RIAS Funkhaus, Berlin – Studio 7





Elisabeth Grümmer

**Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750),**

**arr. Hans Chemin-Petit**

**Ich steh' an deiner Krippen hier, BWV 469 3:40**

*Text: Paul Gerhardt (1607-1676)*

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Bariton •

Fritjof Fest, Oboe • Streichquartett Berlin

**Anonymus, arr. Hans Chemin-Petit**

**Gelobet seist du, Jesus Christ 3:08**

*Text: Martin Luther (1483-1546)*

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Bariton • Johannes Zuther, Fagott •

Fritjof Fest, Englischhorn • Streichquartett Berlin

Aufnahme: 23-12-1953 • RIAS Funkhaus, Berlin – Studio 7

**Anonymus, arr. Hans Chemin-Petit**

**Vom Himmel hoch, ihr Engel kommt 2:58**

Elisabeth Grümmer, Sopran •

Linde Höffer von Winterfeld, Blockflöte •

Jeannette Chemin-Petit, Blockflöte •

Rudolf Schulz, Violine • Walter Brose, Viola • Walter Lutz, Cello

Aufnahme: 23-12-1953 • RIAS Funkhaus, Berlin – Studio 7

**Es ist ein Ros' entsprungen 2:30**

Elisabeth Grümmer, Sopran •

Linde Höffer von Winterfeld, Blockflöte •

Jeannette Chemin-Petit, Blockflöte • Walter Lutz, Cello

Aufnahme: 23-12-1953 • RIAS Funkhaus, Berlin – Studio 7





**Anonymus, arr. Herbert Baumann (\*1925)**  
**Ave Maria zart, du edler Rosengart 2:09**

Lisa Otto, Sopran •

Ein RIAS-Studioorchester • Günther Arndt, Dirigent

Aufnahme: 10-12-1961 • Siemensvilla, Berlin-Lankwitz

**Anonymus, arr. Rudolf Kühn (+1981)**  
**Süßer die Glocken nie klingen 3:51**

Text: Friedrich Wilhelm Kritzinger (1816-1890)

**Martin Luther, arr. Rudolf Kühn**  
**Vom Himmel hoch 1:56**

Text: Martin Luther

Rita Streich, Sopran •

RIAS-Unterhaltungsorchester • Hans Carste, Dirigent

Aufnahme: 10-12-1955 • Siemensvilla, Berlin-Lankwitz





### The raptured gaze: a 1950s Christmas in front of the radio

The image of a family gathering at Christmas in the 1950s includes, for today's observer, a radio set – be it because we experienced these years ourselves, or that they feel recognisable from family stories and from films. The radio often formed part of the radiogram, a piece of furniture which unmistakably dominated the drawing room. Once the family had congregated around the decorated Christmas tree to play or to sing together, musical entertainment was readily passed into the hands of the programme-makers at the radio. Records of festive music were rarely available in the early post-war years, for most record companies had to re-establish themselves, and were able only gradually to issue new recordings. Consequently, it was left to resourceful music producers at the radio to invite suitable musicians into the radio studios in order to create atmospheric Christmas programmes.

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 shows. Despite their doubtless busy schedules, they were not above coming into the RIAS studio in the run-up to Christmas. The artistic proceeds of these Christmas productions would not have been a decisive factor, but rather the prospect of a very large audience, even if the number of connoisseurs – music lovers who scour radio programmes for great interpreters – would naturally, in this context, have remained comparatively small.

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 Berlin music historian Gotthold Frotscher, for instance, embedded the voice into miniature string quartet movements. Hans Chemin-Petit, a choral conductor who later became deputy head at the Berlin Musikhochschule, arranged seven old tunes for voices and small-scale instrumental accompaniment. The spectrum of arrangements on this disc stretches from the sparing





but emphatic lute dabs with which Gerhard Tuchsolski accompanies the soprano Margot Guillaume, right up to the onomatopoetic expansion of orchestral sonorities in Rudolf Kühn's arrangement of the last two tracks of the disc, 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.

The programme opens with five Marian carols, followed by eight numbers about the holy night and the birth of Jesus. *Das himmlische Menüett* presents a curious piece – angels dancing in heaven encourage baby Jesus to leap joyfully whilst Mother Mary directs the proceedings, although the image of angels making music is no rarity in the genre of the Christmas carol. The second half of the programme returns, with the exception of one Marian carol (*Ave Maria zart, du edler Rosengart*), to the contemplation of the divine infant in the silent, holy night.

Rüdiger Albrecht

Translation: Viola Scheffel

Fried Walter • Erna Berger





Hans Carste

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#### Deutschlandradio Kultur

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studio recording, mono  
research: Rüdiger Albrecht  
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