



REVIEW: *It's Christmas Time*

2007 ECMA nominee "Children's Recording of the Year"

Performed by **Donna & Andy**

It's Christmas Time is a collection of original Christmas songs written by **Donna Rhodenizer**. There are eleven tracks ranging in style from calypso to classical to traditional. In addition to the strong vocal performance Donna & Andy fans have come to expect, the instrumental talents of Nova Scotia's finest studio musicians help make this CD one you will want to add to your Christmas collection, and maybe even listen to all year long!

The title track, **It's Christmas Time**, describes snow, presents, family and travel, and all the things we associate with the season. The French horn instrumental section helps to create the ambiance of Christmas and the flowing waltz-like music supports the sentiment expressed, "Christmas all the time, wouldn't that be fine, feeling like this every day."

Deo is a rousing choral anthem. Donna & Andy are joined by the Hallelujah Praise Choir of North Preston, Nova Scotia. Multiple layers of harmony are intertwined with percussion, bass, Hammond organ and driving piano rhythms that bring this musical celebration to life.

Star Above is a gentle and poignant song examining the qualities of stars and the light and hope from which we can draw inspiration. Juxtaposed with the adapted American spiritual, *Great Big Stars*, this is a song that crosses the Christmas classification to become a lovely thought and a great song for the entire year.

Sing "Gloria!" will make you think of warm island Christmas celebrations. The baby, the shepherds and the Wise Men of the Christmas story are placed in a samba-like musical setting. Donna is showcased in multiple vocal tracks with a backup band that is as hot as a Brazilian samba.

The writing of **One Small Voice** was inspired by the Acadia University Youth Choir, embracing the concept that even one small voice can be strong when added to other voices. Masterfully performed by Andy showing off a great part of his vocal range, with delicate violin counterpoint, this song is classical in nature and timeless in its appeal.

Huron Carol is an original arrangement created by Donna Rhodenizer featuring handbells, strong modal harmonies from xylophone, piano and harp instrumentals, all supported by acoustic bass. Andy's strong vocal lead is joined by Donna's vocal harmonies and creates a haunting rendition of this traditional carol.

Mister Santa I've Been Good features pizzicato strings and banjo and will remind the listener of a good old Western musical. Instrumental breaks are included for hand jiving or foot stomping. The lyrics portray a child trying to highlight exemplary behaviour that might bode well for the future filling of Christmas stockings. Sure to become a toe-tapping favourite of the season.

Father Christmas leaves subtlety at the starting gate. This is straight up asking for stuff! The lyrics are built within the familiar folk tune *Alouette* and the arrangement is brightened by the interplay between mandolin and clarinet that appears throughout the tune.

Waiting Patiently for Santa provides the listener with lots of ideas for things to do while waiting for the arrival of the big man down the chimney. The delightful combination of brass quintet and banjo creates a musical cushion for the lyrics as the details unfold.

Christmas A to Z is the perfect way to organize everything that is Christmas. Handbells add sparkle to the piano and bass accompaniment and all support the vocal performance of Donna & Andy.

Joyful Bells is an instrumental offering featuring Donna playing multiple handbells. The bright tune and lovely sound of the bells will surely put listeners in the Christmas spirit.

Instrumental accompaniment tracks are provided for each song resulting in a total of 22 tracks on this CD.

Andy Duinker • Donna Rhodenizer • Donna & Andy • vocal duo • entertainers • publishers • composers • performers • recording artists • educational materials • Rhodenizer & Duinker Choral series • downright mighty fine folk

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