

# John Turner

## *Christmas Card Carols*

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First published 2017

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ISMN 979-0-9002395-0-1

Cover illustration by Stephanie Godwin (1917-2006), *The Christ Child of Poland*, a Christmas card of 1945, used by permission. See Joscelyn Godwin, ed., *The Starlight Years: Love and War at Kelmscott Manor 1940-1948* (Dovecote Press).

Music setting by Timothy Rogers  
Printed in the UK

All of the works in this anthology, other than no. 24 *Berceuse*, have been recorded as follows:  
Christmas Card Carols, performed by Intimate Voices, directed by Christopher Stokes, released on Divine Art (cat. no. DDA 25161) and available on CD or as HD, FLAC or MP3 download.  
[www.divineartrecords.com](http://www.divineartrecords.com)

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## Preface

I have always liked Christmas Carols (perhaps a legacy of school carol services with my wonderful music master Douglas Steele, a conducting student of Bruno Walter and one time assistant to Sir Thomas Beecham) and I have been composing them (or rather trying to) since my early teens. For many years our Christmas Cards were designed by my good friend the composer and artist Thomas Pitfield, but after his old age and infirmity brought that sequence to an end I thought I would send a specially composed carol each Christmas to my friends. All the various dedicatees are musical friends and colleagues.

I am very grateful to the singer and former BBC music producer Mark Rowlinson, whose idea it was to arrange for these to be recorded, and I am immensely indebted to Mark for his enthusiasm, organisation and advice. The disc, on the Divine Art label (cat. no. DDA 25161), contains all of these Christmas Card Carols, together with one earlier carol and a short instrumental piece sent as a card one year when inspiration failed! This volume contains them all in sheet music form, together with the bonus of a short solo oboe piece written for 2017, and which relates musically to at least four of the carols (hence the subtitle!). Tim Rogers of Encore Publications has helped meticulously in the preparation of the scores (some of the carols being already in his firm's catalogue) for publication, and I enormously appreciate his help and encouragement in bringing this project to fruition.

John Turner

## About the composer

John Turner is one of the leading recorder players of today. He was Senior Scholar in Law at Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge. For many years he pursued a legal career alongside his many musical activities. But he now devotes his time to writing, reviewing, publishing, composing and generally energising, as well as playing the recorder. He has played and broadcast as a recorder soloist with many leading orchestras, including the Academy of St Martin-in-the-Fields, the Academy of Ancient Music, and the English Chamber Orchestra. His many recordings include no less than five sets of the Brandenburg Concertos, as well as the F Major version of Brandenburg Concerto No. 4 with Menuhin and George Malcolm, but lately he has made numerous acclaimed recordings of the recorder's contemporary concerto and chamber music repertoire, including four solo concerto discs, all of which have received critical acclaim.

He edits series of recorder publications for both Forsyths and Peacock Press, and founded the periodical Manchester Sounds, in response to the perceived threat to music libraries in Great Britain. In addition he was responsible for the rediscovery of several works for his instrument, including the Rawsthorne Recorder Suite, Antony Hopkins' Pastiche Suite, Herbert Murrill's Sarabande, the Handel F Major Trio Sonata and John Parry's Nightingale Rondo (the only substantial known British nineteenth century work for a fipple flute).

He was awarded an Honorary Fellowship by the Royal Northern College of Music in 2002 for his services to British music, and is a Visiting Distinguished Scholar of Manchester University.

# I. A nativity carol

Words: Frances Chesterton (1869–1938)

Music: JOHN TURNER

**Dolce** ♩ = 108

SOPRANO ALTO

TENOR BASS

*Solo p* *Full p* *Solo*

How far is it to Beth-le-hem? Not ve-ry far.\_\_\_\_ Shall we find the

sta-ble-room Lit by a star?\_\_\_\_ Can we see the lit-tle child, \_

Is he with-in?\_\_\_\_ If we lift the wood-en latch May we go in?

May we stroke the crea-tures there, Ox, ass, or sheep?\_ May we peep like them and see\_

*mp* *sub. p* *pp* *Solo mf* *Solo mf* *Full p*

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6  
23 *mf* *p*

Je - sus a - sleep? If we touch his ti - ny hand

Full *mf* *p*

27 *p*

will he a - wake? Will he know we've come so far Just for his sake?

Solo *mf* Full *p*

33 *mf*

For all wea - ry chil - dren Ma - ry must weep. Here, up - on his

*mf*

38 *f* *sub. p*

bed of straw Sleep, chil - dren, sleep. God in his mo - ther's arms,

*f* *sub. p*

43 *mf* *mp*

Babes in the byre, Sleep, as they sleep who find Their heart's de - sire.

*mf* *mp*

## 2. A song on the birth of Christ

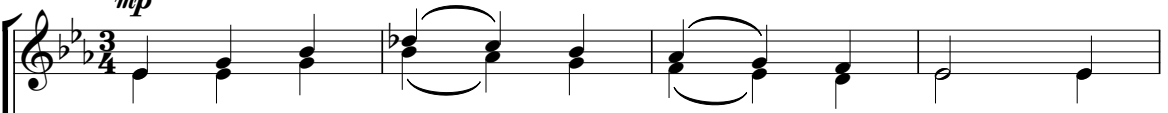
Words: Luther's Christmas Carol (1535),  
translation printed Edinburgh 1578

Music: JOHN TURNER

**Rocking**  $\text{♩} = 54$

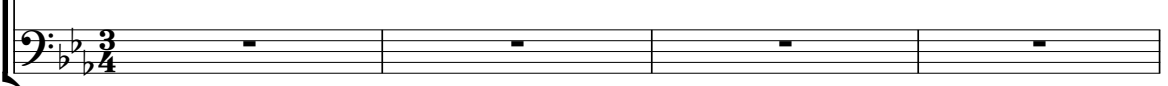
*mp*

SOPRANO  
ALTO



1. O my deir heart, young Je - - sus sweet, Pre -

TENOR  
BASS



5

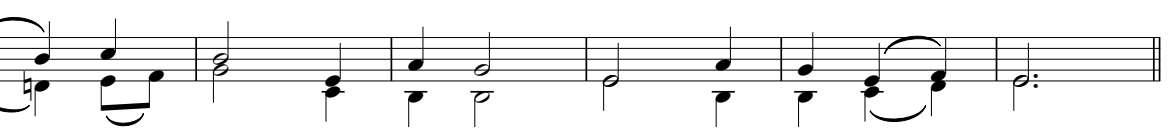


-pare thy cra - dle in my spreit. And I shall rocke thee


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11




in my hert, And nev - er mair from thee de - part,



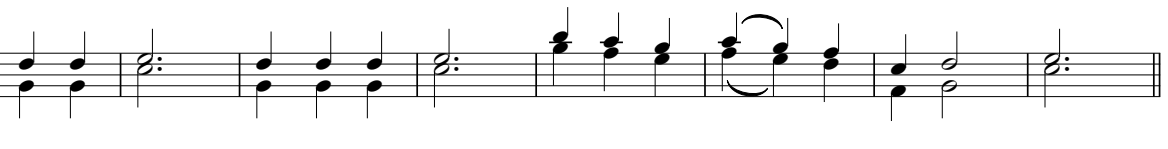
17

*p*



Ba - lu - la - low, Young Je - sus sweet, O my deir heart, Ba - lu - la - low.

*p*



25

2. But I shall praise thee ev - er - moir. With sang - is

*mf*

30

sweet un - to thy gloir. The kne - es of my heart

35

shall I bow And sing that might Ba - lu - la - low.

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(S.)

41

*p*

Ba - lu - la - low, Young Je - sus sweet, O my deir heart, Ba - lu - la - low.

*p*

49

*f*

3. Gloir be to God e - ter - nal - ly, Who gave his

*f*



54 Son for mee.

on - ly Son for mee. To come and save me

on - ly Son for mee.

59

from dis - tress, How can I thank his gen - tel - nesse?

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65 *pp*

Ba - lu - la - low, Young Je - sus sweat, O my deir heart, Ba - lu - la - low.

*pp*

73 *ppp* **poco rit.**

Ba - lu - la - low, Young Je - sus sweat, O my deir heart, Ba - lu - la - low.

*ppp*

# 5. I sing of a maiden

Words: Anon, 15th century

Music: JOHN TURNER

Always quiet and radiant

SOPRANO  
ALTO

1. I sing of a maiden That is make-less;

TENOR  
BASS

5

King of all king - es To her son she ches.

9

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2. He came all so still Where his mo - ther was. As

13

— the dew in Ap - ril That fall - eth on the grass.

17

3. He came all so still To his mo - ther's bower,