

Jennifer cutting's OCEAN

# Song of Solstice



celtic music for midwinter

Notes by Stephen D. Winick and Jennifer Cutting

## Song of solstice

Words and music by Jennifer Cutting,

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Choral vocals arranged by Jennifer Cutting and  
Betsy Fulford Miller

Vocal and Concertina - John Roberts

Vocal - Tony Barrand

Button Accordion - Jennifer Cutting

Fiddle - Steve Hickman

Fiddle, Nyckelharpa - Bruce Sagan

Recorders - John Guillory

Double Bass - Charlie Pilzer

Choral vocals - singers from Washington Revels:

Helen Fields, Joanna Franco Marsh, Cheryl

Lane, Jennifer Greene, Susan Hall Lewis,

Gillian Penn, Marc Lewis, Mike Matheson,

Milan Pavich, Mike Platt, Michael Lewallen,

Greg Lewis, Will Wurzel, and Elizabeth Miller

(Music Director, Washington Revels)

Additional vocals on choruses - Lisa Null, Charlie

Baum, Steve Winick, Riki Schneyer, Jim Lewis

Bells - Foggy Bottom Morris Men: Jim

Voorhees, Gus Voorhees, Bruce Sagan,

Arthur Shaw, Jim Lewis, Bill Brown

## A Christmas Day in the Morning

Trad., arr. Sue Richards

Celtic Harp - Sue Richards

Bodhrán - Myron Bretholz

This tune is associated with Friedemann Stickle, a German sailor who was shipwrecked on Unst, in the Shetland Islands, in the 1770s. Stickle remained in Shetland, where he became a famous fiddler, and was paid to play this tune every year at Christmastime in the Hall of Bunness in Unst. Stickle's great-great grandson, John Stickle, was still playing the tune into the 1950s. The Shetland fiddler, collector, and teacher Tom Anderson thought that Friedemann had composed the tune, but Patrick Shuldham-Shaw, the folklorist who collected the tune from John Stickle, believed it was older than Friedemann's day.

Jennifer wrote this song because she could not find one that spoke to certain ideas, which many cultures have reflected on at the Winter Solstice since ancient times. For one, that the Solstice is a turning point, a magical gateway through which we pass into the season of the Sun's rebirth. For another, that as we give thanks for the returning Sun, we should give equal thanks to the season of cold and dark for all it has taught us, as a time of reflection, incubation, and gestation. Finally, that at this season we should gather together in fellowship, to raise our spirits and sing back the sun.

Jim Voorhees of the Foggy Bottom Morris Men has written a wonderful dance to this song, which the men now perform each year on the Winter Solstice.

*'Tis the gateway of the year;  
Shortest day and darkest hour;  
Praises as our newborn Sun  
Journeys back to its full power,*

## CHORUS

*Raise the song of Solstice high,  
Through the wind and weather;  
Welcome Yule with frost and fire  
And sing we all together!*

*Blessed be the darkness deep;  
All we learned there well worth knowing.  
As below, the seeds' long sleep  
Nourished hope for springtide's growing,*

## CHORUS

*Troubles of the old year past  
Burning in the oaken fire,  
Making way for greater gifts;  
Glowing with our hearts' desire,*

## CHORUS

*Merry meet and merry part,  
Merry meet again,  
Strangers only at the start,  
Now are friends until the end, and*

*Raise the song of Solstice high,  
Through the wind and weather;  
Welcome Yule with frost and fire  
And sing we all together! (repeat)*

## People, look east

Trad., arr. John Guillory and Jennifer Cutting

Vocals - Christine Noyes

Recorders - John Guillory

Lute - John Albertson

Piano Accordion - Jennifer Cutting

Oboe - Karen Moses

Dumbek, Tombak, Daf, Riqq, Zils - Steve Bloom

Bodhrán - Myron Bretholz

Double Bass - Charlie Pilzer

Harmony vocals - Lisa Moscatiello, Betsy  
Fulford Miller, Jennifer Cutting

The traditional melody of this song comes from a French carol in the Besançon dialect, entitled "Chantans, Bargies, Noué, Noué." Sir John Stainer

(1840-1901) traced the tune to a Besançon publication of 1717, and it probably originated in the 17th century. The words are modern. They were written by Eleanor Farjeon (1881-1965), and first published in *The Oxford Book of Carols* (1928). Best known in her day as a children's author, Farjeon is better known today as the lyricist responsible for "Morning Has Broken," which she wrote, to a traditional Gaelic melody, for the 1931 edition of the book *Songs of Praise*, and which was a major pop hit for Cat Stevens in 1972.

**4** **voici la Noël** [Christmas Eve is Here]  
*Trad., arr. Sue Richards and Jennifer Cutting*

Celtic Harp - **Sue Richards**  
Glockenspiel - **Jennifer Cutting**

An instrumental version of a French song, which was published in the very first volume of the venerable French folklore journal *Revue des Traditions Populaires* in 1886. It is a traditional singing-game for older children, and its theme is not really Christmas, but courting and marriage. The narrator recounts the gifts her boyfriend will bring her when he returns from Paris, including "the fiancée's bouquet." This song was sung in France at Christmas, but also on Toussaint (All Hallows, an ancient seasonal festival in France), and St.-Jean (St. John's Day, which falls within 3 days of the Summer Solstice). The association between courting and these prehistoric turning

points of the year is common in folklore, and reflects a universal recognition that humans and the earth both have their seasons of fertility.



*Quelle est cette odeur  
agréable?* [What is that Fragrance?]

*Trad., arr. Jennifer Cutting and Lisa Moscatiello*

The melody of this song has been used for a number of French carols. It most likely originated in France during the 17th century, and has been known in England since at least 1728, when John Gay used a variant for the drinking song "Fill Every Glass" in *The Beggar's Opera*. Nowadays, English translations of the text are popular, but we prefer the French original, especially when it is sung so gloriously by Lisa Moscatiello. While similar carols mention the music and the light emanating from the Christ child, this one is unusual for especially mentioning the baby's fragrance, which is unparalleled by all the flowers of spring.

Vocal and whistle - **Lisa Moscatiello**  
Celtic Harp - **Sue Richards**  
Organ - **Jennifer Cutting**  
Cello - **Barbara Brown**

## **6** **Green Man**

*Words and music by Jennifer Cutting,  
© 2010 Once and Future Songs, ASCAP  
Choral vocals arranged by Jennifer Cutting and  
Betsy Fulford Miller*

Vocal - **Steve Winick**  
Fiddle - **Steve Hickman**  
Soprano Recorder - **John Guillory**  
Bouzouki, Acoustic and Electric Guitars -  
**Zan McLeod**  
Great Highland Bagpipes - **Tim Carey**  
Bass - **Rico Petruccielli**  
Drums - **Daniel Schwartz**  
Bodhrán - **Myron Bretholz**  
Hand Drums: KIVA (Djembe - **Ariana  
Lightningstorm, Tigre Cruz, and David Landis;  
Dumbek - Diana Sunday**)

Choral vocals: men from Washington Revels:  
**(Greg Lewis, Marc Lewis, Mike Matheson,  
Milan Pavich, Will Wurzel, Mike Platt,  
Michael Lewallen)**

Jennifer wrote this song about the wisdom of the Divine Masculine – nurturer and protector of all wild places – and about Nature's wisdom, which knows that there is no death, only transformation. "Green Man" is a name originally given to a pageant character in late medieval England, who dressed in leaves and symbolized wildness. It was later also applied to carvings of a face made of leaves, or surrounded by leaves, which adorn

medieval churches. The Green Man is often thought of today as a spirit of spring and summer. However, midwinter has its own miraculous foliage, including holly, ivy and pine, which remain green while everything else is dead. In one of the Green Man's most compelling medieval appearances, the poem *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, he is clearly a winter spirit. Jennifer wrote this melody to a Highland bagpipe scale, and made it simple enough to sing unaccompanied, or at a drum circle. "Green Man" is dedicated to the Beneficent Order of the Greenman (BOG). Singer and BOG Brother Steve Winick marches with the Order and leads this song. *Find out more about the BOG Brothers at [www.bogbrothers.org](http://www.bogbrothers.org)*

*Deep within this sacred place  
Green Man, King of the Wood  
Outlines of an ancient face  
Green Man, Wild Man, Wise One*

*Spirit of the living leaves  
Green Man, King of the Wood  
In his heart all Nature breathes  
Green Man, Wild Man, Wise One*

**CHORUS**  
*Green Man, bless this wood  
Oak and ash and thorn...in  
Green Man's brotherhood  
All will be reborn...all will be reborn*

*Man may build his castles tall  
Green Man, King of the Wood*

*Time and tide will see them fall  
Greenman, Wild Man, Wise One*

*Thrusting up through crumbling walls  
Green Man, King of the Wood  
Vines and ivy conquer all  
Green Man, Wild Man, Wise One*

#### CHORUS

*Once bright holly Christmas Day  
Green Man, King of the Wood  
Now a flow'ring branch of May  
Green Man, Wild Man, Wise One*

*Soon Midsummer's shelt'ring shade  
Green Man, King of the Wood  
Turns to autumn's fiery blaze  
Green Man, Wild Man, Wise One*

#### CHORUS

*When we see the falling leaves  
Green Man, King of the Wood  
Nature's brethren do not grieve  
Green Man, Wild Man, Wise One*

*Life and death an endless chain  
Green Man, King of the Wood  
All that falls will rise again  
Green Man, Wild Man, Wise One*

#### CHORUS (2x)

*Green Man, bless this wood  
Oak and ash and thorn...in  
Green Man's brotherhood  
All will be reborn...All will be  
reborn...All...will...be...re-born*

## *F*all, leaves, fall

Poem by Emily Brontë (1818-1848)

Music by Jennifer Cutting,

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Vocals - Annie Haslam  
Keyboard, Samples - Jennifer Cutting  
Recorder, Whistle, Sordune - Scott Reiss  
Electric Guitar, Drums - John Jennings  
Bouzouki - Zan McLeod  
Samples - Blake Althen  
Bass - Rico Petruccielli

Emily Brontë's poem "Fall, Leaves, Fall" is the poet's outright reveling in the death and decay of winter that others dread. It was not published in her lifetime, but preserved in a handwritten manuscript, dated 1837. Jennifer wrote a stately melody for Brontë's poem, and created a symphonic arrangement that is at once lushly romantic and darkly Gothic, to echo the feeling of Brontë's words. English vocalist Annie Haslam's soaring high notes will be familiar from her work with the seminal progressive rock band Renaissance. This was the final recording session of the late Scott Reiss, a world-renowned recorder virtuoso, and a founder of the Folger Consort and Hesperus.

Here is the original text of Brontë's poem.

*Fall, leaves, fall; die, flowers, away;  
Lengthen night and shorten day;  
Every leaf speaks bliss to me  
Fluttering from the autumn tree.*

*I shall smile when wreaths of snow  
Blossom where the rose should grow;  
I shall sing when night's decay  
Ushers in a drearier day.*



## *I*n the bleak midwinter

Poem by Christina Rossetti (1830-1894)

Music by Gustav Holst (1874-1934),

arr. Jennifer Cutting

Vocals, whistle - Lisa Moscatiello  
Celtic Harp - Sue Richards  
Violin - Cheryl Hurwitz  
Organ - Jennifer Cutting

Originally a poem by the English poet Christina Rossetti, this piece remained unpublished until the posthumous 1904 edition of her *Poetic Works*. Shortly thereafter, Gustav Holst set it to music as a Christmas carol, and the setting was published in *The English Hymnal* (1906). Holst's melody has a quiet majesty that perfectly suits the stark, pure snowscape of Rossetti's first verse, and the simple, tender sentiment of her last.

## *T*ime to remember the poor

Late-19th-century English broadside; text and music adapted and arranged by Jennifer Cutting,  
© 2010 *Once and Future Songs*, ASCAP

Vocals - Lisa Moscatiello  
Acoustic and Electric Guitars - Al Petteway  
Keyboard, Samples - Jennifer Cutting  
Bass - Rico Petruccielli  
Drums - Juan Dudley

In the 1990s, Hungry For Music founder Jeff Campbell asked Jennifer record a winter song for a holiday compilation CD. While Jennifer was assisting a researcher in the Library of Congress's American Folklife Center Archive, the book she was holding, Frank Kidson's *Traditional Tunes* (1891), fell open to the song *Time to Remember the Poor*. Although she felt that the tune Kidson collected was inappropriately jaunty for the solemn text, she knew this song was "the one." She slowed down the tempo, changed the meter, eliminated the tune's chromatic flourishes, and conflated several texts. Her eerie, dystopian sound canvas complements the foreboding lyrics. To evoke the themes of this Victorian broadside (charity is expected of all morally upright people, and death is the great leveler), Jennifer envisioned a kind of Gothic/steampunk/psychedelia fusion, and persuaded Grammy-winning acoustic fingerstyle guitarist Al Petteway to pick up the electric guitar.

## *10* Light the winter's dark

Words and music by Jennifer Cutting,

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Arranged by Coope, Boyes, and Simpson

Vocals - Barry Coope, Jim Boyes and Lester Simpson (Coope Boyes & Simpson)

Winter is a time when we most need light to sustain us – physically, mentally, and spiritually. Jennifer's original winter song celebrates the illumination brought to us by some of the world's great souls, to light our way... and, no less important, it celebrates the light we bring to each other. Like Winter itself, the setting is stark and austere, the voices in Coope, Boyes & Simpson's stunning arrangement as beautifully bare as winter trees.

*When Jesus brought His light to Earth,  
A star shone in the East  
And Wise Men journeyed from afar  
To hail the Prince of Peace.*

### CHORUS

*So let us all sing Jesus' name  
To light the winter's dark;  
And may His light grow brighter still  
With each new year we mark.*

*When Moses brought His light to Earth,  
His tribe from bondage led.  
In desert, water from the rock;  
In wilderness, sweet bread.*

### CHORUS

*When The Prophet brought His light to Earth,  
He reconciled His foes,  
When four clans raised the Black Stone high  
Upon His holy cloak.*

### CHORUS

*When The Buddha brought His light to Earth,  
He saw beyond love and hate;  
He said, "to end all suffering,  
Each mind must be awake."*

### CHORUS

*When The Lady brought Her light to Earth,  
She took us to Her breast;  
Each fin and feather, hoof and horn  
By Her were brightly blessed.*

### CHORUS

*When We all brought Our light to Earth,  
We made it a better place.  
We loved and lost, yet loved again;  
And learned from our mistakes.*

### CHORUS

*So let us sing each other's names  
To light the winter's dark;  
And may Our light grow brighter still  
With each new year we mark.*

## *11* Baloo, Lammy [Hush, My Little Lamb]

Trad., arr. Sue Richards

Celtic Harp - Sue Richards

"Baloo, Lammy" is a 16th-century Scottish cradle song about the baby Jesus. The words were originally published as "Ane Sang of the birth of Christ with the tune Balulalaw" in James, John, and Robert Wedderburn's *Ane Compendius Buik of Godly and Spirituall Sangis* (1567). The title suggests that most readers were expected to know the tune, perhaps as a secular lullaby.

This day to you is born ane child  
Of Marie meik and Virgin mild  
That blissit bairn bening and kind  
Sall you rejoyce baith hart and mind.  
Baloo, Lammy, Balulalaw.

## *12* summer will come 'round again

Words by Jennifer Cutting,

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Music by Gary Wicknam, © *Songs of Peer, Ltd.*

Vocal, guitar, whistle - Lisa Moscatiello  
Bouzouki - Zan McLeod  
Violin - Cheryl Hurwitz  
Piano - Jennifer Cutting  
Great Highland Bagpipes - Tim Carey  
Bass - Rico Petruccielli  
Drums - Danny Schwartz

The ancient Celts saw the passing of time as cyclical, and represented it by a circle or wheel. This song speaks of the human life stages of birth, growth, decline, and death, as echoed in the four seasons (Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter), and the solstices and equinoxes that herald them. Together, these represent the Celtic Wheel of the Year. Jennifer penned this lyric in the depths of a brutal January to reassure herself and others that the Wheel was bound to turn, and the Sun would return to warm the world.

*In summer, we dream of the harvest,  
In winter, we dream of the spring;  
In darkness, we dream of the sunlight  
Painting the sheen on the dragonfly's wing.*

*Youthful, we dream of adventure,  
Restless to start on the Quest;  
Flying the heights of ambition,  
Aching with pride to be seen with the best.*

*Wondering, we dream of the answer,  
Stranded, we dream of the tide;  
Breathless we wait the arrival  
Of the kiss that will waken the slumbering bride.*

### CHORUS

*Spin all your dreams on the Wheel of the Year,  
Summer will come 'round again;  
Open your eyes and it's already here,  
Freeing the fire that runs in our veins.*

*Hungry, we dream of the farmlands,  
Rich with the seed and the root;*

*Thirsty, we dream of the vineyard,  
Sweet with the juice of the ripening fruit.*

*Withered, we dream of the greening,  
Weary, we dream of relief;  
Shivering, we dream of the sunshine,  
Warming the face of each strawberry leaf.*

### CHORUS

*Nodding, we dream of our young loves,  
Of kisses bestowed in the rain;  
How rivers once frozen were melting,  
Freeing the fire that ran in our veins.*

### CHORUS (2x)

*In summer, we dream of the harvest,  
In winter, we dream of the spring;  
In darkness, we dream of the sunlight  
Painting the sheen on the dragonfly's wing;  
Painting the sheen on each dragonfly wing...*



### Bonus Music Video:

#### **bah humbug!**

(performed live at Blue House)

Words by Jennifer Cutting,

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Music by Sir Arthur Sullivan (public domain)

Jennifer's Christmas parody is set to the tune of Gilbert & Sullivan's "Tit Willow," from their 1885 operetta, *The Mikado*. She wrote "Bah Humbug" to perform at December concerts, to express in a lighthearted way our collective frustration at some of the more...ahem...*irritating* aspects of the holiday season (and, judging from the response of the studio audience in this live recording, she has surely touched a nerve!). For this live performance, she recruited bari-tenor Jase Parker of the Washington Savoyards, D.C.'s own Gilbert & Sullivan specialists. Grab an ultra-pasteurized, shelf-stable, non-dairy, eggnog-like soy beverage and sing along!

Note: This QuickTime video of "Bah Humbug" can be viewed on your computer, but not on your DVD player.

### Produced by Jennifer Cutting

("Fall, Leaves, Fall," produced by Jennifer Cutting and Blake Althen; "Light the Winter's Dark," produced by Coope, Boyes, and Simpson with Neil Ferguson.)

### Recorded and Mixed by Frank Marchand at Airshow Takoma

"Fall, Leaves, Fall" recorded by Glenn Barratt at MorningStar (Spring House, PA); Eamon Loftus at C & C Studios (Sterling, VA); Larry Kolota at SunSign Studios (Takoma Park, MD); and Blake Althen at Human Factor (Arlington, VA).

"Light the Winter's Dark" recorded by Neil Ferguson at Hill Top Studio (Leeds, England).

"Time to Remember the Poor" recorded by Don Zientara at Inner Ear (Arlington, VA). Additional tracks recorded by Blake Althen at Human Factor (Arlington, VA).

"Song of Solstice" recorded by Gantt Kushner at Gizmo (Silver Spring, MD) and Alan Stockwell at Soundesign (Brambleboro, VT). Additional tracking at Airshow Takoma. "Bah, Humbug" audio and video recording by Jeff Gruber at Blue House Productions (Silver Spring and Kensington, MD).

### Mastered by Charlie Pilzer at Airshow Takoma

Executive Producer for "Quelle est cette odeur agréable" – Scott Miller

Executive Producer for "Green Man" – Stephen D. Winick

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[www.wmlbrown.com](http://www.wmlbrown.com) (Takoma Park, MD)

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Lawrence Marie, Inc. (McLean, VA)

Special thanks to Charlie Pilzer and Frank Marchand at Airshow Takoma for wise counsel, tough love, superhuman patience, and always

going above and beyond the call of duty in the pursuit of quality... But most of all, for bringing a great recording studio to our home town of Takoma Park, Maryland.

To Lisa Moscatiello and Rico Petrucci: what a joy it has been to make music with you for over two decades... here's to many more! To all the great musical souls whose light and love grace these songs... Thank you for believing in my work, sharing your gifts, and co-creating this album. Bringing this music to life with you is what I live for!

This recording was made possible in part by support from the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County, Maryland; and from the Maryland State Arts Council.

### Other recordings by Jennifer Cutting:

HIGH TEA – The New St. George  
Folk Era 1415CD

OCEAN: Songs for the Night Sea Journey –  
Jennifer Cutting's OCEAN Orchestra  
SunSign CD2004

For more information on Jennifer Cutting, her group OCEAN, and her production company SunSign, go to: [www.jennifercutting.com](http://www.jennifercutting.com) and [www.oceanorchestra.com](http://www.oceanorchestra.com)

