

Renata Tebaldi - Christmas Festival (2004)

Written by bluesever

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02. Ave Maria: arr. from Bach's Prelude No.1 BWV 846
03. Wiegenlied, Op.49, No.4
04. What child is this (Greensleeves) [play](#)
05. O holy night (Minuit chrétien)
06. Tu scendi dalle stelle
07. Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht
08. Panis Angelicus
09. Repentir (O Divine Redeemer)
10. Mille cherubini in coro (arr. after Schubert)
11. Ave Maria
12. Adeste Fideles (O Come, All Ye Faithful) [play](#)

Decca has been perusing the vaults and re-releasing some classic recordings. Renata Tebaldi's CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL is one such recording. Originally released in 1971, it is a wonderful example of Tebaldi's artistry. While her voice is somewhat darker in this recording than in some of her earlier recordings, the arrangers seemed to know how to highlight Tebaldi's vocal majesty in tracks that suit her voice.

It is a standard operatic Christmas recording-traditional Christmas carols and some religious songs that are not necessarily Christmas pieces, but fit the mood of the holiday season rather well. Tebaldi sings each track with ease. In some tracks we find the glory and artistry that is trademark Tebaldi, particularly when she sings "O Holy Night." We have renditions of both versions of "Ave Maria" (Gounod and Schubert). The Gounod is very well done. "Panis Angelicus" is heavenly. Her rendition of "O Divine Redeemer" reminds me of her Desdemona of OTELLLO (the Karajan version with Mario Del Monaco in the title role) when she sings the "Willow Song" and then moves into the Hail Mary. To me, this is one of Tebaldi's greatest recorded moments. While the music differs, she performs "O Divine Redeemer" with the same intensity and feeling as her Desdemona. An added bonus is her English diction. I have become used to most operatic recordings of Christmas music having beautiful moments vocally, though the English diction is poor (Placido Domingo and Pavarotti's Christmas recordings quickly come

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to mind), but this is not the case with Tebaldi, who carefully sings each English word. It is perhaps attention to detail that makes this recording outstanding. – *Timothy Kearney*

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