

Musical Performances

An Afternoon of Holiday Music & Dance

Bristol Ballet will present renowned **classical guitarist Dr. Robert Trent** Sunday, Dec. 12 at 3 p.m. at the Paramount Center for the Arts. Dancers will join Trent as he plays selections from *The Nutcracker*, the music of Johann Sebastian Bach, and a Christmas medley. Trent is Director of Classical Guitar and Renaissance Lute Studies at the College of Visual and Performing Arts of Radford University. As a member of the ensemble Duo Firenze, he has performed worldwide on modern guitar, Renaissance lute, an original French guitar from the early 19th century, and a reproduction of a 10-string double-necked Romantic guitar of Scherzer. \$6-\$10. 423-274-8920.

Appalachian Express Chorus-Kingsport

This ensemble will present the harmonious and humorous style of barbershop singing in their annual Christmas concerts Saturday, Dec. 11 at Wright's Country Cuisine restaurant. This year's theme is "**Christmas Around the (Sometimes Wacky) World.**" Two performances are scheduled at 5 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. The shows will begin with dinner, followed by traditional and non-traditional tunes. \$12. 423-578-8155.

Central Presbyterian Church-Bristol

The Sanctuary Choir will be joined by a professional orchestra and the church's Children and Handbell Choirs for a **Christmas Concert** Sunday, Dec. 5 at 3 p.m. The program will feature the music of John Rutter, including the musical fable "Brother Heinrich's Christmas" with Tim Landis as narrator. Donations accepted. 276-669-3157.

East Tennessee Children's Choir

Five holiday concerts will be presented throughout the Mountain Empire. ETCC will join the **Johnson City Symphony Orchestra** for its **Family Christmas Celebration** Saturday, Dec. 4 at 7:30 p.m. at Freedom Hall Civic Center. The choir will perform its Christmas concert, **Christmas Angels**, Friday, Dec. 10 at 7:30 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church in Bristol. Admission will be by donation. ETCC will join **A Milligan College Community Christmas** Sunday, Dec. 12 at 8 p.m. at Seeger Chapel. Finally, ETCC will perform five times beginning at 6 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 19 for the **Christmas Candlelight Tours** at Biltmore Estate in Asheville, NC. 276-628-9967.

Emory & Henry College

The **Oratorio Choir** will appear in concert Sunday, Dec. 5 at 7:30 p.m. in Memorial Chapel. They will present Antonio Vivaldi's "Gloria in D Major," accompanied by strings and organ, and Daniel Pinkham's "Christmas Cantata," accompanied by brass. Vivaldi, an 18th century composer, was one of the most important figures in the transition from the late Baroque to early Classical style. The text for the cantata is taken from the *Liber Usualis*, a book of Gregorian chants, Latin music of the early Christian church. \$8-\$10. 276-944-6846.

First Presbyterian Church in Bristol

The **King College Symphonic Choir** will present its annual **Christmas Concert** Saturday, Dec. 4 at 8 p.m. The program will feature "Wachet auf ruft uns die Stimme," written in 1780 by the youngest son of Johann Sebastian Bach. The concert will feature a professional chamber orchestra, including Vicki Fey playing harpsichord. Also performing will be the **Collegium Musicum**, a select group of students and members of the college community. Their set will include "Adam Lay Ybounden," a carol based on a Medieval text. A featured piece will be a modern harmonized arrangement of Gregorian chant, "There is no Rose of Such Virtue," and a Renaissance motet based on John 1:14. The rousing finale will be "Toast Pour le Nouvel An" (A Toast to the New Year) by Rossini, followed by the choir leading the audience in a Christmas carol. Following the free concert, the college president's office will host a reception in the Fellowship Hall. 423-652-4846.

Highlands Youth Ensemble

Their holiday schedule includes three concerts: during **A Jonesborough Christmas** Saturday, Dec. 11 at 7 p.m. at the International Storytelling Center; and two performances of **O Holy Night** — Sunday, Dec. 12 at 3 p.m. at Christ the King Church in Abingdon and Friday, Dec. 17 at 7 p.m. at St. John's Episcopal Church in Johnson City. Donations are encouraged. 276-628-9967.

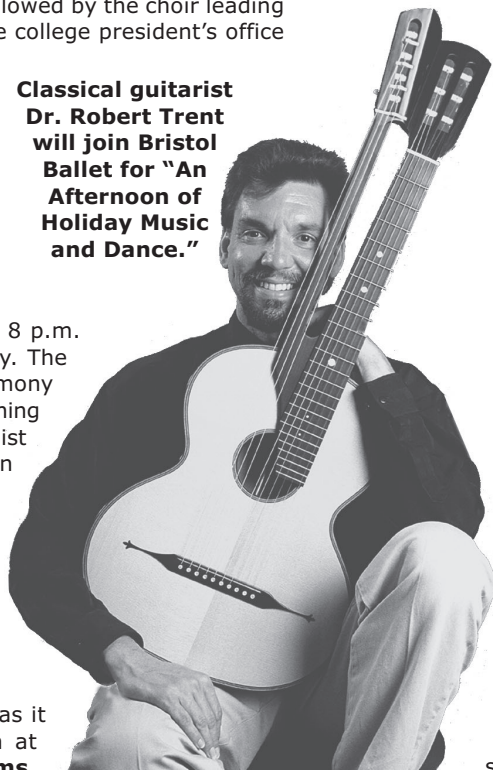
Johnson City Civic Chorale

The **Christmas Concert** will be presented at 4 p.m. and at 8 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 18 at St. John's Episcopal Church in Johnson City. The program will include Benjamin Britten's best known work, "Ceremony of Carols" for chorus and harp, with a processional sung at the beginning and end of the piece. Afterwards, the Chorale will be joined by harpist Jacqueline Bartlett, guitarist Justin Butler and percussionist Alan Fey for Conrad Susa's "Carols and Lullabies." Based on Latin American and Spanish carols, the work will be sung in Spanish and is scored for chorus, harp, guitar, xylophone and marimba. \$10 donation suggested. These performances are supported, in part, by a grant from the Tennessee Arts Commission through the Arts Build Communities program of the Johnson City Area Arts Council. 423-638-2195.

Johnson City Symphony Orchestra

A variety of local and regional artists will join the orchestra as it performs traditional and sacred Yuletide favorites this season at Freedom Hall Civic Center. Two **children's Christmas programs**

Classical guitarist Dr. Robert Trent will join Bristol Ballet for "An Afternoon of Holiday Music and Dance."



The Appalachian Express Chorus will present "Christmas Around the (Sometimes Wacky) World."

will be presented Friday, Dec. 3 at 9 a.m. and again at 11 a.m. A **Family Christmas Celebration** will take place Saturday, Dec. 4 at 7:30 p.m. Each performance will feature a harp ensemble of eight players, the East Tennessee Children's Choir, an illustrator who will create eight-foot-tall animal drawings in chalk, the Joyful Sounds Choir, a handbell choir, Dance Theatre Suitcase, and the six-time national dance champions, the Tennessee Hoedowners. 423-926-8742.

Journey's End

This annual event in downtown Bristol is a local interpretation of the Latino tradition of Las Posadas (The Inns). It re-enacts the story of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem where they are refused entry at several inns before finding shelter in a stable. In this presentation, the inns are restaurants on State Street and the innkeepers are area choral groups who sing traditional songs and carols accompanied by instrumentalists. The evening begins with hot cocoa at the Downtown Center, then the audience is asked to join the candlelight procession, ending at the Paramount Center with gingerbread and hot cider. The performance will begin at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 21 (rain date: Thursday, Dec. 23). 423-274-8920.

Symphony of the Mountains

"**A Symphony of Carols**" will be performed Saturday, Dec. 4 at 2 p.m. at the Eastman Employee Center in Kingsport. Selections will include Christmas carols, "Sleigh Ride" and music from "The Nutcracker" plus other seasonal musical treats. The concert will be conducted by Dr. James Fellenbaum, director of the University of Tennessee Symphony Orchestra. Doors open at 1:15 p.m., but there will be no Concert Prelude. This performance is not part of the subscription series; a separate ticket is required. \$10-\$19. 423-392-8423.

A Viennese Christmas

The Paramount Center for the Arts in Bristol will present the **New Sigmund Romberg Orchestra**, "American's First Touring Pops Orchestra," Monday, Dec. 13 at 8 p.m. The program will include traditional Christmas favorites with a bit of "Pops" along with Romberg's love songs and the famous "Viennese Waltz." \$27-\$30. 423-274-8920.

Virginia Highlands Community College

For 32 years the **VHCC Madrigal Singers** have ushered in the Christmas season with their angelic voices. The ensemble will present **Angel Voices From On High!** Sunday, Dec. 5 at 3 p.m. in the Martha Washington Inn Ballroom. \$7. On Tuesday, Dec. 7 at 7:30 p.m., the Madrigal Singers will be joined by the **VHCC College Choir** in Room 605. The concert will feature traditional carols and a nostalgic blend with Bing Crosby types of harmonizations, as well as contemporary favorites. \$4. 276-739-2447.

Voices of the Mountains

This new regional vocal ensemble will present two **Christmas concerts:** Thursday, Dec. 16 at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Kingsport and Friday, Dec. 17 at First Presbyterian Church in Bristol. Both performances begin at 8 p.m. and will be conducted by Dr. W. Patrick Flannagan, accompanied by Vickie Fey. The program will feature "Sing to the Lord a New Song" by J.S. Bach, "Today Christ is Born" by Palestrina, "Alleluia" by Randall Thompson, "Christmas Rounds" by Mark Kilstofte, "The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy" by Robert DeCormier, and "The Twelve Days of Christmas" by Tom Mitchell. Suggested donations are \$10 for adults and \$5 for children under 12. The concerts are funded by the Tennessee Arts Commission and The National Endowment for the Arts. 423-392-8423.

We Need a Little Christmas

The **Bristol Virginia Senior Showchoir** will take the stage Monday, Dec. 20 at 7:30 p.m. at the Paramount Center for the Arts. The production will take audiences back to the Victorian Era and Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* for an eyewitness account of the transformation of Ebenezer Scrooge and his outlook on life. Also featured will be Santa, Rudolph, Frosty, an audience sing-along with carolers from both the Victorian era and the 21st century, and a tribute to those who are away serving our country in the armed services this season. 423-274-8920.

POEM OF THE MONTH



by Nancy Orr Inazu

The Wooded Christmas

Deep dark and cold as daggered ice
is plunged into the breast of night,
the rising moon stirs strange and strong
the things of woods that move, and song,
and evening fairies flying light.

Sharp crack of wood now shatters quiet
into a thousand splintered sounds
while beavers' teeth flash sharp and hone
on tree boughs smoothed by flinty stone
to careful plans drawn on the ground.

In the clearing, the fairy queen
with all her maidens twirl and pose;
they leap and dance a ballet rare
with pirouettes and ribboned hair
and all the while, upon their toes.

The mourning dove ensemble there
so gently coos a lullaby,
it hardly stirs the frosted air
but stirs the heart and unaware,
it brings a teardrop to the eye.

The mink and otter, deer and bear
bring fur and hair so soft and warm
to spin and weave with thinnest web,
with acorn thimble, thorn for thread,
a blanket for the coldest morn.

As moonbeams cast their Christmas spell
upon the strange and moving scene,
As time holds breath for one last note,
a final seam in blanket coat,
the cradle glows with hand-rubbed sheen.

Then slipping thru the scented trees,
an angel comes and kneels in snow,
and breathless, speaks with fairies there,
and to the beasts from hidden lairs,
an ageless Christmas tale is told.

And when the sun whitewashes sky
and all is hushed and lullabyed,
the angel takes the gifts and songs
then all are benedicted by
the echo of a Baby's cry.

About the Poet: For this poem, Nancy Inazu, already familiar with the fantasy artwork of Charles Vess, was freshly inspired by Vess' artwork on the cover of the November issue of *A! Magazine for the Arts* and on display at New Light Gallery in Abingdon. Inazu lives in Glade Spring, VA. She says, "Writing is my 'heart career,' but my main career has been teaching. I have not had time to settle down, write, and maybe try to actually publish my writing until now." Inazu once won second place in the *Bristol Herald Courier's* annual Christmas story contest with a story about her husband's Christmases in Japanese internment camps during World War II. She has served as pianist at many churches and composes music, some of which has been published. She and her family regularly sing at regional events, including the annual Community Christmas fundraiser at Barter Theatre.

The Poetry Page is sponsored by Drs. Moore and Elkington of Abingdon, VA

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