

Sing round the year

Donald Swann



18 carols
selected, sung
and played by
Donald Swann
including
songs by
Sydney Carter

Sing round the year

18 CAROLS SELECTED AND COMPOSED BY

**Donald
Swann**

including songs by Sydney Carter



**sung by boys of the
Westminster School and
girls of Mayfield School, Putney,
conducted by Sylvia Junge.
Organ: Nicholas Jackson
Piano: Donald Swann.**

Donald Swann describes 'Sing round the year' as a collection of new carols for children, "but I do not know any satisfying definition either of a carol, or a child," he says.

Carols are not just Christmas carols. A carol is a light, gay song to celebrate a Christian event—as delightfully demonstrated here. So they can be sung all round the year, by young and old, all ages.

"The songs on this record represent the sum of my musical wanderings in this uncertain field of the carol," says Donald. "Because of the latitude I have allowed myself, two canticles, a spiritual, a hymn, and a round augment the list, which are, in their various moods of worship and praise, as good as the several songs of Sydney Carter which he himself describes as songs, ballads, or carols."

**Recorded on 29 May 1968 in St. Mark's Church, in the West
End of London**

1 Here we go up to Bethlehem
Words by Sydney Carter, tune traditional.
Unaccompanied chorus.
© 1965 Sydney Carter (Words)

2 Standing in the Rain
Words and music by Sydney Carter.
Donald Swann solo voice and piano; with chorus.
© 1963 Essex Music Ltd.

3 Every Star shall sing a Carol
Words and music by Sydney Carter. Susan MacDonald and Peter Wilson, with chorus.
© 1961 Sydney Carter.

4 Jesu Parvule
Words by Michael Hoban, music by Donald Swann. Boys of Westminster Under School and Nicholas Jackson organ.
© 1965 Donald Swann (Music).
© 1965 Michael Hoban (Words).

5 The Storke Carol
Words anonymous, music by Donald Swann. Girls chorus.
© 1957 Chappell & Co. Ltd.

6 Jubilate Domino
Words by David Marsh, music by Donald Swann. Divided chorus, with tambourine, piano and organ.
© 1965 Donald Swann (Music).
© 1965 David Marsh (Words).

7 Christmas
Words by John Betjeman, music by Donald Swann. Solo by Donald Swann.
© 1965 Donald Swann (Music).
Copyright John Betjeman (Words).

8 The Devil wore a Crucifix
Words and music by Sydney Carter. Boys leading mixed chorus.
© 1961 Sydney Carter.

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9 Psalm 95: Venite
Words from Book of Common Prayer, music by Donald Swann, Mixed chorus.
© 1959 J. Curwen & Sons Ltd.

10 The Clock Carol
Words by Paul Townsend, music by Donald Swann. Girls chorus, with triangle and piano.
© 1968 Galliard Ltd. (Words & Music).

11 Sanctus
by Clemens non Papa. Mixed chorus in five parts unaccompanied.

12 Judas and Mary
Words and music by Sydney Carter. Solo by Donald Swann.
© Sydney Carter.

13 Praise the Lord who reigns above
Words by Charles Wesley, music by Donald Swann. Mixed chorus and organ.
© 1964 The Epworth Press.

14 The Fruit of the Tree
(Harvest Carol)
Words by David Marsh, music by Donald Swann. Girls chorus.
© 1968 Galliard Ltd. (Words & Music).

15 Dust, Dust and Ashes
Words and music traditional. Boys chorus with two guitars and double bass.

16 I Lie down with God
Words by Eleanor Hull (from the Irish), music by Donald Swann. Susan MacDonald and Helen Denniston.
© 1965 Donald Swann (Music).
© Chatto & Windus (Words).

17 Lord of the Dance
Words by Sydney Carter, tune traditional, arr. and adapted by Sydney Carter. Donald Swann solo, with chorus.
© 1963 Sydney Carter.

18 Benedictus
Words from Book of Common Prayer, music by Donald Swann. Mixed chorus with piano and organ.
© 1964 J. Curwen & Sons Ltd.

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Donald Swann will forever be popularly known as the musical half of the comic song writing duo Flanders & Swann; but the quintessential Englishness of that satiric output belies his exotic roots – Donald’s middle name, Ibrahim, is a clue.

Donald was born in Llanelli on 30 Sept 1923 into a family of amateur musicians, both parents refugees from the Russian Revolution. His upbringing was one of Russian folk song and four-hand piano reductions of the Russian and European Romantics.

Donald Swann and Michael Flanders had been performing their own songs at cast read-throughs and private parties for some years often, as they would say “at the drop of a hat”; they gradually honed their material as a double-act. Their show, titled *AT THE DROP OF A HAT*, opened on 31st December 1956 and was an overnight success. A sequel, *AT THE DROP OF ANOTHER HAT*, opened at Theatre Royal, Haymarket in London October 1963 for a long run before reverting to its previous title for performances in Australia, New Zealand and Hong Kong.

Over the next few years Donald compiled and performed hundreds of concerts; sometimes solo or often with different performers picked to explore the variety of his output. *EXPLORATIONS ONE*, with Sydney Carter, concentrated on words and music in a folk idiom. The show was later expanded, with the addition of Jeremy Taylor, into *AN EVENING WITH CARTER, TAYLOR & SWANN* which took folk music into mainstream theatres.

Donald Swann died at Trinity Hospice in South London on 23rd March 1994.

A full biography of Donald Swann can be found at
donaldswann.co.uk

