

Instrumental Invasion with Mike Chimeri
Long Island's 88.1 FM, WCWP & WXBA, LIU Public Radio
Christmas 2025 (pre-recorded 12/1/25)
Talk Break Script

HOOR 1

It's a special three-hour Christmas edition of Instrumental Invasion with Mike Chimeri.

Some songs or artists will appear more than once, but with a different arrangement.

If a song's writing credit is "Traditional," I won't acknowledge that; only songs with known lyricists and/or composers will get proper credit.

Lastly, many songs are from the same record label compilation album: GRP, Narada, and Windham Hill lead the way on *that* front.

So...you wanna have a catch?

Catching Snowflakes on Your Tongue, a Mannheim Steamroller original, gets us started.

(WCWP Remembers 2007)

(LINER Chimeri Auto [without HCW, with WXBA tag])

Jay Rowe with his 2021 take on Joy to the World, a 1719 hymn by Isaac Watts based on Psalm 98, and you can find it on "Ho! Ho! Ho! Merry Christmas from Jay Rowe."

That *is* the album title.

Jay *was* on piano, keyboards, and percussion programming; Andy Abel on guitar; Dave *Anderson* on bass, and Trevor Somerville on drums.

All but Andy return next hour with another "Ho! Ho! Ho!" track.

Jingle Bell Rock was the middle song of that triple shot, performed by violinist Lindsey Stirling and the Hungarian Studio Orchestra on Warner in the Winter *in* 2017.

Said orchestra was conducted by Peter Illenyi.

Stop illin'.

Jingle Bell Rock was the work of songwriters Joe Beal and Jim Boothe, first recorded vocally by Bobby Helms in 1957.

50 years later, 2007, Mannheim Steamroller, rolled out Christmas Song, not to be confused with *The* Christmas Song, which we will hear later *this* hour, by Catching Snowflakes on Your Tongue.

Mannheim Steamroller leader Chip Davis was the composer, paying tribute to his son Evan.

Quoting the liner notes, "Evan was 4.

I can still see him and his bouncy little blonde head running around the front yard with Mommie catching snowflakes on their tongues.

Then they'd run inside to sit by the fire to warm up a minute and back out they'd go. The snow picked up, so I made the track match."

Unquote.

And that's Mommie, I-E, as in Mommie Dearest.

Chip Davis was the producer and arranger, otherwise playing recorders, drums, harpsichord, crumhorn, hurdy-gurdy, cimbalom, hammered dulcimer, bass, and the Kurzweil 2000 and 2600 synthesizers.

Arnie Roth was the concertmaster, Louis Stout the orchestral assistant, and the orchestra had violins, violas, cellos, horns, trumpets, and bass.

Chip and Mannheim also return next hour with a traditional Christmas song by George Handel.

For now, Dr. Billy Taylor's piano trio arrangement of Deck the Halls.

(WCWP Remembers 1993)

(Jay Mirabile Liner 3)

Jay Mirabile, J-A-Y, the third song of the second set of this Christmas Instrumental Invasion was *Jessy J* (Y, *not* I-E) and What Child is This from California Christmas Volume 2 in 2022 (...*twenty-two*).

Jessy produced her version of What Child is This (a.k.a. Greensleeves) with Jeff Lorber, who arranged it on his own.

Jessy played tenor sax with Jeff on piano, organ, keyboards, guitar, and synth bass.

Gary Novak was on drums.

Before What Child is *This*, Will Ackerman and David Cullen asked What Strangers Are *These*, part of A Windham Hill Christmas in 2002.

What Strangers Are These is a Scottish carol that explored the Nativity story.

I think What Child is This did, too.

Will Ackerman and David Cullen were the *only* two, T-W-O, duetting on acoustic guitars, as opposed to Jeff Lorber's electric.

Will played baritone guitar and produced the recording while David arranged and was on regular guitar.

No guitar on the first song of the set: Deck the Halls a la Billy Taylor on GRP Christmas Collection Volume 3 in 1993 (...*ninety-three*).

Billy was on piano, Victor Gaskin on acoustic bass and *Bobby* Thomas on drums.

Hour 2 will feature John Nilsen's version of Deck the Halls – his first appearance of the show – and Jay Rowe's version of What Child is This – his *second* appearance.

This is Brian Bromberg with *The Christmas Song*...on Instrumental Invasion with Mike Chimeri.

(WCWP Remembers 2020)

(Bruce Leonard Liner 4)

Instrumental Invasion at Christmas time.

David Benoit with Christmastime is Here, from Christmastime in 1983.

Christmastime is one word on David's album, but it's two words in "Christmas Time is Here," music by Vince Guaraldi, lyrics by Lee Mendelson, for Charles "Sparky" Schulz's debut Peanuts special, A Charlie Brown Christmas in 1965, 60 years ago.

Presented originally by Coca-Cola; that part was cut from reruns, and those reruns were tweaked in the same manner George Lucas tweaked the early Star Wars films.

But I digress.

David's '83 rendition of Christmas Time is Here, predating his work in the Charlie Brown universe, was another trio song: David on piano, Wade Short on *electric* bass, and Tony Morales on drums..

I Heard the *Bells* on Christmas Day...was the middle song, performed by Gordon Goodwin's Big Phat Band on A Very Special Christmas WRAP THIS!...in 2015.

Gordon was a featured soloist on tenor sax, aside from arranging, conducting, and playing piano.

Trumpeter Dan Fornero was the other soloist.

Other members of the rhythm section were Andrew Synowiec on electric guitar, Kevin Axt on *acoustic* bass and possibly tuba, Bernie Dresel on drums, with percussion and possibly vibraphone by Joey DeLeon.

Alex Acuña was the percussionist on Brian Bromberg's cover of the Robert Wells-Mel Tormé classic The Christmas Song, from Celebrate Me Home: The Holiday Sessions in 2020.

And yes, all musicians recorded themselves remotely for...a reason.

Brian played two basses: nylon string piccolo and Kiesel B25 electric.

Ray Fuller played rhythm guitar, Tom Zink on keyboards, Tony Moore was on drums, and the no-name Social Distance Orchestra played violins, violas, and cellos.

Here's a pair of quick songs from 2005, beginning with the Craig Chaquico original, *Every Day's a Holiday With You*.

(WCWP Remembers 2005)

It's the Christmas edition of Instrumental Invasion with Mike Chimeri on Long Island's 88.1 FM, WCWP and WXBA, LIU Public Radio.

Morning Has Broken...was what we heard there by Jeff Johnson and Brian *Dunning* from A Windham Hill Christmas: The *Night* Before Christmas in 2005.

Morning Has Broken was produced, arranged, mixed, and recorded by Jeff Johnson, whose instruments were piano, keyboards, and percussion.

Brian Dunning was on flute and accordion, Tim Ellis on acoustic guitars, and *Phil* Ellis on bass.

Before that, also in 2005, Every Day's a Holiday With You by Craig Craquico *from* Holiday.

The song's two composers were the only performers: Craig on acoustic *and* electric guitars, and Ozzie Ahlers on keyboards.

Craig and Ozzie return in hour 3 with more performers.

Taking us into hour 2, two songs from two different years: Kenny *G* first with Irving Berlin's White Christmas. (WCWP Remembers 1994)

HOOR 2

This is hour 2 of Instrumental Invasion with Mike Chimeri, a special edition with Christmas or Christmas-ish songs.

Hour 1 ended with O Come All Ye Faithful performed by Arturo Sandoval from GRP Christmas Collection Volume 2 in 1991, the only Christmas song recorded in the state of Florida; specifically, Coral Gables, the Miami area.

O Come All Ye Faithful has been attributed to various authors; in this case, John Reading ("redding").

Arturo bookended his rendition on piccolo trumpet while opting for B-flat trumpet in the middle; the jazzy part. Richard Eddy, the arranger, played keyboards, Michael Orta was on piano, Orlando Hernandez Sr. on bass, Jr. on drums (neither's nickname is El Duque), and the string section of David Everhart on cello, David *Chappell* on viola, and violinists Alexandra Prilutchi and Jorge Orbon.

Before Arturo, Kenny *G* with White Christmas from Miracles: The Holiday Album (his first) in 1994, 52 years after Irving Berlin wrote it for the musical film Holiday Inn, where it was sung by its star: Bing Crosby.

Kenny's version of White Christmas had him on his signature soprano sax, Walter Afanasieff on piano, and strings arranged and conducted by William Ross.

Bill has also arranged and conducted for Barbra Streisand.

Well, that was White Christmas, but hour 2 begins with *Your* Christmas by T-Square.

(WCWP Remembers 1989)

(LINER Chimeri Auto [without HCW, with WXBA tag])

Jay Rowe returned for *his* turn to ask What Child is This.

Like Joy to the World, Jay's arrangement is on "Ho! Ho! Ho! Merry Christmas from Jay Rowe" in 2021.

This time, piano was his only instrument and Andy Abel wasn't on guitar.

Dave Anderson was retained on bass and Trever Somerville back on drums.

Keyboardist Minoru Mukaiya borrowed elements from What Child is This *and* It Came Upon a Midnight Clear for the song before that: Blessing, written for Casiopea's Marble album in 2004.

Mukaiya played piano *and* keyboards with Casiopea bandmates Issei Noro on guitar, Yoshihiro Naruse on bass, and Akira Jimbo on drums.

We started the hour in 1989 with another Japanese jazz fusion mainstay: T-Square.

Your Christmas was *their* song from Wave (as in our sister station *The Wave*), the first studio release as T-Square after starting out as *The Square*.

If you've played the original Super Nintendo game F-Zero, it's obvious Your Christmas inspired that game's composer Yumiko Kanki – now Yumiko Kameya – when penning the Mute City stage theme.

Masahiro Andoh, later a Gran Turismo writer and performer, wrote Your Christmas and played guitar and guitar synth.

Takeshi Itoh was on EWI (electronic wind instrument), Hiroataka Izumi on piano and keyboards, Mitsuru Sutoh on bass, and Hiroyuki Noritake on drums and drum *programming*.

Synth programming was collectively handled by Andoh, Izumi, and Nobuo Tsuji.

David Arkenstone was the sole programmer on his entry for Narada ("NAR-a-da"): The Christmas Collection: I Saw Three Ships.

(WCWP Remembers 1988)

(Bruce Leonard Liner 4)

We had a double dose of Bob James in that Christmas triple play.

Fourplay...

(Colin Mochrie: "Foreplay? You're makin' that up.")

No, I'm serious.

They were third with Bob James's composition, The Ivy Variations, from Snowbound in 1999.

Bob arranged his composition and played piano and keyboards (unless it was all on Yamaha Disklavier), Larry Carlton was on electric guitar, Nathan East on bass and vocals, and Harvey Mason on drums and percussion, *plus* keyboard (synth) programming by Tim Heintz.

And Bob was on the second song of the set: Russ Freeman (sans The Rippingtons) with God Rest Ye Merry Gentleman from *Holiday* in 1995.

Yes, another Holiday, and there is a connection between Russ and Craig Chaquico, as they collaborated on From the Redwoods to the Rockies, a collaboration that brought Bill Heller to the Rippingtons.

But about God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen: Russ Freeman arranged it and played most of the instruments: acoustic and electric guitars, bass, keyboards, and drum and percussion programming.

Bob James recorded his presumed Disklavier parts from his home studio in Ardsley up in Westchester.

He later moved to Michigan, and for the record, Christmas coincides with his birthday.

There was a horn section, too: Jerry Hey and Gary Grant on trumpets and flugelhorns, and Steve Holtman on trombone.

That same section played on Fourplay's Snowbound title track, a Steely Dan cover, and on Santa Claus is Comin' to Town.

Sailing first in this set was I Saw Three Ships, performed (and arranged) by David Arkenstone for Narada: The Christmas Collection in 1988.

David utilized Commodore Super Sequencer 64 software, a Roland S-550, other keyboards, and drum programming.

Daniel Chase played *real* percussion; you can bank on it.

Bank on Herb Alpert with a cut from an album released early last month: My Favorite Things is the song.

(WCWP Remembers 2025)

Long Island's 88.1 FM, WCWP and WXBA.

It's Christmas, it's Instrumental Invasion, and it's Mike Chimeri.

John Nilsen with *his* Deck the Halls from A Midnight Clear: Music of Christmas in 1991.

Like the Billy Taylor Deck the Halls last hour, this was a trio recording with John on piano and keyboards, Rob Thomas (not that one) on bass, and percussion by *Jason* Moore; no drummer.

Herb Alpert had a drummer, regular size, on My Favorite Things from Christmas Time is Here in 2025; November 7, to be exact.

In this case, Christmas Time was two words, as Vince Guaraldi intended.

This was Herb's third Christmas album, second without the Tijuana Brass.

Incidentally, Herb Alpert and the Tijuana Brass and Other Delights will be at Tilles Center exactly three months after Christmas.

Whipped Cream and Other Delights, and Going Places are celebrating their 60th anniversary, just as A Charlie Brown Christmas is, and just as the film adaptation of The Sound of Music is.

That adaptation came six years after the Broadway original.

My Favorite Things was musically and lyrically by Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein.

Despite no lyrical references to Christmas, this song became a Christmas standard when Jack Jones put it on his '64 Christmas album...The Jack Jones Christmas Album.

Original, I know.

Herb Alpert arranged and mixed his take on My Favorite Things, producing it with Jochem van der Saag ("yokum von der sog").

Herb played trumpet, Jochem on keyboards and programming, Mitchell Long on guitar, Andre de Santanna (with two Ns) on bass, Jaz (with one Z) Sawyer on drums, Jon (with no H) Gilutin on additional string pad, and Ryan Dragon on trombone.

Ryan is part of Herb's live band that you'll see at Tilles March 25, and was heard elsewhere on A Big Phat Christmas WRAP THIS!.

Nick Colionne has his turn at My Favorite Things in hour 3.

Mannheim Steamroller *returns* now with the first of three songs from 2001: Hallelujah from George F. Handel's The Messiah.

(WCWP Remembers 2001)

(InsInvOnWCWP2)

And WXBA.

I'm Mike Chimeri and that was Joe Sample on solo piano with the second of three Christmas songs on 2001 releases: I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus, part of Making Spirits Bright: A Smooth Jazz Christmas, which you could consider the *fourth* GRP Christmas collection.

Joe's arrangement was adapted from a Tommie Connor composition – music and lyrics.

Tommie (I-E) was British and the first to record the song was American singer Jimmy Boyd in 1952 when he and Joe Sample were 13 years old.

A notable cover of I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus came in 1970 via The Jackson 5 when Michael turned 12.

Before Joe Sample, Mannheim Steamroller reappeared with Handel's Hallelujah from Christmas Extraordinaire.

Again, I quote the liner notes:

"The arranging technique that Chip [Davis] used was to quote the main melodic sections until the counterpoint. The counterpoint is exactly from the original, creating a Mannheim/Handel duet."

Unquote.

Chip produced, arranged, conducted, and played recorders and drums.

Jackson *Berkey* was on harpsichord, Ron Cooley on guitar, lute, and bass, Arnie Roth was again concertmaster, and Louis Stout again the orchestral assistant, on top of writing the liner notes that I quoted.

Jackson and Ron might have been on Catching Snowflakes on Your Tongue, as well.

The first of two songs to take us into hour 3 is the third from 2001 and second version of God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen.

Richard Elliot has the honor here.

HOOR 3

It's hour 3 of the Christmas edition of Instrumental Invasion with Mike Chimeri.

You heard hour 2 end with Do You Hear What I Hear, arranged by Michael Broening for Cindy Bradley on Trippin' 'N' Rhythm: The Very Best of Christmas in 2009.

If you're keeping score that's four labels with one or more Christmas collections: GRP, Windham Hill, Narada, and Trippin' 'N' Rhythm.

Do You Hear What I Hear is another Nativity story, but written in 1962 by married couple Gloria Shayne (music) and Noel Regney (lyrics) as a plea for peace during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

In 2009, Cindy played flugelhorn, Thano Sahnas on acoustic guitar, and Mike Broening on the rest: keyboards, synth bass, and drum programming.

Before Cindy, it was Richard Elliot with this show's second version (after Russ Freeman) of God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen, this show's second song from Making Spirits Bright: A Smooth Jazz Christmas in 2001.

Jeff Lorber made *his* second appearance, returning from Jessy J's What Child is This, arranging God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen with Steven Dubin.

Jeff was on keyboards and synth bass, Steve (the producer) on drum programming, Tony Maiden on guitar, and Richard Elliot (lest we forget) on tenor sax.

Rocking into hour 3 are David Lanz and Paul Speer with their arrangement of Hark the Herald Angels Sing by Felix Mendelssohn (different spelling), and different title: *Rock...the Herald Angels*.

(WCWP Remembers 1992)

(LINER Chimeri Auto [without HCW, with WXBA tag])

Craig Chaquico made a full return on his medley Jingle Bells/Jingle Bells (Slight Return).

This, too, was on *his* Holiday in 2005.

I'll leave it to you to name what other Christmas song phrases found their way into Craig's medley, a medley arranged with Ozzie Ahlers – keyboards – and Bill Heller – additional keyboards, piano, organ.

Repeating my anecdote about Bill's connection to Craig and Russ Freeman, who both had Christmas albums titled Holiday, Bill worked on Craig and Russ's 1998 collaboration, *From the Redwoods to the Rockies*.

That led Bill to the Rippingtons while he continued working with Craig Chaquico, who was solely on electric guitars for Jingle Bells/Jingle Bells (Slight Return).

Jim Reitzel was on bass, Wade Olson on drums, and Marquinho Brasil (that *is* his name) with percussion.

We Three Kings was the middle of the three in that set by Marion Meadows – *ladies* – from Christmas with *You* (you know, like Your Christmas) in 2019.

Marion recorded a worldly version of We Three Kings back in '96 on The Carols of Christmas: A Windham Hill Collection, home to a Nightnoise medley later this hour.

This was a jazzy version with Marion on tenor sax (not his signature soprano), Jason Newsome on *acoustic* bass, Damarius Wooten on drums, Mark Stubenrach on piano, and Rahni *Song* (the song's arranger) on keyboard, tube bells, and horn and *string* arrangement.

David Lanz & Paul *Speer* arranged Rock the Herald Angels, adapted from *Hark the Herald Angels Sing*, from Narada Christmas Collection Volume 2 in 1992 (“...*ninety-two*”).

It was an arrangement four years in the making, recorded in May '88 *and* March '92.

No idea what was recorded when, but David Lanz was on piano and keyboards, Paul Speer on guitars, *Neal* Speer on drums, *Gary* Lanz on bass, and James Reynolds on additional keyboards.

Back to John Nilsen and back to '91 with O Come, O Come, Emmanuel, introduced by Joseph Berger on French horn.

(WCWP Remembers 1991)

(Bruce Leonard Liner 4)

We were walking in a Winter Wonderland with Jaared, two As in his name, another track on Trippin 'N' Rhythm: The Very *Best* of Christmas in 2009.

Winter Wonderland was written in 1934 by Felix Bernard – music – and Richard *Bernhard* Smith – lyrics.

Like “My Favorite Things,” it's a song with a seasonal theme that became associated with Christmas.

Jaared was on alto sax (one A in alto), Gary Grainger on bass, *Greg* Grainger on drums, Robert “Wa Wa” LeGrand on electric guitar, and *Dan* Reynolds on piano and keyboards.

Dan, the Graingers, and Jay Rowe (heard twice in this show) are alumni of guitarist Ken Navarro's band, with Jay, Gary, and Greg now serving as the rhythm section for guitar duo Acoustic Alchemy.

Before Jaared, it was John Nilsen again with O Come, O Come, Emmanuel from A Midnight Clear: *Music* of Christmas in 1991...again.

1851 (“*eighteen fifty-one*”) was the year English (British) hymnwriter John Mason Neale translated the carol from Latin to English (language).

John was on guitars, in addition to piano and keyboards, for O Come, Joseph Berger was on French horn (notably at the beginning), Rob Thomas still on bass, and Jason Moore still on percussion without drums.

Peggy Duquesnel has a version of O Come later this hour.

This instant, we have O Tannenbaum via vibraphonist Gary Burton.

(WCWP Remembers 1988)

(Chimeri More Music)

The music bed in that liner contained the beginning and end of Six Four by the Rippingtons, a showcase for the late, great percussionist Steve Reid.

It was preceded by the late, great Nick Colionne and *his* version of My Favorite Things from Just Come On In in 2003.

Nick produced his version and played electric guitar, keyboards, and programming.

“Downtown” Tony Brown was on bass and Ernie (not Edie) Adams on drums and percussion.

Before Nick on electric guitar, it was Alex de Grassi with on *acoustic* guitar with Good King Wencelas, another track on A Windham Hill Christmas: The Night Before Christmas in 2005.

Good King Wencelas was our second John Mason Neale lyrical masterpiece, this time in collaboration with music editor Thomas Helmore.

Alex de Grassi arranged, produced, and recorded this Good King, a duet with him on guitar (as I said) and Marcia Sloane on cello.

The set began with Gary Burton’s take on O Tannenbaum from A GRP Christmas Collection in 1988.

That takes care of all the GRP Christmas collections that I know of.

Gary was on vibraphone, Makoto Ozone on piano, Donald McCaslin on tenor sax, Gildas Boclé on acoustic bass, and Martin Richard on drums.

If you can believe it, we only have four songs left in this Christmas edition of Instrumental Invasion, starting with the Peggy Duquesnel iteration of O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.

(WCWP Remembers 2013)

(InsInvOnWCWP2)

And WXBA, but you knew that.

That was the Alison Brown Quartet with Sleigh Ride from Evergreen in 2008, a light orchestra standard composed 60 years earlier – 1948 – by Leroy Anderson.

Mitchell Parish added lyrics in 1950, not that we heard them here.

We *did* hear Alison Brown on banjo, John R. Burr on piano, Garry West (Alison’s husband) on bass, David Heyer on drums, and Joe Craven on mandolin and percussion – such as sleigh bells and whip – and I’ll assume he was the voice of Santa Claus.

Before that, Nightnoise with a medley of *Hark* the Herald Angels Sing and Angels We Heard On High from The Carols of Christmas: A Windham Hill Christmas in 1996, as previously discussed.

Nightnoise collectively arranged and produced their medley with Brian Dunning on flute and accordion (as with Jeff Johnson back in hour 1), Johnny Cunningham on fiddle, Triona Ní Dhomhnaill on piano and keyboards, and Micheal Ó Dhomhnaill on guitar.

First in that three-song set was our second *crack* at O Come, O Come, Emmanuel from Peggy Duquesnel’s All I Ask for Christmas in 2013, a 2-CD album.

This was from the instrumental CD.

Peggy produced (and perhaps arranged) O Come and played piano, Brian Bromberg was on *acoustic* bass (as opposed to the electric basses on The Christmas Song), Brian Kilgore on percussion and I assume marimba, and... (BillEvansTrio-DOWAR90780-JoeLaBarberaOnDrums)

Thank you, Bill Evans.

Joe LaBarbera on drums.

David Benoit was inspired by Bill Evans, and even collaborated with *Bill’s* son Evan on *Letter* to Evan in 1992.

David’s second appearance of the show closes it: Skating, another Vince Guaraldi instrumental for A Charlie Brown Christmas, from *Remembering* Christmas in 1996, same year as The Carols of Christmas.

It features Earl Klugh on acoustic guitar, John Patitucci on acoustic bass, Harvey Mason on drums (as he was on The Ivy Variations by Fourplay), and of course, David Benoit on piano.

Thank you very much for listening to the Christmas edition of Instrumental Invasion with Mike Chimeri.

I hope you enjoyed it as much as I enjoyed putting it together.

Special thanks to station manager Dan Cox for the opportunity to *make* this show, as we skate away with Skating by David Benoit.

Merry Christmas, Charlie Brown, and a Happy New Year.