

STEREO

Seth MacFarlane



Holiday For Swing!

ARRANGED AND CONDUCTED BY JOEL McNEELY

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1. **Let It Snow! Let It Snow! Let It Snow!** 3:04
 2. **Christmas Dreaming** 2:50
 3. **I'll Be Home For Christmas** 3:55
 4. **Little Jack Frost Get Lost** *Featuring Norah Jones* 2:36
 5. **Snow** (From *White Christmas*) 3:02
 6. **A Marshmallow World** 2:16
 7. **What Are You Doing New Year's Eve?** 5:00
 8. **Baby, It's Cold Outside** *Featuring Sara Bareilles* 3:01
 9. **Mele Kalikimaka** 2:36
 10. **Warm In December** 3:19
 11. **Moonlight In Vermont** 4:02
 12. **(Everybody's Waitin' For) The Man With The Bag** 2:46
 13. **The Christmas Song** 4:18



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It's a privilege and a thrill to have the opportunity to collaborate once again with the incomparable Joel McNeely on this album of holiday classics. As with our first album, *Music Is Better Than Words*, we've chosen a combination of well-known standards combined with some rarer gems that we feel deserve to be heard. And as with the previous record, the orchestra plays a prominent role. One of the things I always admired most about Sinatra was his awareness (far more than any other vocalist of his time) of how important a great orchestration is to the overall quality of a vocal recording. He sought out first-rate arrangers like Nelson Riddle, Gordon Jenkins, and Billy May, who created lush, sparkling arrangements that were bold and aggressive without detracting from the vocals. True composer/arrangers have become incredibly hard to find today, as we live in an era in which the role of the composer in popular music has been largely overtaken -- to its detriment -- by the producer. It's pretty hard to craft truly great orchestrations if you can't understand what all those little black dots on the page are. Fortunately for me, I've found a collaborator in the twenty-first century who truly belongs among the ranks of those brilliant arrangers of half a century ago. Joel McNeely takes command of an orchestra and handles it with a buoyancy that creates the feeling of a single organism, rather than a conglomeration of players. His music -- expertly performed at London's Abbey Road by one of the finest orchestras I've had the good fortune to sing with -- boasts that most elusive of all tones: It swings hard without swinging loud. It is both powerful and seemingly effortless in execution. And of course his ballad arrangements each tell a story in a way that only a top-notch film composer can. He is a true artist in every sense, and his music is a joy to sing to. The album was mixed by master engineer Rich Breen, who has an unmatched ear for all corners of the ensemble.

As this is a holiday album, we've allowed ourselves the luxury of a slightly richer, more Old Hollywood sound than on the previous album, but we feel it complements the songs appropriately. In addition, I am joined once again by Norah Jones and Sara Bareilles, the two colossally gifted and already legendary vocalists who came on board for *Music Is Better Than Words*. Beyond all this, I'll let the recordings speak for themselves. We hope you enjoy *Holiday For Swing*!

- Seth



Working on a record with Seth MacFarlane is about as good as it gets. This Renaissance man's musicality is remarkable; he has a composer's ear and an arranger's imagination. And I am challenged on every single arrangement to write my best because his standards are so very high.

But this record is about Seth MacFarlane the singer. It's a producer's job to coax an interpretation from a singer, and once that's done, to use all the modern tools to fix, massage and tune the output to performance standards. Not so here. Seth is an uncannily precise and consistent singer, and he comes prepared. He knows beforehand exactly how he wants to perform the songs and then experiments with the phrasing as we record. In other words, he produces himself. And, each time we work together he vocally tops himself. Seth's vocals are true, unmanufactured performances. It's a rare joy to work with such a singer.

Holiday For Swing has been, among many great things, an education for me. Seth had a list of tunes long enough for two records. I had never even heard of some of his choices, like "Christmas Dreaming," "Little Jack Frost Get Lost" and "Man With The Bag." It was great fun for me, discovering new songs and interpreting them in the arrangements. Of course, there were many classics on the list as well, and the challenge was to find different approaches to the arrangements. For example, Seth wanted to treat songs like "Snow," "Man With The Bag" and "Mele Kalikimaka" (which are normally done medium tempo and bouncy) as rip-roaring, full-out bells and whistles orchestrations.

Many of the arrangements have little stories embedded in them. In the introduction to "What Are You Doing New Year's Eve," twelve strikes of the chimes announce midnight on New Year's Eve. The arrangement is done in a melancholy tone and ends with a reflective choral excerpt of "Auld Lang Syne." In "Little Jack Frost Get Lost," the stately brass choir playing "Deck The Halls" is rudely interrupted by the musical representation of Jack Frost crashing the party. The Hawaiian favorite "Mele Kalikimaka" begins as if we are lost in the jungle, then suddenly a clearing opens where a festive luau is in progress. The Hawaiian guitar juxtaposed with the swinging big band always gives us a laugh.

The final track of the record, "The Christmas Song," was not something we originally selected or planned for. We had the last minute idea that after all the boisterous orchestral music making, it would be a nice way to end the record with a simple piano and vocal selection. At the end of the sessions, we did two additional takes with Seth singing "The Christmas Song" with solo piano. The second take in its entirety is what you hear. There's a simplicity and spontaneity to the performance that I love.

- Joel

Let It Snow! Let It Snow! Let It Snow! 3:04

Written by: Sammy Cahn, Jules Styne.

Published by: Cahn Music Company administered by
Imagem Sounds (ASCAP)/Producers Music
Publishing Co. Inc. administered by Warner Chappell
Music Inc., Chappell & Co. Inc. (ASCAP).

Christmas Dreaming 2:50

Written by: Irving Gordon, Lester Lee.

Published by: BeeBourne Co. administered by Bourne
Co. (ASCAP)/PeeJay Music Co.

I'll Be Home For Christmas 3:55

Written by: Kim Gannon, Walter Kent, Buck Ram.

Published by: Gannon And Kent Music Co. (ASCAP)/
Piedmont Music Company administered by Carlin
America (ASCAP).

Little Jack Frost Get Lost

Featuring Norah Jones 2:36

Written by: Seger Ellis, Al Stillman.

Published by: The Stillman Song Company
administered by Larry Spier Music LLC (ASCAP).
Norah Jones appears courtesy of Blue Note Records.

Snow (From *White Christmas*) 3:02

Written by: Irving Berlin.

Published by: Irving Berlin Music Corp. administered
by Williamson Music Co. (ASCAP).

A Marshmallow World 2:16

Written by: Carl Sigman, Peter DeRose.

Published by: Music Sales Corp. (ASCAP)/Shapiro
Bernstein & Co. Inc. (ASCAP).

What Are You Doing New Year's Eve? 5:00

Written by: Frank Loesser.

Published by: Frank Music Corp. administered by
MPL Communications Inc. (ASCAP).

Baby, It's Cold Outside

Featuring Sara Bareilles 3:01

Written by: Frank Loesser.

Published by: Frank Music Corp. administered by
MPL Communications Inc. (ASCAP).
Sarah Bareilles appears courtesy of Epic Records.

Mele Kalikimaka 2:36

Written by: R. Alex Anderson.

Published by: Lovely Hula Hands Music LLC
administered by Lichelle Music Company (ASCAP).

Warm In December 3:19

Written by: Sidney Keith Russell.

Published by: Music Sales Corp. (ASCAP).

Moonlight In Vermont 4:02

Written by: John M. Blackburn, Karl Suessdorf.

Published by: Johnny R Music administered by The
Songwriters Guild of America (ASCAP)/ Michael H.
Goldsen Inc. administered by Universal Music
Publishing Inc. (ASCAP).

(Everybody's Waitin' For) The Man With The Bag 2:46

Written by: Dudley A. Brooks, Hal Stanley,
Irving Taylor.

Published by: Morley Music Co. administered by
MPL Communications Inc. (ASCAP).

The Christmas Song 4:18

Written by: Melvin H. Torme, Robert Wells.

Published by: Morris Edwin H & Co. Inc.
administered by MPL Communications Inc.
(ASCAP)/Sony/ATV Tunes LLC (ASCAP).

Musicians:

Piano/Celeste: David Hartley

Piano: Alan Pasqua

Bass: Chuck Berghoffer

Drums: Peter Erskine

Background Vocalists: Jennifer Barnes, Missi Hale,
Teri Koide, Tim Davis, David Loucks

Flute: Karen Jones, Eliza Marshall

Oboe/Cor Anglais: Chris Cowie, Dan Bates

French Horns: Richard Watkins, Nigel Black,
Philip Eastop, David Pyatt, Richard Bissill,
Richard Berry

Alto Sax/Soprano Sax/Flute/Alto Flute/Bb Clarinet:
Phil Todd, Jamie Talbot, Graeme Blevins,
Andy Panayi

Tenor Sax/Flute/Alto Flute/Bb Clarinet: Nick Moss,
Howard McGill, Dave Bishop

Baritone Sax/Flute/Bb Clarinet/Bass Clarinet:

Martin Robertson, Colin Skinner

Trumpet/Flugelhorns: Mike Lovatt, Pat White,
Jim Lynch, Andy Gathercole, Danny Marsden

Tenor Trombones: Gordon Campbell,
Mark Nightingale, Liam Kirkman

Bass Trombone: Andy Wood

Harp: Skaila Kanga, Camilla Pay

Jazz Acoustic Guitar: John Parricelli,

Adam Goldsmith, Tom Rizzo

Percussion: Frank Ricotti

Librarian: Dave Hage

Violins: Andrew Haveron - Leader, Jackie Shave -
Leader, Everton Nelson - Leader of 2nds,

Magnus Johnston - Leader of 2nds, Rolf Wilson,

Patrick Kiernan, Rita Manning, John Bradbury,

Richard George, Alison Dods, Ian Humphries,

Mark Berrow, Ishani Bhoola, Sonia Slany,

Chris Tombling, Steve Morris, Dai Emanuel,

Emlyn Singleton, Boguslaw Kostecki,

Cathy Thompson, Emil Chakalov

Violas: Vicci Wardman, Kate Musker, Bruce White,

Reiad Chibah, Julia Knight

Celli: Caroline Dearnley, Dave Daniels, Tim Gill,

John Heley, Bozidar Vukotic

Produced, Arranged and Conducted by Joel McNeely

Executive Produced by Joy Fehily

Recorded by Jonathan Allen, Rich Breen

Mixed by Rich Breen

Musicians Contracted by Isobel Griffiths

*Music Preparation by JoAnn Kane Music Services,
Mark Graham*

Background Vocals Contracted by Tim Davis

Recorded at Abbey Road Studios, Studio 2,

London, England

Mixed at Green Acres Studio, Hidden Hills, California

Mastered by Bob Ludwig for Gateway Mastering

Studios, Portland, Maine

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