

Bringing In The New Year of 2018



Happy New Year 2018

Happy New year of 2018 everyone! We all survived the horrors of 2017, with a promise that 2018 will be a better year for everyone. So, to ring in the new year properly we need a bit of holiday music.

For the new year of 2018, I think this lovely piece of music speaks for hopes of better times ahead.

Believe it or not, this song was released way back in 1976. From the ever-wonderful Wikipedia:

Year of the Cat is the seventh studio album by Al Stewart, released in 1976 and was produced and engineered by Alan Parsons; it is considered his masterpiece [...] While Stewart is known for his guitar virtuosity, the song is recognized for producing amazing interplay of multiple guitars, piano, saxophone, violin, and drums

So here it is, for your start of the new year enjoyment.

Merry Christmas, Now With Music



Trans Siberian Orchestra

I want to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas to end what has generally been an awful year. So I think a bit of uplifting music is in order for this magical day.

I first heard of the band "[Trans Siberian Orchestra](#) (TSO) from some people in my carpool, about eight years ago. Hearing them rave about this group got me curious, and I purchased my first TSO album "Christmas Eve and Other Stories." I was immediately hooked. I've since picked up two other albums by this group, (one Christmas album, and one rock opera) and I remain in awe of the power of their music.

The two TSO Christmas albums mix renditions of classical Christmas music mixed with their original work. Their music speaks to me in a way very few singers do.

I joined the Navy at the ripe age of 17 and celebrated my 18th birthday in Navy Boot Camp. I ended up stationed on my first submarine in San Diego, California, on the opposite side of America from the rest of my family. After several years other members of my family migrated out to California but for the first few Navy years, I spent my holidays alone. Christmas was usually the loneliest holiday as all my married shipmates spent the day with their families, which left single folks

like me to fend for ourselves. This meant Christmas in the barracks or (once I turned 21) at the designated local bar. Some years I volunteered to take a duty day for one of my married shipmates so they could be at home, and I could spend my day onboard my sub around the only people I then knew.

The TS0 song “The Old City Bar” brings me back to my early Navy days of not having any family around. I can’t listen to it without bringing back strong memories of my first few Christmases in the Navy. For this Christmas, after a horrendous year that was witness to the wholesale government-directed looting of our country and citizens taking increasingly sharp sides over who we are as a nation; I think this song is worth listening to.

So here is a live rendition of TS0’s incredibly powerful Christmas song “The Old City bar.”

Merry Christmas everyone. May the coming year bring us peace.

Snow Falls In Virginia



Music Inside

Today I’m watching the first snowfall of this season, and coincidentally the first snow of 2017. At least here in

Northern Virginia. As luck would have it, today is a Saturday, so I've avoided the Mad Max-like horrors of traveling out on our snowy highways. On the flip side, I'm stuck in the house all day and cabin fever strikes quickly.

We're presently up to about one-half inch, and with any luck, we'll have Washington, D.C. shut down for a week.

On this cold, snowy day, we need a little something to warm the place up. Something like, [Vanessa Mae](#) playing something really hot. With ice. Okay, just about everything Vanessa Mae does is pretty hot, but some things are hotter than others. So, how about a music video clip of Vanessa Mae in "The Devil's Trill."

On a snow-related question; Every time we get a snow storm everyone runs out and buys up melting salt and snow shovels. Now, I get the melting salt, but, snow shovels? What the hell did everyone do with the shovels from the last year?

A question to ponder...

Happy New Year 2016!



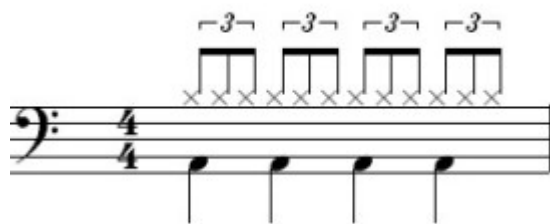
New Years!

For my first post of the new year of 2016, I want to wish all my many readers, family and friends a new year of prosperity, good health, and good fortune.

And for those old-timers who need a bit of cheering up this morning, there's a music video on the flip.

I found this on Facebook a few days ago and traced it back to the YouTube source. If you were born well before the 1970's you might recognize the TV shows used in this wonderful music mashup.

The Competitive Foursome



Four Beat Music Example

OK, so I've been out of town (again) this week and just catching up on things at home. It's a cold Friday morning here in our nations' capitol. The yard is covered with leaves, meaning at some point I'm going to need to do serious yard work. I think it's it's time for a little morning pick-me-up.

So without further ado, here is a cute YouTube video of four really hot (female) musicians playing around with their music. And having a really good time doing it!

This is a German quartet called "[Salut Salon](#)" and they seem to have [quite a following](#) in Europe. Yeah, I wish I could play any one of these instruments as well as these ladies...

Outward Bound



Outward Bound

Back in 1970 I had just landed my first job as a newspaper delivery boy for the New York Daily News. It was a big deal for me, getting a job at the ripe age of 13, as it meant I had money in my pocket. On a good week when I finished collecting and paid my manager his cut I might actually have as much as \$15 profit for delivering 60-80 newspapers each morning, seven days a week.

The first thing I used my new-found wealth for was to invest in a radio cassette tape recorder. I wanted to listen to music and be able to record it. With the wonders of then-new solid-state electronics, all kinds of gadgets were becoming

available. So I found a sale on a quirky portable AM/FM/Cassette recorder that was within my budget, and with Mom's help driving me to the store I became a proud new owner.

One of the first songs I heard on my new radio cassette included the lyrics:

...Outward Bound Upon A Ship With Tattered Sails...We Could Not Ask For More...

It was a simple song with a simple guitar accompaniment that touched me. I never actually heard it all the way through for one reason or another, and never caught the DJ announcing either the title or singer. It only played in the top 40's list a few times before it was off the air.

The melody and few lines of lyrics stayed with me ever since. For years I wished to be able to hear the entire song, and learn the composer and title.

Fast forward to last winter. I was home alone on a cold Saturday playing on the Internet. That piece of music flashed into whatever part of my brain remembers stuff like that, and I decided to use the power of the Internet to locate it.

I did an Internet search and quickly located a music database "SongLyrics.com" that allowed searches based on lyrics. I entered the few words I remembered and the search results came back...with the song *Outward Bound*. The musician was listed as Tom Paxton, and a bit of searching in YouTube, "Amazon.com" and "CD Universe.com" brought up two versions of the song, one by Tom Paxton and the second by Nana Mouskouri.

With a little more research I determined that the song "*Outward Bound*" was first released in 1966 by singer/songwriter Tom Paxton on his album "*Outward Bound*." Paxton re-released the song in 2004 on his album "*Outward Bound/Morning Again*."

It was also released in 1971 by Nana Mouskouri on her album “*A Place in My Heart*.” I suspect her version of this song was the one I heard on that top 40’s station way back in the last century, on a now antique radio cassette player. Between the two versions, I prefer Mouskouri ‘s. Her voice is absolutely enchanting and perfectly adds to the lyrics.

So, as a reward for reading all the way through this post, here is Nana Mouskouri’s version of this beautiful piece of music as provided by the ever-wonderful YouTube.

This song still touches me.

So About Your Complaint



What Complaints Look Like

Back when I was in the Navy, our standard phrase was “a happy sailor is a bitching sailor.” In fact, most sailors did spend a lot of time complaining about stuff. Including me, which may come as a shock to many people who know me now.

So when I stumbled across this on the ever-wonderful YouTube, I knew I had to post it.

On this day before day before Christmas eve, I bring you the Helsinki Complaints Choir singing about – their complaints. They missed a few, but did get in a lot that I can identify with including:

- Toilet paper
- Gabby Wives
- Slow Moving People
- Prying Neighbors
- Bullshitters who get on too well in life

They also got in a few complaints that seem to be typically Finnish, such as people who show up for their sauna appointments too early. Whatever. Please enjoy. The choir is singing in Finnish with English sub-titles, but its well worth the eight minutes.



Just one more bit of proof that people are people no matter where in the world they are.

A Snowed-in Saturday Morning Multi-cultural Music Fun



Music Inside

It's early Saturday morning here in our nation's capital, and we're having the storm of the century. It started snowing early last night and it's still snowing this morning even as I write. Judging by the snow piled up on the picnic table, visible just outside our basement door, we already have at least six inches and more to come.

So, what to do on a snowed-in Saturday morning? How about a little multi-cultural music fun?

From the [Wikipedia](#):

Vanessa-Mae (in Chinese: 陈美, Chén Měi) was born in Singapore to a Thai father (Varaprong Vanakorn) and a Chinese mother (Pamela Tan). After her parents separated, her mother married Briton Graham Nicholson, and the family moved to England when Vanessa-Mae was four years old. She grew up in London and is a British citizen. She was educated at the independent Francis Holland School in London.

She is an internationally known British [pop](#) and [classical musician](#), especially noted for her [violin](#) skills. Her music style is self-described as "violin techno-acoustic fusion", as several of her albums prominently feature the [techno](#) style.

On entering adolescence Vanessa-Mae broke away from her traditional classical influences and became known for her flashy, sexual style appearing in music videos in stylish outfits. Her first pop-style album, The Violin Player, was released in 1995. She appeared on the 1997 Janet Jackson album The Velvet Rope playing a violin solo on the song "Velvet Rope".

She is truly a world-class musician. But, she doesn't just do that elitist high-nosed classical stuff. She plays real music also. And here to prove it, I offer a YouTube music video of Vanessa-Mae playing the all-time American Redneck classic "Cotton-Eye Joe."

Just a little something to cheer you up on this snowed-in Saturday morning.

A Few of My Favorite...Christmas Songs



Chinese Christmas Elf

Well, it's that time of year again. The time of year when

everyone suddenly finds value in acting good and nice towards their fellow persons. Almost as if someone like Santa Claus was watching. Besides the delightful (not!) cold weather, we have the wonderful opportunity to listen to yet another go-around of music designed to get us into the holiday spirit.

A lot of readers write and ask me what my favorite Christmas songs are. Other readers ask what my least favorite Christmas songs are. Well OK, not a lot of readers ask, because I actually don't have a lot of readers of this fine website.

But I know if I did have a lot of readers, they'd want to know. So, as a preemptive strike at the very heart of anti-Christmas forces everywhere, here for the first time ever in print is my list of most favorite and least favorite Christmas music. With a little bonus selection tossed in as a holiday treat.

Most Favorite, in no particular order as I'm not that obsessive:

Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer
Elmo & Patsy

Dance of the Snowflakes
The Nutcracker Suite

Babes in Toyland/March of the Toys
Victor Herbert (1903)

Angels We Have Heard on High
Traditional French carol (Les Anges dans Nos Campagnes);
translated from French to English by James Chadwick in Crown
of Jesus, 1862

Run Rudolph Run
Chuck Berry

Rockin' Around The Christmas Tree
Brenda Lee

Feliz Navidad
José Feliciano

Jingle Bell Rock
Daryl Hall And John Oates

Happy Xmas (War Is Over)
John & Yoko And The Plastic Ono Band With The Harlem
Community Choir

Ave Maria
Franz Schubert (1825)

Old City Bar
Trans Siberian Orchestra

OK, that's eleven, one more than the traditional list of ten best. Not that I don't like a lot of other music, I just happen to enjoy these a lot.

For my least favorite Christmas music, we have:

Jingle Bells
James Pierpoint (1857)

I actually used to like this song until I spent Christmas Eve bar-hopping in Hong Kong back in 1995. I spent the entire evening listening to recordings of this song played over and over again, sung by apparent young Chinese women attempting to sing in English. At most bars, this song was accompanied by a few of the young Chinese barmaids attempting to dance to it, wearing Santa Claus hats, while mildly drunk. Then taking a break and serving beer.

Somewhere during the evening I became permanently traumatized. Ever since; when I hear Jingle bells I have flashbacks...

Rudolf the Red-Nosed Reindeer
Gene Autry
Old and tired.

I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus

Andy Williams

I mean. Please. Give us all a break...

Santa Baby

Eartha Kitt

Lady. Just get a rich boyfriend and LEAVE SANTA CLAUS ALONE!!!

I Want a Hippopotamus for Christmas

John Rox (1902–1957) and performed by Gayla Peevey (10 years old at the time) in 1953

The tune is kind of catchy, but this little kid would be in for a rude awakening if he actually did get a hippo. Do you really think he'll clean out the litter box...?

Any Christmas Music by Madonna...

OK, that's five songs plus. In the spirit of the holiday season, I really can't list many more. There's a lot of artists who've ruined otherwise great music (but still made a lot of money on their album).

As for the promised bonus, I give you a YouTube rendition of Los del Rio with a Macarena Christmas special. Just because.

Merry Christmas Everyone. Enjoy shopping, stringing up Christmas lights and decoration, filling the house with good cheer, and generally getting ready for the holiday season!

PS: For those diligent readers who just can't get enough Macarena, I present to you the original Los Rios Video of this classic song (English version):

A Song For The Times



Music Inside

It's a moderately cold, very windy day, and Winnie's at work while I'm home vegetating between jobs. Meaning, I have way too much time to spend ~~playing~~ researching on the Internet.

Among my discoveries, I've located this wonderful YouTube video that combines Marxist-Lennism with American Redneck. Really.

This is a YouTube clip of a Finnish band named "Leningrad Cowboys." They are described as:

The Leningrad Cowboys is a Finnish rock and roll band famous for its humorous songs and concerts featuring the Soviet Red Army Choir.

Currently, the band has eleven Cowboys and two Leningrad Ladies. The songs, all somewhat influenced by polka and progressive rock, and performed in English, have themes such as 'vodka', 'tractors', 'rockets', and 'Genghis Khan', as well as folkloric Russian songs, rock and roll ballads and covers from bands as diverse as The Beatles, Led Zeppelin, and Lynyrd Skynyrd, all with lots of humour.

The Red Army Choir (Choir Aleksandrov) is a performing ensemble that served as the official army choir of the former Soviet Union's Red Army. The choir consists of a male choir, an orchestra, and a dance ensemble. The songs they perform range from Russian folk tunes to Church hymns, operatic arias and popular music.

In 1991, The Red Army Choir participated in Roger Waters' The Wall concert celebrating the fall of the Berlin Wall. They performed an anti-war song "Bring the Boys Back Home".

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Red Army Choir has continued performing, entertaining audiences both inside and outside Russia.

So there you have it. The Evil Empire meets Good 'Old Boys.
Enjoy

Leningrad Cowboys & Red Army Choir – SWEET HOME ALABAMA

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