

Winter Carols review By Carol Swanson for ChristmasReviews.com

Our Review

A rock-renaissance hybrid, **Winter Carols** is a fine holiday release with a fun pedigree. After all, Blackmore's Night is the brainchild of Ritchie Blackmore, the hard-charging guitarist of Deep Purple fame. He joins with Candice Night, a former model-turned-lyricist/vocalist (whom he apparently first encountered on a soccer field), and others to present this quirky time machine warp, bringing ancient carols to spirited life in a modern context.

Blackmore's guitar licks on cuts such as *Winter (Basse Dance)* and *Wish You Were Here* are first-rate, and these alone are worth the price of admission. I also enjoyed the up-tempo, hand-clappin' version of *I Saw Three Ships*. Night's pleasing voice is buoyant, bright, and clear; her emotive vocals are lovely throughout. Unfortunately, the band occasionally overshadows Night's vocals (I wish her microphone had been cranked up a bit). For example, in the first half of *Good King Wenceslas* (before the fuller instrumentation kicks in), Night shines with an especially sweet intensity (and the percussive effects are very cool, too). The *Lord of the Dance/Simple Gifts* medley is another favorite; it exhibits high energy and a rockin' joy.

Winter Carols provides a fascinating mix for the Christmas season. Fans of Deep Purple and Ritchie Blackmore's guitar talents will likely want to check out this offering, as will those who are curious to sample holiday favorites simmering in a rock-renaissance stew.

--Carol Swanson
Reviewed in 2007
Our Review

The latest from Blackmore's Night is **Winter Carols**. Blackmore's Night is, of course, Ritchie Blackmore and Candice Night's renaissance-inspired rock band, or rock-inspired renaissance band, whichever way they would have it. This CD rocks from the get go, with plenty of guitar and even some horns and pipe organ on *Hark, The Herald Angels Sing/Come All Ye Faithful*. The renaissance flavor is pleasant and not at all overpowering as the CD continues. *Winter (Basse Dance)*, which may be a new song (though I have no liner notes to indicate in the advance copy I was sent), is a delightful Celtic-flavored instrumental on acoustic guitar and other medieval-sounding stringed instruments.

I enjoy Candice Night's intrepid vocals. Though it does not project great volume, her voice has a penetrating clarity that makes additional volume unnecessary. In this lyrical outing, she takes some liberties with these old carols and manages to breathe new life into some of them. For example, she updates *Ding Dong Merrily On High* by 100 years with some slick reworking of the melody. She gets support from Ritchie Blackmore in the form of excellent guitars and other interesting instrumentals. Blackmore has put together a well-functioning band, a band that seems to be right on time with the right note to maintain the mood. Every song is well-played, and some seem particularly charged with energy.

Yes, the highlights were many and the slow spots few. The renaissance arrangements make this rock music accessible to many. I can imagine this to be a popular Christmas party CD this year.

--Richard Banks
Reviewed in 2006

More

From the promotional materials:

For nearly a decade, guitar legend Ritchie Blackmore, charismatic vocalist Candice Night and their fellow band of minstrels have crafted an enchanting renaissance/folk/rock sound that has earned them the devotion of fans around the globe. Now for the first time ever, audiences can enjoy the magic of Blackmore's Night performing holiday songs.

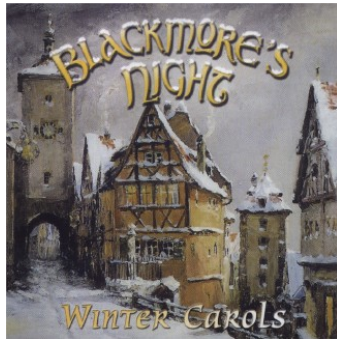
Forged by a common love of Renaissance and Middle Age music, former Deep Purple/Rainbow guitarist Ritchie Blackmore co-founded Blackmore's Night with vocalist Candice Night in 1997. Over the course of

five high internationally charting studio albums--four gold records, awarded the Number One Vocal album of the year for two of their releases, music video awards, several live and compilation releases, and many sold-out tours around the planet-they have truly perfected their signature blend of renaissance and folk music with an effective rock and roll flourish.

The songs on **Winter Carols** are Candice and Ritchie's interpretation of many favourite carols, shared, performed and enjoyed for the past 400 years.

Blackmore's Night Winter Carols

Summary: Every song is well-played, and some seem particularly charged with energy



[Order from Amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

Label: Locomotive Records
Length: 42 minutes
Genre: Rock
Release: 2006

Track List

Song Title

Hark The Herald Angels Sing/Come All Ye Faithfull
I Saw Three Ships
Winter (Basse Dance)
Ding Dong Merrily On High
Ma-O-Tzur
Good King Wenceslas
Lord Of The Dance/Simple Gifts
We Three Kings
Wish You Were Here
Emmanuel
Christmas Eve
We Wish You A Merry Christmas