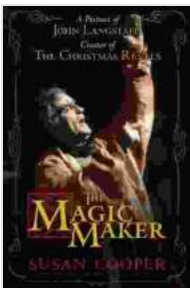


Portrait of John Langstaff, Creator of the Christmas Revels

A Pioneer of Holiday Traditions

John Langstaff, a visionary musician and educator, left an indelible mark on the holiday season with his creation of the Christmas Revels. This immersive and educational musical experience has become a beloved tradition for countless families, fostering a deeper appreciation for the diverse cultural heritage of Christmas.



The Magic Maker: A Portrait of John Langstaff, Creator of the Christmas Revels by Susan Cooper

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 1484 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 207 pages

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A Musical Journey Begins

Born in 1920 in New York City, John Langstaff's musical journey began at an early age. Inspired by his father, an accomplished organist, Langstaff began playing the piano at age five. He later studied at the Mannes School of Music, where he developed a passion for folk music and the rich musical traditions of different cultures.

Langstaff's experiences as a young musician profoundly influenced his later work. He was captivated by the power of music to connect people and preserve traditions. This belief would become a cornerstone of his educational philosophy and the foundation of the Christmas Revels.

A Holiday Tradition Takes Flight

In 1957, Langstaff founded the Christmas Revels in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Inspired by medieval English mystery plays and traditional European folk customs, Langstaff envisioned a participatory musical experience that would immerse audiences in the true spirit of the holiday season.

The first Christmas Revels was performed at the First Parish Church in Cambridge. It featured a cast of local singers, dancers, and musicians, and included a mix of traditional carols, folk songs, and instrumental pieces. The performance was a resounding success, captivating audiences with its authenticity, warmth, and educational value.



A vibrant performance of the Christmas Revels, showcasing the rich cultural heritage of the holiday season

Inspiring a Love of Music and Culture

Beyond its artistic appeal, the Christmas Revels has had a profound educational impact. Langstaff believed that music education was essential for fostering creativity, cultural understanding, and a sense of community. Through the Revels, he introduced audiences to a wide range of musical styles and traditions, from medieval chant to Appalachian folk songs.

The Revels also provides educational opportunities for young performers. Each year, hundreds of children are involved in the production, gaining valuable experience in singing, dancing, and playing instruments. The

experience fosters a lifelong love of music and instills a deep appreciation for cultural diversity.

A Lasting Legacy of Joy and Tradition

John Langstaff's legacy extends far beyond the Christmas Revels. He was a prolific composer, arranger, and author, and his work has inspired countless musicians and educators. His innovative approaches to music education and his commitment to preserving cultural traditions continue to resonate with people around the world.

The Christmas Revels has grown exponentially since its humble beginnings in Cambridge. Today, there are over 20 Revels companies across North America, each with its unique character and cultural influences. These companies bring the joy and educational value of the Revels to communities large and small, ensuring that Langstaff's legacy will continue to inspire generations to come.

A Treasured Holiday Tradition

John Langstaff, the creator of the Christmas Revels, left an indelible mark on the holiday season. Through his visionary work, he created an immersive and educational musical experience that has enriched the lives of countless families.

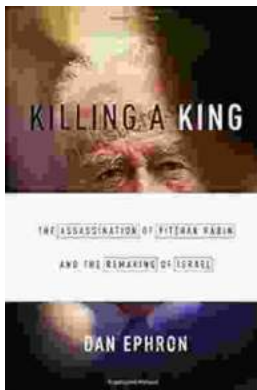
The Christmas Revels is a testament to Langstaff's passion for music, education, and the power of tradition. It continues to be a beloved holiday tradition that fosters a deeper appreciation for the diverse cultural heritage of Christmas, inspires a love of music and culture, and brings joy to communities near and far.



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