The Washington Revels presents

The Christmas Revels

A Celebration of The Winter Solstice 2003

Roads of the Roma

Introducing

Khânci Doğ
Romani band from Budapest, Hungary in their premier visit to the United States

With

Anna Menendez
Dancing flamenco

Richard Marlow
Guitar

Alexander Fedoríouk
Cimbalom

Susan Worland
Violin

And

Oran Sandel as Old Rom

Featuring

The Revels Kumpania (Chorus, Dancers, Children & Teens) with the Zlakni Vetar Brass and the Nritya-Tarangi Dance Troupe

Roberta Gasbarre artistic director
Judith Harrison & Charlie Pilzer music directors
Cindy Speas executive director & producer
Autumn Wilson production manager

December 5-7 and 12-14, 2003
Matinees Saturdays and Sundays

Lisner Auditorium
The George Washington University
Imagine a people without a country searching for a home, steeped in family tradition and music, pursued by prejudice and misunderstanding: Imagine a people forced into many migrations over the centuries, first searching for a new homeland, then enslaved, then wandering to avoid slavery and then “settling” in a modern, ghettoized way. Imagine that throughout all the centuries, at the heart of everything, is the love of community and music. Many call them Gypsies, travelers, wanderers — they call themselves...the Roma.

This year’s Christmas Revels follows the path of the great migration of the Roma in an era that is timeless. The journey begins with folk dancing from the western Indian province of Gujarat, and the Indian New Year’s Festival of Lights (Diwali). The Roma left India in the tenth century and traveled west to Persia and Turkey, where we will celebrate the Festival of Eid that ends the fasts of Ramadan. Then we move westward to the swirling circles of mid-winter Balkan dances from Macedonia and Bulgaria. We will greet the Christmas season among the glorious sounds of carols from Romania and Hungary and the haunting strains of the cimbalom and violin. We will join the caravans traveling to honor the Gypsy Saint, Sara Kali, in Saintes Maries-de-la-mer on the coast of southern France, and we will meet, finally, at a crossroads in Spain, amidst the soul-searing music and dance of authentic flamenco.

The Romani tribes were influenced by many cultures along the great migration — they celebrated religious holidays in every country according to their own preferences — and they have continued to embellish, color and layer their music and language with the rituals and traditions of every place they have lived. The Roma are truly citizens of the world, and in a 21st century where tensions are heightened by cultural and religious misconceptions, we hope that the story of the survival of the Romani as a people may serve as a beacon for those who would end prejudice and oppression against those less fortunate.

Where there is music, there is joy; where there are families, there are stories to be carried forward; where there is a road ahead, there is survival — and in that incredible tale lies the path ahead for all of us.
1. Balkan Brass Prelude:

Throughout Eastern Europe the sound of a Balkan brass band evokes the oriental content and rigid, martial styles associated with the original 19th century Turkish military bands heard throughout the region. However, the modern Balkan brass band sound has creatively been transformed to include Romani rhythms, jazz improvisations, folk melodies, and in many cases electric amplification (wedding music and coffee house styles).

The Zlatni Vetar (GOLDEN WIND) Brass

2. Here We Come A-Wassailing:

For twenty-one years audiences in Lisner Auditorium have welcomed the season by joining Revelers on stage in a rousing opening carol. This year we sing a wassailing song which would have been sung by the “waits” as they caroled from door to door in a village, bringing luck for the New Year to their neighbors. There are many variants of this English folk song, and this version is arranged by Marshall Barron.

SONG LEADER: Greg Lewis

All sing:

We are not daily beggars
That beg from door to door,
We are your neighbor’s children
Whom you have seen before.
Chorus

God bless the master of this house,
Likewise the kistress too,
And all the little children
That round the table go.
Chorus
3. Traveller’s Carol:

Our twentieth century community prepares for the journey ahead as we sing (in call and response with the audience) this popular Catalonian carol, with words written for Revels by Susan Cooper.

Chorus sings, followed by the audience singing the words in bold, using this tune:

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Here we come to - gath - er.
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Travelers from every land,
Here we come together.
Following the Christmas call,
Braving wind and weather.
Mother, daughter, father, son,
Sisters, brothers, every one,
On this holy day,
On this day, on this day,
For all days passing,
This is like no other.

Dawn to dusk we journey on,
Bound for celebration.
Traveling across the world,
Drawn from every nation.
On the long, long road,
On the road, on the road,
To rejoice together,
At the new year’s turning.

Every mile our numbers grow,
Joining hands in greeting.
On the hard and wintry way,
To our joyful meeting.
Through the storm-clouds’ icy cold,
This one hope all travelers hold,
To come home at last,
To come home, to come home,
To a glowing Christmas
And a bright tomorrow.

4. Khanči Doš:

Roma tradition bearers sing music from the Romani diaspora. The vibrant and exuberant music is our first glimpse that we may be traveling far from Lisner Auditorium and Washington, D.C.

India

As we begin our travels, the children ask Old Rom, the oldest member of the tribe and the archetypal storyteller, where the Gypsies came from. His Darane Swatura, or “Big Story” in the Romani language of Romanes, takes us back in time to the beginning of the great migration.

OLD ROM:  Gran Sandel  DOMARI WOMAN:  Monica Mohindra

5. Navratri:

This festival of nine nights of celebration and dance is dedicated to the Mother or Divine Goddess who represents the all-powerful universal energy that destroys evil and protects the righteous. The folk dance Garba-Raas is still performed today in the western Indian state of Gujarat. Garba (from the Sanskrit word garbadeep, meaning a lamp inside a pot) is a circular dance performed by women wearing colorful embroidered textiles that bring the arid landscape to life. They dance with Garba pots on their heads, symbolizing the Universe and the light of Universal Energy shining through. As the celebration progresses, the Garba gives way to a more energetic stick dance, Dandiya Raas, in which dancers join the circle holding small polished sticks or dandiyas, striking them together as they whirl to the intoxicating rhythms. The Raas has its roots in the legendary dance between Krishna, an incarnation of Lord Vishnu, and the village maidens, symbolizing the joyful dance of the human soul with God.

Nritya-Tarangi (DANCING WAVES) Dancers

6. Diwali:

Most scholars believe that the Roma left India in the 10th century and traveled west. They would certainly have celebrated Diwali, from the Sanskrit Deepavali, meaning lights in a row. This Festival of Lights is celebrated nationally in India to welcome Lakshmi, consort of Lord Vishnu, also known as the Goddess of wealth and prosperity. It is celebrated with Rangoli designs painted in front of houses, floral decorations, fireworks and rows of diyas (oil lamps) that symbolize the age-old desire to drive away the darkness of ignorance with the light of knowledge.
7. Percussion & Metalwork:
The Romani tribes carried with them the skills and tools they needed to make a living on the road. The tinsmiths and metal workers made prized pieces to sell and also found a deep, musical richness in the rhythms of their work.

Larry Weiner and chorus men

8. Call to Prayer:
The daily fasts of Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic Calendar, are designed to increase spiritual awareness and gratitude as well as generosity to those less fortunate. Each daily fast invites all participants to control not only physical appetites but also negative emotions and actions. The call to prayer signals the beginning of Eid al-Fitr, a festival breaking the fast of the last day of Ramadan. The feast days are spent visiting friends and family, giving special gifts and treats to children, and offering charity to the needy.

Soloist: Amer Tobing

9. Niška Banja:
A lively tune in Serbian and Romani dialects celebrates the “good time” to be had in this little town near Niš, in Serbia. It sets the scene for a čoček, a Romani line dance from Macedonia. Listen for the fascinating 9/16 rhythm, almost too quick to count.

Soloists: Tzvety Weiner, Bryndyn Weiner

10. Tin Tin, Ozdolu idu and Pluğaşor:
The children play and sing for their parents. “Tin Tin Tini Mini Hanim,” refers to a “pretty little lady” and it is a variant of the “Halay” that is danced by the Kurdish population of Eastern Turkey. A more recent variant, simply called “Teen” has become popular in Armenia. “Ozdolu idu” is a Bulgarian tune about a many-colored cart bumping down the road. “Pluğaşor cu Şase Boi” is a song about one of the most popular New Year’s customs in Romania. It tells about the “little plow,” a remnant of ancient agricultural traditions from Roman times. Groups of young children walk a plow decorated with evergreens from house to house, scattering seeds, cracking their whips and ringing bells, all to wish health, prosperity and happiness to every villager.

11. Winter in Bulgaria:
The men’s chorus sings “Sednala E Malka Moma” as our Bulgarian children extend good luck to family, friends and visitors by tapping everyone in the house with small, specially decorated sticks called Sooroovachki. The women sing “Shirijte Se Malki Momi” to accompany Laduvane (the singing of the rings), a traditional Bulgarian ritual celebrated to predict upcoming marriages. Maidens bring “silent water” drawn from a well, and one by one they drop in rings and flowers with tokens that, when withdrawn, will foretell the future of each woman. (Musical translations and transcriptions of both tunes by Carol Freeman) The men sing “Stani, Stani” while boys and unmarried young men called Kolodari travel through Bulgarian villages dancing with long carved oak sticks called Koledarki, thus ensuring prosperity and good health for everyone. (Musical transcription by Tzvety Weiner)

12. Good King Wenceslas:
King Wenceslas ruled Bohemia for five years and died in 929 in his early twenties. He is remembered today as the patron saint of the Czech Republic. The music is from a 13th century song called Tempus Adest Floridum, or “Spring Has Unwrapped Her Flowers.” The words were written in 1853 by John Mason Neale, a cleric more interested in the Victorian ideal of charity than the actual Wenceslas
The Feast of Stephen is celebrated on December 26.

KING: James Harkless       PAGE: Ben Names

All sing First and Final verses:

First: Good King Wenceslas looked out

On the feast of Stephen
Where the snow lay round about,
Deep and crisp and even.

Brightly shone the moon that night
Though the frost was cruel,
When a poor man came in sight
Gathering winter fuel.

Final: In his master's steps he trod,
Where the snow lay dented;
Heat was in the very sod
Which the saint had printed.

Therefore, all good men, be sure,
Wealth or rank possessing,
Ye who now will bless the poor
Shall yourselves find blessing.

13. Khanđi Đoš:
The Romani celebrated the religious and cultural holidays of the countries they traveled through, adding many spiritual layers to their beliefs in good and evil spirits.

14. Cimbalom solo:
The cimbalom is an unusual instrument that can be traced historically to the Orient. Early Asiatic nomads (particularly invaders from Mongolia and China) and the roaming Gypsy tribes from India, carried the instrument to all parts of Europe and the Middle East. An early ancestor from Arabia was called the kannel (or qanun), a musical gourd box with metal or gut strings strung across one or two bridges, played by striking the strings with a pair of metal mallets. Today there are two types of cimbalom: a small, portable one, much like a hammered dulcimer, and a larger one with a pedal like those on a piano.

CIMBALOM: Alexander Fedoriouk

15. Iată Vin Colindători, Florile Dalbe:
Arrangements of these centuries-old, traditional carols from Romania can be found on the Colindătorii compact disc, produced by George and Larissa Lucaci, local Washington, D.C. descendants of Romanian immigrants, used here by permission. The first welcomes the advent of the carolers in the brightly shining dawn; the second, sung with the children is “Snow White Flowers” and heralds the seasonal flower-like patterns of frost on the windows.

SOLOISTS: Elizabeth Fulford Miller, John Clewett, Jennifer Rutherford
CONDUCTING: Donna Simonton

16. Căluș:
In an ancient Romanian ritual dance similar to the English Morris Dance, the dancers wear white costumes adorned with bells and use sticks while dancing. The familiar mummers-like ritual includes a masked, mute fool called the “Mut” who unaccountably speaks—bantering with the villagers and goading the dancers. Originally the Căluș was a healing ritual ensuring protection from malevolent forces and fertility for the ensuing year. The dancers jump over the infirm to endow them with strength and good health, and the garlic or sprigs of wormwood they wear are “stolen” by onlookers for health and protection.

DANCERS: John Bartholomew, Steve Bilanow, David Giusti, Greg Lewis, Ben Names, Jim Voorhees, Bryndyn Weiner and Larry Weiner, with Ted Schneider as the Cook.

17. Hora șa la Cavall:
The violinist ties a horse hair to the low string and pulls on it with rosined fingers. This unique Romani style of playing was introduced to western audiences in the movie Latcho Drom, a musical odyssey about the music and history of the Roma.

VIOLINIST: Susan Worland
18. Botolo:
In this Romani dance from the Northeastern region of Hungary, the sticks were once used by the
Olah Roma in herding their flocks of pigs, sheep and goats. The mock combatants circle each other
with offensive and defensive movements.

DANCERS: John Bartholomew, Bryndyn Weiner

19. Lord of the Dance:
Sydney Carter’s contemporary lyrics to the Shaker song “Simple Gifts” were choreographed for the
first staged Christmas Revels in 1971 by Carol Langstaff with Shag Graetz and Jonathan Morse, using
a compilation of Morris dance steps from various Cotswold village traditions.

SINGER: Greg Lewis
DANCERS (ALTERNATING): Christopher Lewis, Chimney McTortyre, Jim Voorhees

All sing refrain:
Dance, then, wherever you may be,
I am the Lord of the Dance, said he,
And I’ll lead you all, wherever you may be,
And I’ll lead you all in the Dance, said he.

Intermission

Round for Peace:
Words by Jean Ritchie
RECORDED: David Giusti
All sing:

Part 2
On the Road: Porrajmos

20. Porrajmos:
The Roma refer to the darkness of the Holocaust as “The Devouring” or Porrajmos. During World
War II hundreds of thousands of Roma were interned in concentration camps, many never to return
to their families. The child’s question of being forced to move or forced to stay reflects not only this
terrible time in history, but also the modern prejudice, oppression and forced ghettos the Roma still
experience around the globe.

DANCER: Anna Menendez  VIOLIN: Susan Worland

21. Oshwitsate:
This song in Romanes is about the twentieth century travails of the Roma in the camps. The singer
asks the blackbird to take his heart and fly with a message to his wife that he is starving in Auschwitz.
22. O Come, O Come, Emmanuel:
This familiar Advent hymn is based on one of the oldest of Christian prayers, referred to as the “O” Antiphons dating back to the 9th century. The first letter of six of the original seven verses spell out a reverse acrostic “SARCORE” or “ero cras”, meaning “I shall be with you tomorrow.” We are familiar with the verses written in the 19th century to a 15th century minor key tune. The references to exile, struggle, and hope for relief from misery are metaphors for our hope that the pain and suffering of the oppressed in today’s world will soon cease.

All sing:

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O Come, O Come, Emmanuel,
O Come, O Day-spring, from on high,
    And cheer us by your drawing nigh;
O Come, thou Key of David, come,
    And open wide our heavenly home.
That mourns in lonely exile here,
    Un-fail the Son of God, appear.
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
    And death's dark shadows put to flight.
Re-joice! Re-joice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.
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23. Cimbalom and violin duet:

**CIMBALOM:** Alexander Fedoriouk  
**VIOLIN:** Susan Worland

24. Khanët Doñ:
The music most people associate with the Roma is not “real” Gypsy music, but “tourist” Gypsy music. From the time the Roma first arrived in Europe, they learned local forms of music and played them for the natives. They became major preservationists of indigenous folk music throughout Eastern Europe. But there was much that the Roma did not play for gadje (non-Rom). Romani music was danced and sung to honor the kumpania (Romani tribes) and to lighten their trials and burdens.

25. Grast (The Horse):
Some traveling Romani became specialists in horse training and healing. A Romani writer once referred to the horse as the Roma’s “brother”, so important was this honored animal to the Romani way of life. The “horseplay” recognizes a lighthearted, “making the best of it” attitude of those that had to travel on in order to survive.

26. Dunántúli ugrós:
This tune from southwest Hungary (Dunántúli—beyond the Danube) preserves an ancient, precouples dance style. Hearty and physical, with symbolic weapons (sticks for men and bottles on heads for women), this popular version can today be danced as solo, line, circle, star or couples.

**MUSICIANS:** Alexander Fedoriouk and Susan Worland  
**DANCERS:** Cathy Lamont and teens

27. Töret Észik a Cigány:
Hungarian composer and musicologist Zoltan Kodály (1882-1967) wrote this arrangement of two old folk tunes in 1950. The playful, blustery encounter in one tune balances the poetic love song of the other. The reference to Cigány, or Gypsy, was not considered derogatory in that decade, although a linguistic debate swirls today around whether or not to use the term, highlighting continuing social and political concerns of the Roma in today’s world.
France

28. Je Me Suis Levé:
The children welcome us to France with a little folk song about welcoming the dawn of a new king with the voice of a nightingale.

29. Sing We Noël:
This French 16th century carol tune is sung to words written for Revels by Susan Cooper.

All sing:

Spain

30. Sara Kali:
In France a majority of Romani are Catholic, and many follow traditional pilgrimages for religious inspiration. The best known is to Saintes Maries-de-la-Mer in Provence, where a fortress church is constructed around the relics of the Holy Marys, Salomé and Jacobé, who sailed from the Holy Land on a small boat. At their side was a mysterious woman, now hailed as the patron saint of the Roma, Sara Kali. From the 19th century until today, the Roma have gathered in reunions of the kumpania to honor her with music and ceremony. As all the relics are blessed, their statues are marched to the sea; the Bishop blesses Roma and gadje alike. We hear authentic music as sung today in the church and processions. Father Dumas provided “Sainte Marie” and “Salut.” Father François provided “La Prière à Sara” (words by Krys Mestas, music by Pierre Aupy).

SOLOISTS: Mike Matheson, Jose Louis Sanchez, Riki Schneyer
GUITAR: Richard Marlow

31. Mary Come Running:
There are many folk stories about the birth of Christ, and this version from Spain says there were Gypsies at the stable in Bethlehem. The children’s innocent retelling of the story in mummers style starts with Joseph, as the first-time father with his nervous, stereotypical responses about the Romani, and it ends with Mary’s wisdom and understanding of the deep love the Romani have for all children, including her own. Some familiar modern versions of this tale have omitted references to the Roma.

SOLOIST: Elisabeth Myers and children
32. Flamenco Dance:
The dancing of the Romani tribes that settled in Andalusia became the groundwork for what we know as flamenco style dance today. The hand gestures and footwork of this thrilling dance are also reflected in the movements of the Indian Katachali dancer from India who joins in. The similarities in these dances is a prime example of how cultural elements traveled with the Roma from East to West.

**DANCERS:** Anna Menendez and Prachi Dalal
**GUITARIST:** Richard Marlow

33. Khanči Doš:
This final *patshiv*, or meeting of the *kumpania* (Romani tribes), honors the lineage and heritage of the Roma, their homelands and the countries through which they have traveled.

**DANCER:** Bryndyn Weiner

34. Ramo, Ramo:
According to popular legend this melody by B. Milojević was part of a sound track for an Indian movie in the early 1960s. Many Roma have a strong liking for Indian music, and not long after the movie was released a number of Roma “Duvachki Orkestari” (Serbian/Roma Brass Bands) picked up the tune, put Serbian words to the song, and it became an instant hit. The tune also can be found on the sound track of the cult movie *Montenegro* about Yugoslav Rom guest workers in Sweden.

**SOLOISTS:** Milan Cavich, Ivan Gandel, Carl Silvano

35. Caje Šukarije:
This Romani song, “Pretty Girl,” was recorded by Macedonians Esma Redžepova and the Ansambl Teodosievski several decades ago. The passionate music has become popular throughout the Balkans, and is still sung today in concert by Esma, “Queen of the Romani.”

**SOLOISTS:** Joanna Franco and Claudia Hosky

36. The Shortest Day:
This poem, written by Susan Cooper in 1977, has become an annual tradition in all Revels performances throughout the country.

37. Sussex Mummers Carol:
This is a traditional English carol, sung as the ending to a folk play in Horsham, Sussex. In each of the twelve American communities where The Christmas Revels is performed annually, this has become the final parting song with the audience. Arranged by Brian Holmes with descant by Ralph Vaughan Williams.

All sing:

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God bless the master of this house, With hapi ness be his store;
God bless the mistress of this house, With gold chain round her breast;
God bless your house, your child ren too, Your cat tle and your side;

Where'er his body rides or walks, His God must be his guide.
Where'er her body sleeps or wakes, Lord send her soul to rest.

And send you more and more, And send you more and more.
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About Khanči Doš

The band was formed in 1987 at Nagyecsed (North Eastern Hungary) and has been playing together for more than ten years. In the early period Khanči Doš interpreted the songs of the local Roma/Gypsy community. One CD has been produced and a second has been recorded but not yet released. The band has twice received Nivo awards at European folk-music festivals.

Khanci Dos personally represents the culture of the three main Roma/Gypsy groups living in Hungary: the so-called Romungro, Vlach and Boyash Roma. The main goal of the band is to create a base for an intercultural and multicultural exchange between the Roma/Gypsy and other people.

The band demonstrates how we can increase mutual understanding and reduce prejudice through the language of music. Khanči Doš now plays songs from Hungarian, Russian, Romanian, Balkan and Greek Gypsy traditions and would like to distribute this treasure all around the world.

Other appearances by Khanči Doš:

December 10, Noon
Library of Congress
Symposium: The Roma in Today’s World

December 11, 1:00pm
Holocaust Museum
Concert

For more information call 202-723-7528
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Alexander Fedorionk, CORIDIM
Susan Woland, VIOLA
Anna Menendez, FLAMENCO ARTIST
Richard Marlow, GUITARIST
Romni (WOMEN OF THE COMPANY)
Theadocia Austen
Ann Bayliss
Andrea J. Blackford
Leah de la Beaujardiere
Jooyce White Granados
Lisa Grosh
Julianne J. Harden
Robin Jones
Diane Kresh
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Symi Rom-Ryner

Stefania Rubino
Jennifer Rutherford
Riki Schneyer
Donna Simonton
Tzvetty Weiner
Diane Behrens Winslow

Romale (MEN of THE COMPANY)
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Peter Behr
Steve Bilanow
Brian Cardell
John Clewett
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Dhruva Khatildeo, PERCUSSION
Sandeep Rao, SINGER

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Muslim Call to Prayer
Amer Tobing

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“I will be glad to be part of this major celebration of the history and life of the Romani people. It is astonishing how scarce our knowledge of their culture is; how little we know about the uniqueness of their historic path and their life as a diaspora nowadays. Yours is an interesting idea which will help us learn more about the Roma in an imaginative and illustrative way.”

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This multi-cultural effort could not have happened without incredible support throughout our local community. We wish to thank the following for their enthusiastic help with this project:

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- Larisa Lucaci for permission to use musical transcriptions from the CD Colinditorii: proceeds from sales are used to support an abandoned babies center in Targoviste, Romania.

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For information in the spring, go to www.revelsdc.org or www.cathedral.org/cathedral/flowermart
Dominique Charmaison, guardian, and Father Thierry François, priest of the Catholic Church of Saintes Maries-de-la-Mer, France and Father Claude Dumas from Toulon, France, for dramaturgical assistance and musical research.

Dr. Krys Mestas-LaCombe, poet/songwriter, singer and founder of La Psy qui Chante, a charity which aids marginalized members of society, who shared music from the Sara Kali pilgrimages.

Romani poetry recited is taken from Roads of the Roma, ed. Ian Hancock, Siobhan Dowd & Rajko Djuric, University of Hertfordshire Press.

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And most especially to our dance consultants, whose expertise in musicology and dance, as well as cheerful teaching and community spirit, made this production possible: Larry Weiner, Cathy Lamont, Bryndyn Weiner and Prachi Dalal.
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nor a season, but a state of mind.
To cherish peace and goodwill,
to be plenteous in mercy,
is to have the real spirit
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