

IMPOSSIBLE CHRISTMAS

GORDON GREEN



Thirty electronic arrangements of
the Christmas classics

Albany
RECORDS

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Every year at Christmas time I'm struck by the predictability of most of the Christmas music that crowds the record stores and airwaves. In this collection I tried to show the Christmas classics in a different light, to take a fresh look at what are some of the most beautiful melodies in circulation. Fortunately, most of these tunes have qualities that make them good for adaptation — they are distinctive but simple enough to be recognized in distorted harmonic settings, they do not depend on any particular kind of interpretation, and they are familiar enough to lampoon.

My approach was to match each tune with a favorite idiom. Marching band music, rock and roll, carousel music, African and Latin American percussion, orchestral music, and Indian classical music were the main inspirations. In some cases the influence was direct: *Silent Night Snowfall* is in the style of Terry Riley's *A Rainbow on Curved Air*; *The Star of Christmas* paraphrases the end of the Scherzo from Mahler's *Second Symphony*; and the harmony of Strauss's *Four Last Songs* is quoted in *Silent Night Starlight*. Some of Brian Eno's textures are imitated in *Lullaby* and *March*, Ivo Papasov's music was the inspiration for the altered meter in *Russian Dance*, and Messiaen's bird-call piano music was the basis for the bridge of *Silent Night Kaleidoscope*. Charles Ives' *Fourth Symphony* made it clear that, in orchestral music, anything is possible, which led to the treatment in *Twelve Dazes* and *Medley*.