

bing crosby little drummer boy lyrics

bing crosby little drummer boy lyrics have become synonymous with the holiday season, capturing the spirit of Christmas through heartfelt storytelling and memorable melodies. This classic Christmas song, famously performed by Bing Crosby alongside other artists, tells the touching tale of a young boy who plays his drum for the newborn Jesus as a humble gift. Understanding the lyrics provides insight into the song's enduring popularity and emotional resonance. Moreover, exploring Bing Crosby's rendition offers a glimpse into how his iconic voice contributed to making "The Little Drummer Boy" a timeless holiday favorite. This article delves into the full lyrics, the song's background, Bing Crosby's collaboration, and the cultural impact of this beloved Christmas carol.

- Understanding the Lyrics of "The Little Drummer Boy"
- Bing Crosby's Rendition of "The Little Drummer Boy"
- The Historical and Cultural Background of the Song
- Impact and Legacy of Bing Crosby's Version
- Common Interpretations and Symbolism in the Lyrics

Understanding the Lyrics of "The Little Drummer Boy"

The lyrics of "The Little Drummer Boy" narrate the story of a poor boy who has no material gift to offer the newborn King, Jesus Christ. Instead, he offers the only thing he can: the sound of his drum. The song emphasizes themes of humility, generosity, and the power of simple gifts given with love. The recurring phrase "pa rum pum pum pum" mimics the beat of the drum and serves as a memorable refrain throughout the song.

Full Lyrics Overview

The lyrics open with the young drummer boy being summoned to see the newborn child. As he approaches, he contemplates what gift he can bring. Unable to provide gold, frankincense, or myrrh like the Magi, he chooses to play his drum. The lyrics describe the boy's performance and the newborn's response, symbolizing acceptance and appreciation for heartfelt offerings.

Key Phrases and Their Meanings

Several key phrases in the lyrics carry deep meaning:

- **"Come they told me, pa rum pum pum pum"** - This line sets the scene of being called to witness the nativity.
- **"I have no gift to bring, pa rum pum pum pum"** - Expresses the boy's humility and lack of material wealth.
- **"Then He smiled at me, pa rum pum pum pum"** - Represents the acceptance and blessing from Jesus towards the boy's simple gift.

Bing Crosby's Rendition of "The Little Drummer Boy"

Bing Crosby's version of "The Little Drummer Boy" is among the most famous and beloved interpretations of this Christmas classic. His smooth baritone voice added warmth and sincerity to the song, making it a staple in holiday music collections worldwide. Crosby's collaboration with other artists, including David Bowie, further elevated the song's popularity across generations.

Notable Collaborations and Recordings

One of the most iconic renditions was Crosby's duet with David Bowie, released in 1977. This version blended Crosby's classic style with Bowie's contemporary influence, resulting in a unique and memorable performance that introduced the song to new audiences. The collaboration is especially noted for its harmony and respectful blending of two distinct vocal styles.

Stylistic Elements in Crosby's Version

Crosby's interpretation emphasizes a gentle, rhythmic approach that complements the drumbeat motif in the lyrics. The arrangement often features orchestral backing and a steady drum rhythm, reinforcing the song's narrative. His vocal delivery is both tender and expressive, highlighting the emotional depth of the lyrics.

The Historical and Cultural Background of the Song

"The Little Drummer Boy" was originally written in 1941 by Katherine K. Davis, inspired by a traditional Czech carol. The song's narrative reflects Christian themes surrounding the nativity story, focusing on the idea that gifts given with love and sincerity hold great value regardless of their material worth.

Origins and Evolution

Katherine K. Davis composed the song based on the story of a young boy who expresses his devotion through his music. Since its creation, "The Little Drummer Boy" has been covered by countless artists and adapted into various musical styles, becoming a Christmas standard worldwide.

Cultural Significance

The song's message of humility and giving resonates deeply during the Christmas season. It serves as a reminder that acts of kindness and love are the true spirit of the holiday, transcending materialism. This universal theme contributes to the song's widespread appeal across cultures and generations.

Impact and Legacy of Bing Crosby's Version

Bing Crosby's rendition of "The Little Drummer Boy" significantly influenced how the song is perceived and celebrated today. His recordings helped cement the carol's place in popular culture and holiday traditions. Crosby's association with Christmas music, including his legendary "White Christmas," added credibility and enduring popularity to this particular song.

Influence on Holiday Music

Crosby's versions of Christmas songs, including "The Little Drummer Boy," set a standard for holiday music production and performance. His smooth, comforting voice became emblematic of the Christmas season, inspiring subsequent artists to create their own interpretations.

Continued Popularity

Decades after its release, Bing Crosby's "The Little Drummer Boy" remains a fixture on radio, streaming platforms, and holiday playlists. The song's inclusion in various Christmas specials and compilations continues to introduce it to new audiences, ensuring its legacy endures.

Common Interpretations and Symbolism in the Lyrics

The lyrics of "The Little Drummer Boy" are rich with symbolism and open to various interpretations. At its core, the song conveys the importance of sincerity and the value of non-material gifts. The young drummer's simple offering symbolizes pure devotion and faith.

Symbolism of the Drum

The drum represents the boy's unique talent and his means of expressing love and reverence. Unlike gold or treasures, the drum is a personal gift, emphasizing that the worth of a gift lies in the giver's intention rather than its material value.

The Message of Humility and Giving

The song encourages listeners to appreciate humble beginnings and recognize that everyone has something valuable to offer. It highlights that true generosity comes from the heart, regardless of social status or wealth.

List of Themes Explored in the Song

- Humility and simplicity
- Faith and devotion
- The power of music as a gift
- Recognition and acceptance
- Self-expression through giving

Frequently Asked Questions

Who originally performed 'The Little Drummer Boy' that Bing Crosby famously sang?

'The Little Drummer Boy' was originally written by Katherine Kennicott Davis in 1941, but Bing Crosby popularized the song through his duet with David Bowie in 1977.

What are some key lyrics from Bing Crosby's version of 'The Little Drummer Boy'?

Key lyrics from Bing Crosby's version include: 'Come they told me, pa rum pum pum pum, A new born King to see, pa rum pum pum pum.'

Is Bing Crosby's 'The Little Drummer Boy' a solo or a

duet?

Bing Crosby's most famous version of 'The Little Drummer Boy' is a duet with David Bowie, blending Crosby's classic style with Bowie's unique voice.

Where can I find the full lyrics for Bing Crosby's 'The Little Drummer Boy'?

The full lyrics for Bing Crosby's 'The Little Drummer Boy' can be found on various lyric websites such as Genius, AZLyrics, and official music platforms.

What is the theme of the lyrics in Bing Crosby's 'The Little Drummer Boy'?

The lyrics tell the story of a poor boy who plays his drum as a gift for the newborn Jesus, symbolizing a humble but heartfelt offering.

How did Bing Crosby's rendition of 'The Little Drummer Boy' influence Christmas music?

Bing Crosby's rendition, especially the duet with David Bowie, became a classic and is credited with popularizing 'The Little Drummer Boy' as a Christmas staple, blending traditional and contemporary styles.

Additional Resources

1. *The Story Behind "The Little Drummer Boy": Bing Crosby's Holiday Classic*

This book delves into the origins and history of the beloved Christmas song "The Little Drummer Boy," famously performed by Bing Crosby. It explores the song's creation, its lyrical themes, and how Crosby's rendition helped cement it as a holiday staple. Readers will gain insight into the cultural impact of the song and its enduring popularity over the decades.

2. *Bing Crosby and the Golden Age of Christmas Music*

Focusing on Bing Crosby's influential role in shaping Christmas music, this book highlights his performances, including his iconic version of "The Little Drummer Boy." It provides a broader context of holiday music in the mid-20th century, examining how Crosby's smooth voice and charismatic style brought warmth to the season. The book also explores collaborations with other artists and the evolution of holiday recordings.

3. *Lyrics and Legacy: The Meaning Behind "The Little Drummer Boy"*

This exploration of the song's lyrics unpacks the symbolic meaning and spiritual themes present in "The Little Drummer Boy." The author discusses the narrative of the song, its message of humble giving, and how Bing Crosby's version emphasizes these elements. It's an insightful read for fans interested in the deeper significance behind the words and music.

4. *Christmas Duets: Bing Crosby and Friends*

Highlighting famous holiday duets, including Bing Crosby's memorable collaboration with David Bowie on "The Little Drummer Boy," this book chronicles the making of these iconic performances. It provides behind-the-scenes stories, production details, and the impact of these duets on popular culture. Readers will appreciate the blend of classic and contemporary styles that defined Crosby's holiday legacy.

5. *The Art of Holiday Music: Bing Crosby's Influence on Christmas Traditions*

This book examines how Bing Crosby's recordings, particularly "The Little Drummer Boy," helped shape modern Christmas traditions and music. It discusses the marketing and media strategies that popularized these songs and the role radio and television played in their success. The narrative connects Crosby's artistry with the broader cultural celebration of the holiday season.

6. *The Little Drummer Boy: A Musical and Cultural Analysis*

Offering a detailed analysis of the song's musical composition and cultural significance, this book explores why "The Little Drummer Boy" resonates with audiences. It includes discussion of Bing Crosby's vocal interpretation and arrangement choices that contributed to the song's emotional impact. The book is perfect for musicologists, historians, and fans alike.

7. *Behind the Mic: Bing Crosby's Recording Sessions for Christmas Classics*

This insider's look into Bing Crosby's studio sessions reveals how he crafted his timeless holiday hits, including "The Little Drummer Boy." The author shares anecdotes from producers, musicians, and sound engineers who worked with Crosby. It's an intimate portrait of the creative process behind some of the most cherished Christmas music.

8. *Holiday Harmony: The Collaboration of Bing Crosby and David Bowie*

Focusing specifically on the unique partnership between Bing Crosby and David Bowie for their duet of "The Little Drummer Boy," this book explores the cultural and musical significance of their collaboration. It discusses how their contrasting styles blended to create a memorable and enduring holiday performance. The book also examines the media response and fan reception at the time.

9. *The Little Drummer Boy in Popular Culture: From Bing Crosby to Today*

Tracing the journey of "The Little Drummer Boy" through various adaptations and covers since Bing Crosby's version, this book highlights the song's place in popular culture. It looks at how the song has been interpreted across different genres and media, maintaining its relevance. Readers will find a comprehensive overview of the song's impact beyond its original recording.

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