

## Mp3 Sam Stryke - Christmas



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Contemporary instrumental Christmas album featuring acoustic arrangements of traditional carols, a few solo piano tracks, a few originals, and a special vocal performance by Alice Peacock. 10 MP3 Songs

NEW AGE: New Age, JAZZ: Smooth Jazz Details: Composing music is like solving a puzzle, says Sam Stryke. Its an intellectual challenge obeying the rules and then breaking them in a creative and strategic way." Relying on a combination of heart and intellect, the accomplished pianist taps into a reservoir of formal musical training and resurfaces with modern instrumentals infused with engaging melodies and rich orchestrations. Atlantic Records released Strykess first solo album, the warm and melodic In the Wind, to critical acclaim in 1991. Five years later, he contributed compositions and performed on jazz trumpeter Rex Richardsons Pandoras Pocket. Strykess second solo album, 2002s Emerging, cultivates his organic blend of acoustic and vintage electric instruments, as well as strings and horns. Christmas, available in November 2006, is Strykess third major release. The songs fit together to create a cozy and sentimental mood from beginning to end, he says. Id like listeners to experience a nostalgic and peaceful antidote to the sometimes frenetic pace of the holiday season. Chicago singer-songwriter Alice Peacock is featured in a special vocal performance of The Holly and the Ivy, with new lyrics by Stryke accompanied by the traditional melody. A versatile artist, Stryke is also a talented commercial, film and television composer. Composing for commercials is easier than creating my own music, he says. In ads, the picture dictates much of the writing and the direction is clear. When I'm composing for myself, there are many more options, which requires more soul searching. Stryke finds that the two worlds provide a creative balance - the fast and furious pace of advertising complements the introspective and thoughtful process of making albums. Working with longtime friend and guitarist Sandy Torano at Scandal Music in Chicago, Stryke has written music for Anheuser-Busch, McDonalds, Capital One, and Nintendo, among others. He is a

contributing composer for The Oprah Winfrey Show and, with Torano, created the theme music for Oprah and Friends, Winfreys XM Satellite Radio channel. His music has been featured in numerous Super Bowl commercials, including USA Todays 2006 poll winner, Magic Fridge, and also in the popular Bud Light Real Men of Genius radio campaign. Stryke has collaborated with Academy Award-winning composer and singer Randy Newman and scored the movies In Check in 2001 and Merlot in 1998. A native of Grand Rapids, Michigan, Stryke moved to Chicago, where he earned a bachelors degree in music from Northwestern University in 1993. He has studied with jazz pianist Michael Kocour, noted composer and arranger Cliff Colnot, and New York-based jazz pianist Jim McNeely through a National Endowment for the Arts grant in 1994. Stryke resides on the north side of Chicago with his wife, Heather, and his two children, Xander and Sophie. (By Elizabeth Hinshaw Hall)

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