FEDERAL WORKS AGENCY
WORK PROJECTS ADMINISTRATION

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WPA MUSICIANS PRESENT CHRISTMAS PROGRAMS IN 37 STATES

In cooperation with county and municipal authorities, schools, music clubs, and church and civic groups, more than 5,000 instrumentalists, vocalists and teachers on the rolls of the WPA Music Program, together with thousands of children trained in the WPA classes, will bring Christmas music to 37 states and the District of Columbia this year.

In making this announcement, Mrs. Florence S. Kerr, Assistant Commissioner of the Work Projects Administration, said that throughout these programs "Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men" would be a theme songs wherever Project musicians participated in holiday festivities. Because Christmas Eve falls on Sunday, many of the cooperating chorus groups must appear in regular church services, so that plans for the "four-hour hymn of praise across the country" may be carried out only in part tonight at twilight.
"This will be the fourth season in which the Music Program either has initiated carol festivals or has taken part in community programs," said Mrs. Kerr. "During these years a formula for presenting Christmas music has been established, and from many sources I have heard suggestions for a unified Christmas music program that would span the nation.

"The Music Program is a part of the emergency work relief program, nearly all of its musicians coming from the ranks of the unemployed. They wish me to express to you their pleasure in being able to make this contribution to the cheer of the Yuletide season."

Suggestions for utilizing the resources of the WPA Music Program in the national Christmas festival were forwarded to the states by Dr. Earl Vincent Moore, National Director. While the whole familiar field of Christmas music will be covered, seven of the better known carols will be heard on all programs. Many of these programs will be given around the community Christmas trees at dusk tonight. Hundreds of carol sings, pageants, pantomimes and plays were given during the pre-Christmas week.

FROM NEWARK TO NEW MEXICO

One of the most colorful of the Christmas observances will take place tonight in Old Albuquerque, the Mexican community adjacent to Albuquerque, New Mexico, where "Los Pastores," a religious play of ancient origin, will be presented by children in the light of luminaries placed on the adobe rooftops. The version was adapted by a Project musician in collaboration with the Department of Hispanic Studies of the University of New Mexico.
Another presentation of "Los Pastores" had been scheduled for the patio of the old Palace of the Governors in Santa Fe, and here again the luminaries of brown paper sacks containing sand and lighted candles will be used for illumination. The soft light has a traditional place in the mystery plays which derive from Spain.

The Minnesota Music Project is devoting the entire month of December to the presentation of Christmas music. It provided a choir of brass instruments and a group of 35 singers from the Jubilee Chorus for the Christmas Choral Pageant presented yesterday in the Minnesota State Capitol. Eighteen hundred choristers took part.

Christmas Eve festivities of the Project in Newark, N. J., also took place last night when the opera chorus and the symphonic band were heard in a program on the steps of the city hall. The same program was heard earlier in the day at the Post Office building. The municipal loud-speaker system carried the carols throughout the downtown area.

Several hundred Project musicians will participate in the Holiday season in New England, and in Massachusetts alone 74 Christmas programs were booked between December 18 and January 1. There will be no programs on Christmas Day.

Last night (Saturday) there were special programs of seasonal music on Boston Common by the WPA Madrigal Singers and the Concert Band, following which, groups of Project musicians visited downtown hotels and sang carols. On December 18 the Springfield WPA Orchestra participated in a performance of Handel's "The Messiah" in the War Memorial Building. The Christmas schedule called for special
programs in Worcester, Fitchburg, Malden, Bristol, Taunton, Fall River, Brockton, Chicopee and Everett.

NEW YORK PROJECTS BROADCAST

New York City Project units and class groups will be heard in 44 programs during the holiday season, including broadcasts today over Station WNYC by the Negro Melody Singers and the Project's radio orchestra; a performance by the New York City Symphony Orchestra, Eugene Plotnikoff, conductor; and a twilight program by the WPA Symphonic Band under Giuseppe Creatore at the Brooklyn Museum, and a concert by the WPA Civic Orchestra in the American Museum. There also will be programs over Station WNYC and at Seamen's House tomorrow.

The Music Project in Connecticut scheduled more than 40 Christmas programs for Hartford, Bridgeport, and other cities, including a twilight carol sing in Waterbury and a band program in Stamford tonight.

Besides the big Newark program there will be Christmas programs by the Project musicians at Teaneck at twilight tonight where a brass and reed ensemble will play carols on the steps of the public library; and in Paterson, Farmingdale, Trenton, Camden, Woodbridge, West New York, Weehawken and Atlantic City.

In West Virginia the Symphony Orchestra and a chorus of 85 voices will be heard in the Huntington City Auditorium, and there will be other Christmas programs in Wheeling, Parkersburg, Arthurdale and Red House Farms.

In Pennsylvania all of the music units have been giving Christmas programs throughout the last week and there have been a number of special radio broadcasts of carols, noels and anthems.

The Scranton Orchestra participated yesterday in the annual party
sponsored by the Elks Club for the needy of that city, and in Wilkes-Barre the WFA musicians were heard at the Courthouse. Other programs have been given in Reading, Lancaster, Chester, Williamsport, Newcastle, Uniontown, Charleroi, Bloomsburg, Pottsville, Pittsburgh, and Philadelphia.

80 CONCERTS IN CINCINNATI

Project units throughout the Middle West began their programs of Christmas music early in December. In Cincinnati alone, since December 11, the Federal Orchestra, the three dance orchestras, and the vocal units appeared in 80 public programs. These culminated yesterday at noon with the annual Fountain Square carol sing in which the Project joined other community choirs and instrumental groups. The music was broadcast.

In Dayton, a series of programs in schools and radio stations was climaxed last night when Project musicians were assigned to lobbies of leading hotels to present carols. At twilight the two Project orchestras played accompaniments for the annual community carol sing on the Courthouse lawn.

In Toledo, the 51 members of the concert and two smaller orchestras took part in the traditional Christmas program of carols and plays at the Civic Auditorium on Thursday, and last night gave a radio program over WSPD. In the preceding week the Project musicians were heard in Christmas programs in the Medical Service Bureau of Toledo and in several neighboring towns. Project musicians also participated in Yuletide festivals in Cleveland, Columbus, Akron, Zanesville, Cambridge, and Coalton.

For the Music Project in Michigan the holiday period again
will be a season of intensified activity. The 94 members of the Federal Symphony Orchestra and the WPA Concert Band in Grand Rapids will be divided into a number of small units which will be dispatched by automobile to various sections of the city, so that the old noels and carols may greet the Christmas dawn. The Polish Dance Orchestra of 15 members will carry the Christmas music of that unfortunate country to the districts where their countrymen reside.

Heavy schedules have also been assigned to the eight instrumental units in Detroit, which include a Gypsy and a Tambouritza Ensemble. In the Upper Peninsula the WPA Bands of Calumet, Iron Mountain, Ironwood and Stambaugh will cooperate with established choruses and civic groups for the Holiday music festival.

CHICAGO OFFERS "MESSIAH"

In Illinois there will be Christmas performances of Handel's "The Messiah" by the Philharmonic Choir and the Jubilee Singers of Chicago, and by the Project chorus at Colp. Bookings by the Instrumental units are for the most part in hospitals, orphanages and other institutions, but special Christmas programs will be given in Rockford, Moline, Rock Island, Joliet, Forest Park, Decatur, Herrin, Benton, Peoria, and East St. Louis.

Christmas programs were started in Indiana on December 6, and approximately a hundred bookings had been scheduled for the Project instrumental units and the choruses trained by Project teachers. They were heard in public schools, hospitals and other institutions. Yesterday the Indianapolis Project Orchestra and several of the Mothers' Choruses took part in the annual Christmas song festival in City Hall. Other Christmas music was given in Kokomo, Terre Haute, South Bend, Evansville, Elwood and Fort Wayne.
In Oklahoma, Florida, North Carolina and Mississippi, carol festivals have been organized in statewide programs, and during recent weeks the more than 20,000 pupils in the Music Project classes have rehearsed noels, part-songs and cantatas for community performance.

The "Christmas Carol Tour," carried on by the Music Project since 1936, promises to become traditional in Oklahoma. From the 204 Project music centers the choirs and instrumental groups will move tonight and tomorrow through their communities, pausing before the homes of the ill, the shut-in, the aged and the poor, to sing music of the Yuletide. In rural areas the carolers are to be transported in trucks and hay-racks. Beginning at twilight the music will continue until the break of Christmas day.

In many of the Project centers there will be Christmas pantomimes for which the pupils have been in rehearsal since November. The WPA Symphony Orchestra of Oklahoma presented its Christmas program in Oklahoma City last Sunday, in cooperation with the Oklahoma Symphonic Choir and the YWCA dance-drama group. Underprivileged children were guests of the orchestra and the program included music from Humperdinck's opera "Hansel and Gretel," and a ballet interpretation of Anatole France's story, "The Juggler of Notre Dame."

SPIRITUALS IN THE SOUTH

Music Project pupils will participate in carol festivals at twilight tonight in many North Carolina communities including Winston-Salem, Tarboro, Waynesville, Rocky Mount, Elizabeth City, Greenville, New Bern, Richlands, Trinity, Charlotte, Hickory, Old Fort, Sylva, Mt. Airy, Brevard, Thomasville, Whiteville and Goldsboro.

In Asheville the Project took part in 15 Christmas programs during the week, and the festival culminated last night in a great
Carol Sing led by the instrumental unit.

Choruses of Negroes will sing, in addition to the old, familiar carols, four that originated with their race: "Go Tell it on de Mountain," "Mary, What You Gwinna Name that Baby?" "Heaven Bell Ring," and "Behold that Star!"

Throughout Mississippi, school district authorities and civic organizations will provide buses late today to transport the Project-trained carolers. In those communities in the South where the Hanging of the Greens marks the Yuletide festival, "Good King Wenceslas" will be added to the other carols.

More than 60 programs were scheduled in Florida for the holiday season by the Project orchestras, choruses and classes in music, and these do not include special Noel music by the many amateur bands and orchestras directed by Project teachers. On December 28 the WPA Symphony Orchestra of Florida, directed by John Bitter, will be heard in Jacksonville in a special Christmas concert.

Project bands and orchestras in Louisiana have given a series of special holiday programs in New Orleans in connection with the lighting of neighborhood Christmas trees, and today the musicians will be heard in three programs ushering in Christmas Eve. In Richmond and Staunton, Virginia, there also have been pre-holiday programs of Christmas music since December 11. Tonight and tomorrow, ensembles of brass instruments will broadcast Christmas music.

TEXAS TIPICA ORCHESTRAS

Texas Project concert and tipica orchestras will be heard in Noel programs at twilight tonight in Dallas, El Paso, Fort Worth and San Antonio, and Project teachers will direct carol sings in Corsicana and other smaller communities. In Dallas and Fort Worth, large groups
of choristers are to be heard with the orchestras, and in San Antonio
the Christmas Eve festival will be celebrated in historic Alamo Plaza.
As in New Mexico and Arizona, some of the music will derive from
Mexico and Spain.

The Project orchestras in Arizona, particularly the
Mexican groups, have a heavy holiday season under the sponsorship of
Trinity Cathedral in Phoenix, the American Legion, and the National
Guard. On Friday the orchestras were supplemented by a thousand
volunteer singers in an outdoor carol program in Phoenix, and today
they will play at the annual party for underprivileged children given
by Maricopa County.

In the Pacific Coast cities the Music Project will take a
prominent part in many of the carol festivals, cooperating with
municipal authorities and civic groups. Yuletide programs begun
December 20 in San Francisco will reach a climax tonight when the
Project's chorus will give a program in cooperation with the City Ad-
ministration in the War Memorial Opera House. On Friday night the
Symphony Orchestra and the San Francisco and Oakland choruses
were heard in a two-hour program in the Oakland Auditorium. During
the week the WPA Concert Band under Frederick Preston Search gave
special programs in the Civic Center. Other units have been heard
in hospitals and in institutions for the needy.

The WPA Orchestra of Sacramento accompanied a performance
of Handel's "Messiah" in the Civic Auditorium. The unit also was
heard in the same building earlier in the week, under the auspices
of the City Government. The Federal Orchestra of San Jose was heard
in Christmas programs during the preceding week in several sections
of the city.