

## **Christmas Plain and Simple III**

**By**

**Michele McLaughlin**

**Written by**

**Steve Sheppard**

The skills of creating a new feel with a fresh and exciting energy about a Christmas album is a task unto itself, after all, they're not your songs and they have been done a thousand's times over. If you need any advice I recommend asking pianist **Michele McLaughlin** how it's done, because on **Christmas Plain and Simple III**, her latest release, she has performed a musical miracle and each and every arrangement has been lovingly created and gift wrapped with the lushest of performances.

The classics are all here, and include **We Wish You A Merry Christmas**, **Good King Wenceslas** and **The Holly and The Ivy**. However McLaughlin has brought such a skill set to this release its stunning, the arrangement of **Jingle Bells** for one, this legendary piece has now been given a heart and flows with both happiness and love like never before.

Renditions of **In the Bleak Midwinter** and **O Come All Ye Faithful** have all been given a fresh lease of life, and musically sparkle. While **Up On The Housetop** glistens with glee and memory, my personal favourite was the French carol, **Sing We Now Of Christmas**, which for me was outstanding, creating such an emotive mood for this time of year.

**Michele McLaughlin** deserves a standing ovation for creating this album of time worn pieces, and breathing such a beautiful loving light of perfection into each and every one of them. I also need to add that finishing with the track **Peace**, was a stroke of musical mastery, clearly emphasising an intelligent mind as well as a magnificent performer on the piano.

**Christmas Plain and Simple III** is the perfect musical present this holiday season.