

04.16.14

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VINCE GUARALDI: A CHARLIE BROWN CHRISTMAS

Inside the National Recording Registry

Friday, December 14, 2012

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(Fantasy Records)

The soundtrack of the holidays is lousy with annoying songs about sleigh rides and snowmen, and beautiful old carols done up as treacly as possible. One of the saving graces this time of year is the music from *A Charlie Brown Christmas*, written by Vince Guaraldi.

Guaraldi's "Linus and Lucy" theme became identified forever with the *Peanuts* gang and their creator, Charles Schulz. Schulz described how Guaraldi "had captured something about the lilting quality of the kids," remembers Jean Schulz, his widow. "The way they walk and bounce a little bit — he captured that in his music." The theme is one of the most familiar pieces in jazz, though its composer, who died in his 40s, was never widely known outside the West Coast jazz scene.

A Charlie Brown Christmas was chosen for preservation in 2012 in the Library of Congress' [National Recording Registry](#). Its story is told by Jean Schulz; Jerry Granelli, the drummer who played with Guaraldi; and Lee Mendelsohn, the producer who worked closely with Schulz on the Christmas special and later *Peanuts* programs.

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More *Peanuts* on Studio 360:



You're a Complicated Man, Charlie Brown

Kurt talks with Charles Schulz's biographer David Michaelis about how America's most beloved comic strip made "depressed" a household word.



Aha Moment: Peanuts in Panama

Victoria de Puy and her daughter Geraldine read *Peanuts* in Panama City, and the comic strip taught them about the United States — but were there really so many

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