

**BRETT KROEGER**  
**CHRISTOPHER DENNY**



**SATURDAY, MAY 23, 2015**  
**4:00 P.M.**  
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## **BRETT KROEGER, SOPRANO**

With Troupers, she sang the role of Edith for the company's April 2014 production of *Pirates of Penzance* and was Gretchen in Victor Herbert's *The Red Mill* in 2013. She performed with the Taconic Opera in its 2014 premier production of the Dan Montez oratorio, *Jonah* and was the featured vocalist at La Fenice in Venice, Italy, for Hebrew University's European conference on "The Song of Songs." In New York, she has sung the roles of Flora and Annina in *La Traviata* (LDTS Temple, Bill Schuman Presents); Tisbe in *Cenerentola* and Micaela in *Carmen* (New York Consulate of Argentina). For the Manhattan Opera Repertory Company, she performed Tatiana in *Eugene Onegin* and Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte*, Sandman/Dewfairy in *Hansel and Gretel*, and Marguerite in *Faust*. She was a resident artist with Dicapo Opera. Other credits include solo performances in the Absolute Ensemble's U.S. premier of Daniel Schnyder's *Casanova* and in the world premier of Robert Cuckson's "Cantata on Acadian Texts" with the Columbia University Bach Society. She has given solo recitals during summer festivals throughout Tuscany and at the Istituto di Cultura in New York City. She sang in concerts for the Richard Tucker Foundation, at Christ's and St. Stephen's Episcopal Church and at Concordia College in New York. She has a master's degree in vocal performance from the Mannes College of Music, and received her bachelor's degree in vocal performance from Lawrence University. She studies with Bill Schuman.

## **CHRISTOPHER DENNY, PIANIST**

Christopher Denny has served as musical director, arranger and pianist for such theater, cabaret and opera luminaries as Julie Wilson, Karen Mason, Brent Barrett, Gregg Edelman, Rodney Gilfry, David Campbell, David Burnham, Lauren Bacall, Dorothy Loudon, Tammy Grimes, Judy Kaye, Teri Ralston, Ron Raines, Jeff Harnar, Steven Brinberg and Tommy Femia, earning, in the process, two Back Stage Bistro Awards and four Manhattan Association of Cabarets and Clubs (MAC) Awards for Outstanding Musical Direction. His career has taken him to virtually all of the major rooms in New York and throughout the country, notably including Carnegie Hall, where he performed his own arrangements with Skitch Henderson and the New York Pops, as well as to Barcelona's great opera house, the Gran Teatre del Liceu; to Australia, Italy, Switzerland, Paris, and London's West End. Film work includes having produced the recording sessions of Placido Domingo for Baz Luhrmann's Oscar-winning musical film, "Moulin Rouge". Favorite New York theatrical credits include dance arrangements for Josh Rhodes' "All Singing, All Dancing"; musical direction for "The Songs of Kurt Weill", starring Kitty Carlisle Hart and Paula Lawrence, and for Joshua and Nedda Logan's musical memoir, "I Remember It Well"; and assisting Agnes de Mille in preparing the gala dance concert, "Agnes de Mille and Friends", at the Shubert Theater. As a vocal coach, he has worked with many promising newcomers and well-established stars, including Boyd Gaines, John Cameron Mitchell, Ethan Hawke, Melissa Errico, Anthony Rapp, T.R. Knight, Jack Noseworthy, Austin Pendleton and many others. He has recorded some thirty CDs.

## ABOUT "OVER THERE: GREATEST HITS OF THE GREAT WAR"

We purposely put the songs alphabetically so that you don't spend your evening stuck in the program. We encourage you to enjoy these notes after the performance.

Chris and I divided the program into Send-off Songs, Soldier Songs, the Christmas Truce, Songs of Longing and Loss, Songs to Keep the Home Fires Burning, Novelty Songs and Welcome Home Songs. We have tried to create a musical story line of the events of World War I to help bring you back to this time in history before popular radio emerged after the war. (The first radio news program was broadcast on August 31<sup>st</sup>, 1920, in Detroit and regular entertainment programming didn't begin until 1922.) So it was record and sheet music sales, not broadcast playlists, that made many of the songs in tonight's program hits.

The Send-off songs are a perfect example of how music became a propaganda tool, both to rev up the troops and to give the families at home a brave face to hide behind as they sent their loved ones off to war. The Trench songs, written by the soldiers themselves, tend to be more personal. Almost every division had its own entertainment troop replete with marching band. These songs played an important role in staving off boredom and boosting morale.

As Gerald Browne has poignantly written of the songs of war: "Since they are only remembered from the renderings by the singers it follows that the lyrics changed frequently. They are the songs of the lower ranks evoked under circumstances of abuse, humiliation, strict discipline and harsh punishment and whose group composition was constantly changing due to postings to other units' promotions and replacements. They are the songs of men who lived under a high incidence of abuse, injuries and death. They are the songs of men who had no power; men who had no choice but to embrace the possibility of death or severe injury when ordered. The men sang about their hopes, miseries and fears more than anything else. These miseries can be noted from the songs in the booklet; they are the likelihood of violent death, mud, bullying NCOs, leave that was rarely given, lack of sleep, separation from wives, sweethearts and families and the lack of female company. In these songs there is no bravado, little boasting but a great deal of humor, and poking of fun at the depressing and ludicrous discipline of some service life."

The songs that kept hope alive at home often seem to focus on introspection and at times on the weather as a means of letting people drift off from their worries and waiting. The welcome home songs are full of joy and relief, often seasoned with a dose of humor.

We hope you enjoy the show.

Brett Kroeger

## SEND OFF SONGS

### **After You've Gone** #2 in 1918 and #1 in 1919

It has been a hit ever since. Written in 1918 with words by Henry Creamer and music by Turner Layton, its early success came with the rendition of Henry Burr and Albert Campbell in 1918 and Marion Harris the following year. Harris' recording held onto the top of the charts for three weeks.

### **Danny Boy** #5 in 1918

This 1913 adaptation of the traditional Irish song known as "Londonderry Air of 1855" is near the top of the list of the 100 most recorded songs from the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

### **Goodbye Broadway, Hello France** #1 in 1917

It combines a traditional march with barbershop quartet-style singing. The song was introduced in the stage musical, *The Passing Show*, of 1917 at New York's Winter Garden.

### **It's a Long, Long Way to Tipperary** (1912)

Words and music by Jack Judge and Harry Williams, it was written as a sentimental love ballad for the British music halls in 1912 but didn't become popular in America until the early days of the war, when it was transformed into one of the war's most familiar marching songs. It was later featured in the films *For Me and My Gal*, (1942) *Wait Till the Sun Shines, Nellie* (1952); and *What Price Glory?* (1952).

### **Keep the Home Fires Burning** (1914)

Written by Ivor Novello, a 21-year-old Welsh composer and actor who became one of the most popular British entertainers of the first half of the 20th century. This was his first big hit, appearing as it did in 1914 and expressing the feelings of so many war-torn families. In half an hour, Novello composed the music for the song to a lyric by the American Lena Guilbert-Ford. The song was hugely popular and made Novello rich and famous. He avoided enlistment until June 1916, when he reported to a Royal Navy Air Service training depot as a probationary flight sub-lieutenant. After twice crashing an airplane, he was moved to the Air Ministry office to do clerical work.

### **Pack Up Your Troubles in Your Old Kit Bag and Smile, Smile, Smile.**

#1 in 1917 for two years. Brothers George and Felix Powell wrote this song and entered it into a competition announced by NY publishers Francis, Day and Hunter, who offered a prize of 100 guineas for a marching song for the troops. While America observed the War from the sidelines, this song helped arouse sympathy for the Allies. When America finally entered the war in the spring of 1917, this song was an instant hit.

## SOLDIER SONGS/TRENCH AND NOVELTY SONGS

### **After the War is Over** (1918)

By composer Harry Andrieu and lyricist Andrew B Sterling, it's a celebratory song anticipating that American soldiers will end the war and return home, with allusions to General Pershing and the Second Battle of the Marne, which resulted in a decisive Allied victory.

### **Bing Bang Bing 'Em on the Rhine** (1918) #2 in 1918

It took composer Jack Mahoney 7 years to place his first song and earn \$10 for it. "The Tulip and the Rose" brought him \$800. This one was his war novelty song and it was #2 on the patriot list of vocal hits in the fall of 1918.

### **Farewell of Slavianka** (1915)

This is a Russian patriotic march written by composer Vasily Agapkin in honor of the Bulgarian women who went with their husbands in the First Balkan War. In the summer of 1915, it was released as a gramophone single in Kiev. The melody became popular in Russia and adjoining countries as it accompanied Russian soldiers to battle.

### **Le Regiment de Sambre et Meuse** (1870)

This is a French song and military march by Robert Planquette and Paul Cezano, who wrote the original poem in 1870 in the aftermath of the Franco-Prussian War. The song became the official march of the Royal 22<sup>nd</sup> Canadian regiment until 1935. It's a favorite of marching bands at American football games.

### **Mademoiselle from Armentieres aka Hinky Dinky Parlay Voo** (1870-1914)

The tune was believed to have been popular in the French army in the 1830s. The original words recalled the encounter of an innkeeper's daughter and two German officers. The tune again was popular during the Franco-Prussian war of 1870 and again in 1914 with "The Old Contemptibles." Emperor Wilhelm II Germany reportedly issued an order on August 19, 1914 to "exterminate... the treacherous English and walk over General French's contemptible little army." Survivors of the regular army dubbed themselves, "The Old Contemptibles." (No evidence of any such order from the *Kaiser* was ever found.)

### **Memories**

Lyrics by Gus Kahn and music by Egbert Van Alstyne. It is Gus Kahn's first hit. He collaborated with several composers over the next 25 years to become one of the most successful lyricists of all time. Some of his most popular songs are "Dream a little Dream" "It Had to Be You," "Makin' Whoopee," and "Yes Sir, That's My Baby," to name a few.

### **Oh How I Hate to Get Up in the Morning** #1 in 1918

This was part of an all-soldier musical *Yip, Yip, Yaphank* that Irving Berlin wrote and performed in while he was stationed at Camp Upton in Long Island, NY. Berlin donated all of the royalties from this song to the Army Emergency Relief fund.

### **Oh, What a Lovely War** (1917)

By J.P. Long and Maurice Scott, this was part of music hall star and male impersonator Ella Shields' repertoire. Plum & apple jam was the most common flavor found in the trenches. Empty tins became "jam pot bombs" as soldiers packed the tins with shredded gun wadding and nails. A detonator was added and the tin sealed with clay. Until a successful "Mills #5" grenade appeared in February 1915 and was sent to France in March on trial, a factory called Roburite & Ammonal Ltd. produced the jam tin grenades.

## THE CHRISTMAS TRUCE

**Stille Nacht** The Christmas truce is a term used to describe a series of unofficial cease-fires that occurred along the Western Front during Christmas 1914. The war had been raging for several months but German and Allied soldiers stepped out of their trenches, shook hands and agreed a truce so the dead could be buried. The soldiers used that truce to chat with one another and some claim even play a football match. Similar events have occurred in other conflicts throughout history but never on the scale of the first Christmas truce.

## SONGS OF LONGING AND LOSS

### **Roses of Picardy** (1916) #3 in 1918

A British import that became popular in the U.S. In 1916 the BEF had moved into the **Picardy** region of France. The Battle of the Somme River dominated military activity for the year. Allied forces attempted to break through the German lines along a 25 miles front north and south of the river in northern France. After the war a final tally counted 419,654 British and 204,253 French killed, wounded, or taken prisoner. Some 146,431 of the 623,907 total casualties were either killed or missing.

### **There's a Long, Long Trail** (1913)

The lyrics were by Stoddard King and the music by Alonzo "Zo" Elliott, both seniors at Yale. In Elliott's own words to Marc Drogin before his death in 1964, he created the music as an idle pursuit one day in his dorm room at Yale in 1913. King walked in, liked the music and suggested a first line. Elliott sang out the second, and so they went through the lyrics. And they performed it -- with trepidation -- before the fraternity that evening. The interview was published in the *New Haven Register* and later reprinted in *Yankee* magazine.

### **I'm Always Chasing Rainbows** #1 in 1918

"I'm Always Chasing Rainbows" has lyrics by Joseph McCarthy and although the music is credited to Harry Carroll, it is actually adapted from Frederic Chopin's *Fantaisie-Improvisation* in C# minor. It was introduced in the Broadway show, *Oh Look!*, which opened in March 1918.

## TO KEEP THE HOME FIRES BURNING

### **If He Can Fight Like He Can Love, Good night, Germany** (1918)

Music by George W. Meyer, this song was written in 1918. Despite its salacious references to park benches and Morris chairs, this song is another in a long line of lyrics that solicits denial from the American public. The singer here is certain that her beau will end the war quickly if he applies his skills to war like he has applied them to her honor ("*He's a bear in any Morris chair*").

### **My Barney Lies Over the Ocean**

Written in 1919 by the lyricist duo Sam Lewis and Joe Young, (they also wrote "How you Gonna Keep 'em Down on the Farm"), the music is by Bert Grant. This team also produced standards such as "Dinah," "Baby Blue," "Hello Central," and "Give Me No Man's Land." Both men have been inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame.

### **Till the Clouds Roll By** #1 1917

Civilians struggled to keep the home fires burning and hope alive. In London the war was both far and near and those at home also had to worry about Zeppelin attacks and how they would bring in the harvest with their farm workers – even their horses – gone off to war. Both the news and the lack of news dampened spirits. It's not surprising that the metaphors of rain and rainbows captured the prevailing mood. Jerome Kern composed "Till the Clouds Roll By" for the musical *Oh Boy!* (1917). Thirty years later the song was still popular enough to become the title for Kern's screen biography, (1945). PG Wodehouse wrote the lyrics.

## WELCOME HOME SONGS

### **E-Yip-Yow Yankee Boys** (1919)

Composer Al W Brown and lyricist Bob F Sear. It's considered "Navy-themed" music because of the sailor/warships cover design of the sheet music.

### **How Ya Gonna Keep 'Em Down on the Farm?** (1919)

"How Ya Gonna Keep 'Em Down On The Farm?" is the question Ruben, an atypically wise rural type, asks his wife with some winking, foolery, and innuendo written in, but the question is real. After their encounters with the less constricted morality of war-time Europe, the freedom of an army marching anywhere they wish, and the cultural awakening certain to have occurred in places like "Paree" after the armistice, how could rural America compete with the excitement of "Jazzin' Around?"

### **Welcome Home Laddie Boy** (1918)

Composer Gus Edwards and lyricist Will Cobb. Edwards produced a popular annual revue that toured the country and after the Armistice, he renamed it the "Welcome Home Revue" and soon after, "Welcome Home Martial Revue."

### **Over There** (1917) "the plumpest plum"

Sold over 2 million copies of the sheet music and 1 million records by the end of 1918. With words and music by George M Cohan, this song was written in 1917 just a day after President Woodrow Wilson signed a declaration of War against Germany. Cohan earned \$25,000 for it. As the *Boston Sunday Post* reported in March of 1918, with "Over There," Cohan "plucked the plumpest plum." The song was originally featured in the musical *Zig Zag* and later revived for Cohan's musical biography, *George M* (1968).