

Script for a short 25 Minute Concert

## Sabre and Spurs

Good morning ladies and Gentlemen. We just performed the march Sabre and Spurs written by LT John Phillip Sousa one hundred years ago in 1918 for the 311th Cavalry of the United States Army. When it was written, the Cavalry was preparing to fight in WWI. In fact, this year marks the centennial anniversary of the end of WWI. The noise of war fell silent at 11 am on 11 November 1918 when an armistice was declared between the Allied Nations and Germany. While Armistice Day became a commemorative day the following year, the USA did not recognize it as a federal holiday until 1938. Then, in the aftermath of World War II and the Korean War, Armistice Day became legally known as Veterans Day.

Today we are here to perform a commemorative concert to WWI both to celebrate the beginnings of Veteran's Day and express our appreciation to all of those veterans who have come before us. Military service, both during times of war and peace, has a way of intensifying the human experience through love, friendship, separation from families, tragedy, patriotism, and the incredible and yet costly gift of freedom from those who give the final measure of devotion to their ideals and country; this experience bonds veterans together throughout time.

What better way to express our bonds as Veterans than through music, as music is the eternal universal language. During WWI, and as it still does today, music reflected and shaped attitudes to the conflict and to its memory. Music inspired the troupes, rallied patriotic support back home, celebrated victory and defeat, and musical memorials ultimately reflected the idea that no one wins in war.

So next we are going to perform a medley of WWI songs which were there to comfort the soldiers, sailors and marines in the training camps, on the ships, and in trenches when they were missing home and facing the terrors of war. Songs in this medley include "It's a Long Way to Tipperary" and "Pack Up Your Troubles in Your Old Kit Bag." Here is WWI Medley, arranged by Jari Villanueva.

## WWI Medley

The Library of Congress Music Division has cataloged and scanned 14,000 unique titles of World War I sheet music, the bulk of which was published between 1917-18. This collection represents the highest production of popular music in history which is telling of how important music was socially during the war,

Today we will perform two of these songs for you. The first is titled "the Parting Sailor Boy's Vow" and tells the story of a mother wishing her son luck as he shipped off to war while the son expresses his fear of not returning. The second song is titled "The Navy Will Bring Them Back." This song was written to incite support for the US Navy's role during the war which was primarily as a convoy for the troupes. The lyrics say

"On the sea, we've other heroes too. On the sea, our Sailor boys in blue. With their swift Destroyers, Submarine annoyers, they've been tried and true! Now this war is over "over there" we'll have to take our hats off right to Jack. Though the army is the clover, 'Twas the Navy took them over and the Navy will bring them back."

Here are selections from my own arrangement, the 1918 Pop Song Suite.

## 1918 Suite

Our final selection today was written as a memorial by the French composer Maurice Ravel, who was an ambulance driver in Verdun, France during the war. Having seen his own share of devastation from the conflict, Ravel wrote this piece originally for piano and each of the six movements was dedicated to a deceased friend. Here are Rigaudon and Tocatta from *Le Tombeau de Couperin*, arranged by Chris Van Hof.

### **Ravel *Le Tombeau de Couperin***