

*Benefit Concert for the Salem
Music Academy*

**Songs of Service to our
Country**

Stephen Swanson, *baritone*
David Gompper, *piano*
Elizabeth Johnson, *piccolo*

**Salem Covenant Church
Sunday, July 2, 2006
4:00 pm**

*Salem Covenant Church, 2655 5th Street NW, New
Brighton, MN, 651-633-9615*

**BENEFIT CONCERT
FOR THE SALEM MUSIC
ACADEMY**

Stephen Swanson,
baritone
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SUNDAY, JULY 2, 2006 • 4 p.m. •
SALEM COVENANT CHURCH

PROGRAM

Songs of Service to our Country

**Battle Hymn of the
Republic**

William Steffe (ca. 1852)

(As published by Oliver Ditson & Co., Boston, 1890)

Three Songs of the War

Charles Ives (1874-1954)

In Flanders Fields

He is there!

Elizabeth Johnson, piccolo

Tom Sails Away

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Voices from World War II

Gene Scheer (b. 1918)

Holding Each Other (Oswego,
New York)

arr. Lee Musiker

The German U-Boat Captain (Merchant Marine Ship, Gulf
of Oman)

At Howard Hawks' House (Beverly Hills, California)

Omaha Beach (Normandy)

Morrison Shelter (London)

INTERMISSION

So Long, Mom (A Song for World War III) (<i>That Was the Year That Was</i>)	Tom Lehrer (b. 1928)
The Ostrich (<i>The Bestiary of Flanders and Swann</i>)	Donald Swann (1923-1994)
The Wild West Is Where I Want to Be (<i>Songs by Tom Lehrer</i>)	Tom Lehrer
Merry Little Minuet (<i>John Murray Anderson 's Almanac</i>)	Sheldon Harnick (b. 1924)

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And the Band Played Waltzing Matilda Masters of War	Eric Bogle (b. 1944)/arr. David Gompper
Jimmy Newman	Bob Dylan (b. 1941)/arr. David Gompper
Mrs. Bixby's Sons	Tom Paxton (b. 1937)/arr. David Gompper
	David Gompper (b. 1954)

Events in my personal life and in our national life have driven me to present this program. First of all, my son Lars, upon completion of his undergraduate studies, chose a career in U. S. Air Force. He is a Tactical Air Command and Control Specialist embedded with the 101st Airborne Division of the U.S. Army and has been serving in Iraq since March. Now that it is my child who is in the very real position of risking his life in the service of his country, I see our government's use of military power in a very personal way. Second, I have been very moved by my sister-in-law's stories of how her husband, an Air Force nose gunner in World War II, suffered recurring

nightmares, often weeping in his sleep or waking up screaming throughout the fifty years of his life after leaving the military. Third, it is my strong conviction that the sacrifices our men and women in uniform make in defense of our country are very much a national loss and that, although we as a nation cannot feel the personal grief that loved ones experience, we owe it to our soldiers to attempt to realize the enormity of their sacrifices of life, limb, mind, and soul.

This recital is very different from anything that I have attempted before. My primary consideration for choosing these songs was their texts rather than their settings. The fervent nationalistic patriotism of World War I is represented by the Ives songs. The Scheer songs present intimate personal glimpses into World War II. The satirical songs in the second half of the program show the dark humor generated by the fear of nuclear annihilation that accompanied the Cold War. The Vietnam-era protest songs demonstrate a generation's disillusionment with indiscriminate use of military power. For this recital, David Gompper set to music a letter of condolence written by Abraham Lincoln in which the President expresses his depth of feeling for each individual sacrifice of the hundreds of thousands who died in our Civil War.

I am aware that the cabaret and folk songs pose special challenges for a classically trained singer. However, the strength of the emotions expressed by the texts and the simple directness of their melodies demand their inclusion in this program. If in some small way this recital can bring the personal reality of warfare closer to you, it will have served its purpose.

Stephen Swanson

PROGRAM NOTES

THE COMPOSERS AND PERFORMERS – AND THE MILITARY

Accompanying her husband, a pioneer of the Sanitary Commission, to a review of troops near Washington in 1861, **Julia Ward Howe** was inspired to write the poem *Battle Hymn of the Republic* to a popular tune attributed to **William Steffe**. Mrs. Howe later wrote: "I could not leave my nursery to follow the march of our armies... Something seemed to say to me, 'You would be glad to serve, but you cannot help anyone; you have nothing to give, and there is nothing for you to do.' Yet, because of my sincere desire, a word was given to me to say, which did strengthen the hearts of those who fought in the field and of those who languished in the prison."

In 1918 **Charles Ives'** application for a position with the YMCA Ambulance Corps was rejected, presumably for medical reasons. The life insurance company he owned, however, sold liberty bonds which were issued by the U. S. Treasury to provide economic assistance to the Allied Powers.

Although **Gene Scheer** did not serve in the military, he listened "for hours to the stories of veterans during the 50th anniversary of D-Day" in preparation for writing *Voices from World War II*.

During the summer of 1952, **Tom Lehrer** worked as a researcher at the Atomic Energy Commission's scientific laboratory in Los Alamos, New Mexico. In 1955 he was inducted into the U. S. Army and worked for the National Security Agency. He was honorably discharged two years later.

Lyricist **Michael Flanders** served on a destroyer on convoy to Russia and Malta that was torpedoed off Africa. Composer **Donald Swann**, a conscientious objector, served

with the Friends Ambulance Unit in Egypt, Palestine, and Greece.

Drafted into the Army in 1943, **Sheldon Harnick** served as a technician in the Signal Corps at Robins Field. He began performing as a violinist with the base Special Service Group. "I...also played a few songs I'd written that were observations about...army life...Sometimes lines I didn't realize were funny would cause great laughter. They were just things that disturbed me, and I would put them into lyric form."

Intended as an anti-Vietnam War song, **Eric Bogle's** *And the Band Played Waltzing Matilda* is Australia's most recorded song. Bogle received the Australian Peace Award to commemorate the International Year of Peace (1986). He was asked by the Department of Veteran Affairs in 1997 to write a song (*The Gift of Years*) for the occasion of the return of the surviving Anzacs to Gallipoli.

In the early 1960s, **Bob Dylan** became an icon of songs of social protest. The inspiration for *Masters of War* came from his concern about the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Tom Paxton enlisted in the Army in the fall of 1959. After basic training at Fort Riley, he was stationed at the Army Information School. He composed the lyrics to his first hit song during typing class at Fort Dix.

A high school senior in 1972, **David Gompper** drew the number 33 in the draft lottery. Before he could be called up, the Department of Defense announced the end of the military draft and within a year all American troops had been withdrawn from Vietnam.

Because of a congenital visual disability, **Stephen Swanson** was assigned to Class 1-Y in the Selective Service System and was permanently exempted from military service.

THE ACRONYMS, PEOPLE, AND PLACE NAMES

Ives, THREE SONGS OF THE WAR

In Flanders Fields (Poem by John McCrae)

- **Flanders Field** is a United States military cemetery in Belgium where 368 soldiers who died in World War I are buried.

He Is There!

- The Grand Army of the Republic (1866-1956), was a patriotic organization composed of Union veterans of the Civil War. The **G.A.R.** instituted the observance of Memorial Day in 1868.

- In World War I, the Allied and Associated Powers (the **Allies**) consisted of 28 nations, including Britain, France, Russia, Italy, and the United States.

Scheer, VOICES FROM WORLD WAR II

The German U-Boat Captain (Merchant Marine Ship, Gulf of Oman)

- A **U-Boat**, that is, "Unterseeboot" is a German submarine.
- The U.S. **Merchant Marine** is a privately owned commercial shipping fleet, whose ships transport troops and supplies to overseas military bases.
- One of the world's most important strategic waterways, the **Gulf of Oman** is the northwestern arm of the Arabian Sea and is bounded on the north by Iran.

At Howard Hawks' House (Beverly Hills, California)

- Director, writer, and producer **Howard Hawks** introduced the team of Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall to movie-goers in 1944.
- **Evelyn Keyes** played Suellen O'Hara in *Gone With the Wind*.
- A sex symbol of the 1940s, Hollywood star **Hedy Lamarr** created the persona of the elegant and enigmatic dark-haired beauty.

Omaha Beach (Normandy)

- On D-Day, June 6, 1944, Allied troops crossed the English Channel, landing on the beaches of German-held **Normandy** in France. At the landing site code-named **Omaha Beach**, U.S. troops came under heavy fire and barely managed to stay ashore.
- Amphibious landing craft that were used in transporting fully armed troops, light tanks, field artillery, and other mechanized equipment and supplies were designed by Higgins Industries. The use of **Higgins boats** made the D-Day landings at Normandy possible.

Morrison Shelter (London)

- Because most of the injuries in an air raid are caused not by direct hits by bombs but by flying fragments of debris or by bits of shells, the British government began issuing **Morrison Shelters** in March 1941. Named after the Home Secretary, Herbert Morrison, the shelters were made of very heavy steel and could be put in the living room and used as a table. One wire side lifted up for people to crawl underneath and get inside. Morrison table shelters were fairly large and provided sleeping space for two or three people.

- Josiah Spode perfected blue underglaze printing and developed the formula for bone china. **Fine Spode china cups** have been manufactured since 1770.

Lehrer, SO LONG, MOM (A SONG FOR WORLD WAR III)

- The **Huntley-Brinkley** Report was television's highest-rated news program in 1958. Having two anchors, Chet Huntley in New York and David Brinkley in Washington, reporting "**contrapuntally**" was a new concept in television broadcasting.
- **Armageddon** is the battlefield described in the Bible where the ultimate battle between good and evil will take place.

Flanders and Swann, THE OSTRICH

- The **ostrich**, the world's largest living bird, is native to the deserts and plains of Africa. It appears to **bury its head in the sand** while it eats off the ground and also when the male bird scrapes a shallow hole in the sand in which the female can lay her eggs.
- On February 13, 1960, France detonated its first atomic bomb at its **nuclear testing ground** in the **Sahara** Desert at Reggane, Algeria.

Lehrer, THE WILD WEST IS WHERE I WANT TO BE

- The Atomic Energy Commission (**A.E.C.**), 1946-1975, was a civilian agency of the United States government established to administer and regulate the production and use of atomic power.
- **BVD**, one of the most famous brands of men's underwear, was founded in 1876 by Messrs. Bradley, Voorhees and Day.
- When an atomic bomb explodes, a fireball creates shock and heat waves that destroy structures in the immediate vicinity of

the blast. The rising fireball sucks up debris to form a **mushroom cloud**.

- The Federal Bureau of Investigation (**F.B.I.**), a division of the U.S. Department of Justice, is charged with investigating violations of most federal criminal laws and with protecting the United States from foreign intelligence and terrorist activities.

Bogle, AND THE BAND PLAYED WALTZING MATILDA

- Australia's longest river, the Murray and its tributaries drain an area larger than that of Texas, Oklahoma, and Louisiana combined. **The Murray's green basin** is Australia's most important agricultural region. The dry, sparsely populated interior of Australia is known as the **outback**.

- To go **waltzing Matilda** is to rove the outback carrying a knapsack.

- On April 25, 1915, Anzac (Australian and New Zealand Army Corps) troops, landed on the beach of the **Gallipoli** Peninsula in northwest Turkey. Because the forces of the Ottoman Empire held the ridge behind the beach, a stalemate developed. A truce was arranged for a burial of the dead on May 24, after which fighting resumed. In August, the Allies attempted a second invasion at **Suvla Bay** to the north, then, in December, began to evacuate their troops. Virtually half of the soldiers who fought on each side died, and military historians consider the Gallipoli Campaign to be the worst military blunder of World War I.

- **Johnny Turk** is the slang name used for Turkish soldiers of the Central Powers, a coalition of the German and Austro-Hungarian empires, Bulgaria, and the Ottoman Empire.

- **Circular Quay** is the boat landing dock in Sydney.

- The annual Anzac Day **parade** on April 25 commemorates the men who fought at Gallipoli. The last known survivor died May 16, 2002, at the age of 103.

- A **billabong** is a standing pool of water left after a flooded river recedes.

Dylan, MASTERS OF WAR

- **Judas** Iscariot, the disciple who for 30 pieces of silver betrayed **Jesus** Christ, died in AD 28.

Gompper, MRS. BIXBY'S SONS

- This song is the text of a letter written by **Abraham Lincoln**, 16th President of the United States, to the widow Lidia P. **Bixby**, who claimed that all five of her sons died in the Civil War. As a message of condolence, this letter is generally considered unsurpassed.

STEPHEN SWANSON has appeared in 91 roles in operas, operettas and musicals. Mr. Swanson has sung on German, Dutch, and Austrian radio broadcasts and has been a featured soloist in the Berliner Festwochen, Assisi Festa Musica Pro, and Dresdner Tage der zeitgenössischen Musik. Mr. Swanson has recorded Mendelssohn's *St. Paul* and Ullmann's *Der Kaiser von Atlantis*. He has an extensive concert repertoire ranging from Baroque to avant-garde and has performed with many renowned conductors including Sir Georg Solti, Rafael Frübeck de Burgos, Margaret Hillis, and Vance George.

Born in Minneapolis, Mr. Swanson earned his B.M. from North Park College, Chicago, and M.M. from Northwestern University. In 1971 he had his professional debut in Chicago and in New York's Carnegie Hall with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in Arnold Schoenberg's *Moses and Aaron*. In 1975 he received a scholarship to study at the International Opera Studio in Zurich, Switzerland, and remained in Europe performing in opera houses there until 1994. Currently, Mr. Swanson is Professor of Music at The University of Iowa.

DAVID GOMPPER grew up in New York and California. He studied at the Royal College of Music in London with Jeremy Dale Roberts, Humphrey Searle and Phyllis Sellick. After teaching in Nigeria, he received his doctorate at the University of Michigan, taught at the University of Texas, Arlington, and since 1991 has been Professor of Composition and Director of the Center for New Music at the University of Iowa. During the 2002-03 academic year he lived in Moscow as a Fulbright Scholar, teaching, performing and conducting at the Moscow Conservatory.

Gompper is active as a pianist and composer. Recently, he completed a CD recording of contemporary American music with the Austrian violinist, Wolfgang David. They have performed in Moscow, the U.S. and Vienna, and will return to Moscow next month to perform

a new violin and piano work called *Music in the Glenn* during "Moscow Autumn" at the Union of Composers. They will perform the same program here on November 9th.

Gompper's compositions are heard throughout the U.S. and Europe. His *Transitus* was premiered at Carnegie Hall in 1992, and he has recently premiered several of his compositions at the Wigmore Hall in London: *Hommage à W. A. (William Albright)* in October 2001 and *Shades of Love*, a song cycle on the poetry of C. Cavafy in September 2003. He is currently completing a violin concerto.

Flutist **ELIZABETH JOHNSON**