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SOUNDTRACK OF THE AMERICAN SOLDIER

THE UNITED STATES ARMY FIELD BAND
SOLDIERS' CHORUS

COL. JIM R. KEENE CONDUCTOR



LETTER FROM THE COMMANDER

A perfect confluence of events led to this recording. Through the voices of The United States Army Field Band and Soldiers' Chorus, some of the most talented composers in Hollywood—composers like Laura Karpman, Joshua Moshier, and Jeff Beal—created new works dedicated to our military servants, and a profound story emerged. The members of The U.S. Army Field Band and Soldiers' Chorus spent an unforgettable week at Skywalker Sound, working with an incomparable audio engineering team led by multiple award-winning Leslie Ann Jones and best-in-the-business producer Dan Merceruio. The objective was to create an immersive experience for listeners, an opportunity to hear music as only performers, in the moment, can.

The result is what you now hold in your hands. As a recording, the experiment exceeded all expectations, but its power is that it taps into a deeper purpose. The United States Army Field Band and Soldiers' Chorus are the best of the best, and are different from most ensembles in that they serve the Army as ambassadors. Each member is an active duty soldier who has learned over time that honoring audiences across the United States, and representing their country around the world, carries deep and lasting meaning. This meaning is where the magic lives.

Jim R. Keene

BRASS CEILING: *The Journey of General Ann Dunwoody*

Brass Ceiling was composed for The U.S. Army Field Band by Grammy Award and four-time Emmy Award-winning composer, Laura Karpman. "Writing Brass Ceiling was a profound experience for me," she writes. "I based the work on the life and career of a four-star general, Ann Dunwoody. Her career is not only an example of the fierce discipline and heroism of the army, but what it is like to work within a system to change the system. She, I think, was also moved by my work and sent me one of her challenge coins in acknowledging my service to the army. This moved me tremendously and was something that I never ever expected in my life. I treasure it and this entire experience."

OVERTURE TO "SERGEANT YORK"

Originally from Fentress County TN, Alvin C. York was one of the most decorated American soldiers of World War I. For years following the war, York declined to authorize the film portrayal of his life and time in combat, but finally acquiesced in order to finance an interdenominational Bible School in his hometown of Pall Mall, TN. The film *Sergeant York* was released in 1941 starring Gary Cooper, who went on to win the Academy Award for his portrayal. The film also won in the category of Best Film Editing, and was nominated in nine other categories, including Best Music (Score of a Dramatic Picture) for composer Max Steiner.

MEDAL OF HONOR SUITE

Published in 1999 by Electronic Arts and developed by Dreamworks Interactive, *Medal of Honor* was the first installment in the critically acclaimed video game series of the same name. The story, set during World War II, was co-created by film director and producer Steven Spielberg, who credits the inception of the idea in part to watching his son Max play the video game GoldenEye 007. The game's credits feature many veterans of the film industry, including film composer Michael Giacchino, who would go on to become one of the most award-winning composers of all time with his work on the hit television show *Lost* and such films as *Up*, *Star Trek* (2009), *The Incredibles*, and many more.

Giacchino explained that in *Medal of Honor*, character Jimmy Patterson was represented by two primary musical themes: the *Medal of Honor* main theme, and a more personal theme that was used during the

tougher moments of Patterson's journey. The music was recorded by a full orchestra and orchestrated and conducted by Tim Simonec, who also arranged the score for this recording.

OVER THERE

Written by George M. Cohan in 1917, *Over There* remained popular with the American military and civilians alike throughout both world wars, and was widely used in American recruitment efforts. With such hits as *Over There*, *Yankee Doodle Boy*, and *Grand Old Flag*, Cohan became well-known not just as a composer and entertainer, but as an American patriot. Cohan's music was considered to be of such significance to the war effort that he was honored by President Franklin D. Roosevelt with a Congressional Gold Medal in 1940. In 1942, the year of Cohan's death, he was depicted in the film *Yankee Doodle Dandy*, in which James Cagney won the Oscar for his portrayal of Cohan.

A PORTRAIT OF HONOR

An original commission by The U.S. Army Field Band, the central narrative of *A Portrait of Honor* is described by composer Joshua Moshier as "understanding what it means to serve honorably. The central character reflects on past experiences, much like a flashback, and recalls many personal experiences in service. In the present, this character begins planting the seeds of leadership in those who will continue beyond them. Those seeds grow, and the cycle continues."

Moshier, composer for many live action and animated television series, says "'I don't know of a more creatively productive and inspiring environment than Skywalker. It was a singular experience to be able to approach concert band music in a filmic way integrating synths and sound design elements mixed in surround. I loved following Col. Keene's brilliant conducting from the booth, watching my comments become implemented so expertly by our producer Dan Merceruio, and it was such a gift to have Leslie Ann Jones behind the console capturing the depth of the performance. Our work together was truly collaborative and product of all of us being together on the same recording stage.'"



AMERICAN SNIPER SUITE

In the 2014 film *American Sniper* directed by Clint Eastwood, U.S. Navy SEAL Chris Kyle (Bradley Cooper) becomes one of the most lethal snipers in American history, but returns home to find the war has returned with him.

The music of composer Joseph S. DeBeasi can be heard in such films as *Wind River*, *The Revenant*, and *Book of Eli* among others. About *American Sniper Suite*, DeBeasi wrote: "I feel honored to write this piece of music that reflects the heart of the men and women in service. Specifically in this film, it was the heart of Chris Kyle and his story, to bring awareness to other people who don't know much about the Armed Forces or the Army specifically. That's really important to me, and I'm hopefully reflecting their lives and their stories in a very truthful way in music."

Clint Eastwood—a lifelong piano player—composed *Taya's Theme*, which serves as the main theme of the film and opens the arrangement.

THE MARCH FROM “1941”

The 1979 Steven Spielberg film *1941* is one of the few comedies to boast a score by John Williams, arguably the most accomplished and prolific film composer of all time. Mr. Williams has received a variety of prestigious awards, including the National Medal of Arts, the Kennedy Center Honors, the Olympic Order, and numerous Academy Awards, Grammy Awards, Emmy Awards, and Golden Globe Awards. He has served as Music Director and Laureate Conductor of the Boston Pops Orchestra, and composed the music and served as music director for more than one hundred films, including the complete *Star Wars* saga, the *Indiana Jones* series, *Superman*, *Jaws*, *E.T.*, *Jurassic Park*, *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, *Schindler's List*, *Saving Private Ryan*, and many others just as notable.

Williams' working relationship with Steven Spielberg dates back to 1974 with *The Sugarland Express*, and continues to this day. Three of Williams' five Academy Awards were for Spielberg films, as were 15 of his 52 nominations. Still one of Williams' most requested and performed marches, *March from 1941* manages to capture the humor of the film while still maintaining the signature boldness, gravitas, and uniquely memorable melodies that are so frequently found in Williams' work.



THE LONG ROAD HOME: *Suite from the Mini-Series*

Based on journalist Martha Raddatz's bestselling book of the same name, the television series *The Long Road Home* dramatizes the heroism and bravery seen on the front lines of the Iraq War. On April 4, 2004—a day now remembered in military history as “Black Sunday”—the 1st Cavalry Division from Fort Hood, Texas was brutally ambushed, an incident that changed the U.S. military's view of Iraq from a peacekeeping mission to a fight against domestic insurgents. Across eight episodes, the series cuts between the battle in Iraq and the home front in Texas, where wives and families anxiously await news for 48 agonizing hours.

The music from the series was adapted for performance and recording by The U.S. Army Field Band and Soldiers' Chorus by the composer, Jeff Beal. An American composer and jazz trumpet recording artist with a long career writing for film and television, Beal is perhaps best known as a composer for his scores and themes on Netflix's *House of Cards* and the detective series *Monk*. He has won five Primetime Emmy Awards and has been nominated 19 times.

THE GREAT WWII MEDLEY

For years, Tim Simonec has been one of the busiest conductors and orchestrators in Hollywood. He has orchestrated and conducted more than 80 feature films and 25 television series, and is a frequent collaborator of Michael Giacchino.

Simonec mentions – “As an arranger, I try to stay true to the original material and manage the voicing of the Concert Band. I loved the whole concept of the Soundtrack of the American Soldier, their contributions and all that, and was happy to be a part of this project.”

In *The Great World War II Medley*, Simonec arranged two iconic movie themes from two of the most iconic World War II films: *Patton* and *The Great Escape*.

In *Patton*, composer Jerry Goldsmith tried to express General George Patton's career as a soldier, his faith, and his intellect through the use of the “theme,” or principal melody; the “chorale,” a harmonized, hymn-like passage; and the “fanfare,” a trumpet call manipulated through an Echoplex, causing the opening's signature echo effect. All three are heard in the title track.

In the timeless Steve McQueen film *The Great Escape*, composer Elmer Bernstein wrote one of the most memorable movie themes of all time, one that simultaneously captures the relentlessness, good humor, and patriotism of the film's heroic protagonists determined to escape from their Nazi prison camp.

GOD BLESS AMERICA

Born Israel Baline in Russia in 1888, Irving Berlin began his music career as an amateur lyricist and "song-plugger" in Tin Pan Alley, unable to read sheet music. Within a few years he was writing music himself, and wrote his first hit, *Alexander's Ragtime Band*, in 1911. Over the next half-century, he would write more than 800 songs, and became one of America's most prolific and enduring songwriters of both stage and screen.

While serving in the U.S. Army at Camp Upton in Yaphank, NY in 1918, Berlin wrote *God Bless America* as part of a revue called *Yip Yip Yaphank*. Deciding that the song didn't fit in the revue, he set it aside, and it would remain unpublished and unperformed for 20 years. With the rise of Adolf Hitler, Berlin (himself a Russian-born Jew) felt it was time to revive the song. It was performed on an Armistice Day radio broadcast in 1938 by Kate Smith, and was published the following year. It has remained one of the United States' most enduring patriotic songs.

THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER

On September 14, 1814, 35-year-old attorney and amateur poet Francis Scott Key witnessed the British Navy's bombardment of Fort McHenry from Baltimore Harbor, and was inspired to write the poem *The Defence of Fort M'Henry*. The poem was later set to the melody of *To Anacreon in Heaven*, a popular British song by John Stafford Smith, and renamed *The Star-Spangled Banner*.

Although the poem has four stanzas, only the first is sung today. *The Star-Spangled Banner* was recognized for official use by the United States Navy in 1889 and became the National Anthem of the United States by congressional resolution on March 3, 1931. The Army Field Band's Chief Arranger, Master Sergeant Adrian Hernandez, mentions: "The opportunity to record my works at Skywalker Sound with the organization I've been a part of for the past 12 years is truly once-in-a-lifetime. I'm lucky enough to be part an organization of

world-class musicians, but to work in collaboration with the team at Skywalker Sound made my job as a composer/arranger even more humbling. The famous melody, sung in unison by the chorus, departs from typical arrangements to represent the 'one voice' of the American people."



ARMY STRONG

Army Strong was the recruiting slogan used by the United States Army from 2006 to 2018. The powerful, compelling theme of the same name, written by Grammy Award and Emmy Award-winning film composer Mark Isham, was heard in practically every U.S. Army advertisement released during this time.

"My experience recording with The US Army Field Band was wonderful. It is always a thrill to hear one's music performed, especially by an exemplary ensemble and this was exactly that! They delivered everything that I could have asked for in a performance of this piece!"

THE JEDI STEPS AND FINALE (From "Star Wars: The Force Awakens")

When *The Force Awakens* was announced for December 2015 release, it instantly became one of the most eagerly-anticipated films in the history of cinema. Scored once again by the incomparable John Williams, its music transported audiences right back to the world they fell in love with 38 years earlier. The final track of the score, *The Jedi Steps and Finale*, features the long-awaited return of the familiar and iconic *Luke's Theme*, as well as the new themes of protagonist Rey, mysterious Supreme Leader Snoke, and the powerful threat of the First Order.

As a "Thank You" to our new friends at Skywalker Ranch, The United States Army Field Band and Soldiers' Chorus honor the legacy of Skywalker Sound with *The Jedi Steps and Finale*.



ARMY STRONG



MAINS		HEIGHTS		CHORUS SPOTS	
L	M50	FL	MKH800 OMNI	ALTO	4011
C	M50	FR	MKH800 OMNI	AL/SOP	4006
R	M50	BL	MKH800 OMNI	SOPRANO	4011
LFE	M49 CARDIOID	BR	MKH800 OMNI	BASS	4006
L SIDE	M149 OMNI			BASS/TEN	4006
R SIDE	M149 OMNI			TENOR	4006
L BACK	M150				
R BACK	M150				



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