

PACK UP YOUR TROUBLES: PERFORMANCE CULTURES IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR

ABSTRACTS

Jim Beach (University of Northampton)

Everyday Entertainment: Evidence from the Diary of Corporal Vince Schürhoff

Corporal Vince Schürhoff was an infantryman and later an intelligence soldier who served on the Western Front – mostly around Arras – from December 1915. His recently-published diary includes numerous references to concert parties, the cinema, and musical concerts. Using this contemporaneous record, this paper explores his engagement with these activities and his reactions to them. It thereby shows the importance of this cultural dimension to his everyday life.

Dr Jim Beach is Senior Lecturer in Twentieth Century History at the University of Northampton. He is also a member of the Everyday Lives in War engagement centre.

Laura Boyd (University of Leeds)

Doubly Useful: The role of bandsmen and music as preparatory and reparatory in France during the First World War

Non-combatant men during the First World War represent a large proportion of men enlisted, yet the research surrounding their role remains disproportionately scarce. This paper will address the role of stretcher-bearer and bandsman. Alongside their role as stretcher-bearers they were the 'official image' of the Armed Forces employed during parades and other performances. The role of music in conjunction with the role of stretcher-bearer during wartime is one that has rarely been investigated; a conspicuous absence from scholarly writing regarding the conflict.

This paper will focus on a consideration of the therapeutic value of music to wounds which were not necessarily physical, by looking at how the nature and function of the army band was curative as well as performative. Through a study of French memoirs that were written during the First World War, it will consider the portrayal of the therapeutic value of music by the bandsmen themselves, and how it was used by leaders both to maintain morale and to serve as a distraction from the surrounding chaos. The consistency of the rhythm and the familiar nature of the songs were a welcome reminder of home, and engendered – it was hoped – a sense of duty among battle-weary men.

Historians such as Meyer and Smith have highlighted gender anxieties surrounding martial masculinities during this period. This paper will situate the gender struggle faced by bandsmen within existing research surrounding the importance of bearing arms in terms of achieving the status of the idolised 'warrior male'. This was often judged solely upon the importance of bearing arms. However, this paper will convey how, by using music as a curative and reassuring force for combatants, bandsmen were well-placed to heal their own 'damaged' masculinities through portraying how this supportive role was integral to men's wellbeing and therefore to the war effort.

Helen Brooks (University of Kent)

'Torture, murder and bestial lust': German Villains on the British Wartime Stage

In early October 1914 Frederick K. Melville's *One Way of War* was premiered at the Brixton Theatre. Depicting German soldiers threatening a young mother with rape, and bayoneting her son, it was a play which was noteworthy, as the Examiner of Plays, G. S. Street noted, for being 'the first we have had dealing with German outrages on women and children' (BL Add MS 66078R). It was not however to be the last and over the next year plays including Leonard F. Durell's *Kultur* (Manchester, December 1914), J. Millane and Clare Shirley's *War and a Woman* (Salford, January 1915) and Dorothy Mullord's *In the Hands of the Hun* (Willesden, April 1915) drew on contemporary stories of German atrocities to create thrilling and entertaining dramatic productions.

This tension between the excitement elicited by the theatrical German villains of these plays and the real-life horrors which they concurrently denoted is the focus of this paper. Considered as fiction, these plays were a living embodiment of the propaganda atrocity stories circulating in the media, and served a similar purpose: to cultivate the necessary wartime emotions needed to get people to participate in violence. Yet in performance the most thrilling and interesting moments of these plays were those which featured the German villains at their most menacing. Indeed these villains' most despicable characteristics were often those which brought the greatest spectatorial pleasure. Considered as live performance therefore the superficial function of these fictional German villains was complicated. Drawing on both propaganda and melodramatic theory to consider the multiple and often conflicting responses made available by German stage villains, I will suggest however that this complexity did not negate but may have actually enhanced the potential of the theatre to propagandise its audiences.

Dr Helen Brooks is a theatre historian and Senior Lecturer in Drama at the University of Kent. She is Co-I on Gateways to the First World War, an AHRC- engagement centre for public engagement with the centenary of the First World War and is currently working on a project examining the production of new British war-themed drama between 1914 and 1919. She has previously published widely on eighteenth-and nineteenth-century theatre.

Sara Clifford (Insite Arts)

A Presentation on a Play About Conscientious Objectors in World War One, Framed by Original WW1 Theatre Scripts

Following on from the great success of 'Home Fires' which was performed at Newhaven Fort in March 2015, Veronica Stephens (Creative Producer) and Sara Clifford (Writer and co-producer) have secured funding from Arts Council England and East Sussex Arts Partnership to research the second part of their WW1 trilogy.

This time the story will focus on the very important role played by the town of Seaford in Sussex in WW1 history, and explore what life was like in the Seaford military training camp, where 20,000 soldiers were billeted at any one time before being shipped out to the Front.

The project will link with the 2016 nationwide First World War centenary commemorations programme around the Military Services Act which came into force in 1916 and enforced conscription.

We will also tell the story of the group of conscientious objectors who were held at the camp, and the members of the Bloomsbury Group, who were also COs, living at nearby Charleston Farmhouse.

Inspired by locally researched stories, this will be a high quality, large scale, site responsive performance event in two locations: Seaford seafront (adjacent to the original site of Seaford camp) and Charleston Farmhouse and garden.

THE PROMENADE

In Seaford, the show will be presented as a site specific promenade, taking the route between the Martello Tower and Seaford Head. The route will be animated by a series of performance interventions, visual arts tableaux, sculptural sound and light installations, all created by a team of high calibre, respected artists and responding to the surrounding architectural structures, exciting natural landscape and unique features of the South Downs coastline. We envisage the Martello Tower with its roof top cannon, as a site for Thor McIntyre Burnie's sound sculptures; the neat row of painted beach huts transformed into soldiers' huts; and the pill box bunker as a solitary confinement cell. Installations will add layers of sub text to echo the themes explored in the play and give deeper insight into the characters' inner thoughts.

A large scale recreation of Seaford Camp on the adjacent green will have rows of white bell tents for the audience to wander through and experience such things as:

- sound installations – recordings of poetry or letters
- recorded interviews – cross generational opinions on themes explored
- visual spectacles - a tent filled with white feathers
- projections and photos – propaganda tent with posters and archive imagery
- live performance– different tents telling a different character's story

THE PLAY

The play itself will be performed in a large marquee, reminiscent of the theatre hut for the troops stationed at Seaford Camp, and will draw on extant World War One scripts and verbatim text from CO tribunals to frame the main story, written by Sara.

The same play will then be performed at Charleston).

6 professional actors will play the main character roles, supported by a local community cast of up to a 100 local community performers, dancers, musicians and choir members.

Sara has been kindly advised on this by Dr Helen Brooks (Kent), Dr Andrew Maunder (Hertfordshire) and Cyril Pearce (CO database for Imperial War Museum), who are all partners in the project. We are also working closely with Dr Sam Carroll of the Gateways project.

Rebecca D'Monté (University of the West of England)

Queerios at the Front: Crossdressing in First World War Drama

Both at home and abroad First World War troops provided their own entertainment, either rehearsed and with the blessing of officials, or by putting on impromptu performances. Their use of song, slapstick, and satire all spoke of normal life whilst also helping them to cope with their present day situation. The site and sight of the anachronistically named 'concert party' gave a carnivalesque quality to the proceedings, allowing for an overthrowing of social conventions: privates could mock officers,

and men could play women. A typical example of the latter was the Turnip Tops, an amateur dramatics' group on the Western Front, who readily cross-dressed to provide a common form of entertainment. More ambiguous was the Queerios' concert party, composed of soldiers at leisure between some of the deadliest battles of 1917-18. Dressed in provocative costumes and placed in titillating poses, their images were captured by one of the official war photographers, David McLellan. Meant for propaganda purposes, these pictures instead convey a tension between, on the one hand, social anxiety about criminal deviancy, and on the other a sense of liberation away from home. First-hand accounts of these various theatrical proceedings describe the lustful fancies provoked when men 'passed' as women, easily possible given that generally no attempt was made to caricature the gender reversal. Again, there is a subversive spillage into the non-theatrical arena as contemporary news reports describe men masquerading as women away from the battlefields and garrisons. The paradox is that the ultimate homosocial activity to reinscribe manliness – war – could also bring about a rupture in notions of masculinity and femininity, heterosexuality and homosexuality.

Dr Rebecca D'Monté is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Drama, University of the West of England.

Robert Dean (University of Lincoln)

Dame Europa's Schoolroom: Mapping Allegiances through Popular Entertainment

When Britain officially entered the First World War in August 1914 the country certainly wasn't unaccustomed to coalition based conflict. The pursuit of Empire had given rise to ever shifting allegiances and periods of belligerency with other European states following a similarly expansionist agenda. Indeed, not only did Britain have a long-standing adversarial relationship with France, in the early twentieth century Anglo-Belgian relations were also strained due to Belgium's interests in the Congo.

While the declaration of war with Germany and the other central powers honored martial allegiances and defended Belgium's (enforced) neutrality, Britain's involvement in the conflict also needed to be justified to its population. Furthermore, fraternity for Britain's new allies had to be fostered and its enemies vilified. In Music Halls battle lines were drawn to reinforce public opinion regarding allies, enemies and fence sitters. However, the shows being produced also needed to be light, comic and entertaining.

This paper will focus on a novelty dance called 'Europe' first performed at the Empire Theatre in September 1914. It will explore the manner in which this, and similar, music hall segments from the period were used as propagandist tools that reduced the political complexities and socio-historic factors that led to the war into easily understood emblematic archetypes. In addition, the paper will consider the ways in which performances such as these move beyond simple benign Variety entertainment and provide a platform through which views, prejudices and beliefs can be communicated to and simplified for the masses.

Lucie Dutton (Birkbeck College)

It's a Long, Long Way to Tipperary – The inspiration to Victory, so the Picture will bring joy to thousands¹

Outside the old Market Hall in Stalybridge, Cheshire, there is a statue of a man seated, looking over some sheet music, watched by a World War One soldier. That man is Jack Judge, and he is looking at *It's a Long, Long Way to Tipperary*.

The song was written in 1912, supposedly for a five shilling bet, that Judge could not write a song in one night. Judge won his five shillings.

It's a Long, Long Way to Tipperary became a popular marching song of the Great War, reproduced on postcards and handkerchiefs. *Tipperary Rooms* were established to provide respectable social spaces for servicemen's wives, who might otherwise have visited public houses or cinemas.

The song also had a more troubled reputation. Drunken soldiers sang it. In Glasgow, a man held in custody for striking his wife, annoyed by another prisoner who would not stop singing it, "violently kicked him on the jaw."² A blackmailer, sentenced to eight years' penal servitude, left the dock singing *Tipperary*.³

This paper will focus on a lost film inspired by the song: *It's a Long, Long Way to Tipperary*, made in late 1914, by British director Maurice Elvey. It told the story of two men from Ireland, one Ulster Volunteer and one Home Ruler, both in love with the same girl, played by Elvey's muse, Elisabeth Risdon. It was sold as "a story of Ireland's loyalty," and argued that the Irish Question should be put aside until after the War. By drawing on the surviving plot synopsis, reviews, and contemporary articles, the paper will discuss the film and its reception in cinemas in 1915.

I am a PhD Candidate at Birkbeck College, University of London, researching the early career of Maurice Elvey (from 1907 to 1918). Elvey made a handful of war themed films in 1914, before returning to more escapist stories in 1915. The Tipperary film is now lost but I have researched the film, and its star, Elisabeth Risdon, in some depth. The song on which it is based was written in Stalybridge, the town in which I grew up - and the stories of the song being written in one night (which may well be exaggerated) are still celebrated in the town.

Leen Engelen and Roel Vande Winkel (KU Leuven / LUCA School of Arts)

Watching Animals and Moving Pictures. The Film Theatre of the Antwerp Zoological Garden in the First World War

In July 1915 the board of directors of the Royal Zoological Society of Antwerp (Belgium) decided to organise twice-weekly film screenings in the lavish belle époque style concert hall of the zoological garden it operated since 1843. This combination of a film theatre and a zoological garden is unique, both in terms of ownership (both were owned by the Royal Zoological Society of Antwerp) and in terms of management (the cinema was steered by the art- and music-loving director of the zoo himself, Michel L'Hoëst sr.). The screenings (with a large orchestra) were open to the general public. Discount rates were provided for members of the Zoological Society as well as for German officers. The programs were a combination of films and live music and catered mainly for the tastes of the bourgeois and upper-class membership. Cinema Zoologie soon became one of the more prestigious

¹ *Dorking and Leatherhead Advertiser*, 16 January 1915

² *Dundee Evening Telegraph*, 27 August 1915

³ *Daily Gazette for Middlesbrough*, 11 December 1914

venues in the city. Although several movie theatres were located in the its direct vicinity, the screenings were an immediate popular and financial success. Throughout the war, Cinema Zoologie became an important financial back-up for the necessitous zoological garden. The number of visitors and members had diminished drastically following the outbreak of the war in August 1914. The zoo had lost its main point of attraction as the number of animals shrunk with 80% in 1914-1918 and was in desperate need of other revenues. The opening of a film theatre was only one of the initiatives taken in this respect. The theatre remained lucrative until the late 1920s and after a long period of difficulties was finally closed down in 1936.

Based on extensive research in the archive of the Royal Zoological Society of Antwerp this paper will explore the founding of this theatre under wartime conditions and its further development throughout the war in the context of the larger wartime entertainment program of the zoological garden. A complete database of all the film and entertainment programs organised in Cinema Zoologie in 1914-1918 (including musical and variety intermezzi) allows for the detailed analysis of wartime exhibition practices and programming strategies in this particular context.

Leen Engelen is a film historian at the Institute for Media Studies (Leuven University) and LUCA School of Arts. Her research interests include cinema (culture) and the Great War, Belgian cinema and colonial cinema. Leen is the secretary-general of the International Association for Media and History.

Roel Vande Winkel is assistant professor at the University of Leuven (Institute for Media Studies). He teaches at the LUCA School of Arts, is associate board member of the DocNomads program and associate editor of the 'Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television'.

Maggie B. Gale (University of Manchester)

Not Quite Mata Hari: Patriots or Parasites – women in WW1 espionage plays

The theatre of the First World War became a contested ground for all kinds of social anxieties which thrived in the context of war. Issues of class, social behaviour and theatre's potential relationship to moral decline were publicly debated. These concerns however, were highlighted by the war, rather than created by it. Similarly, representations of women, the female and femininity on First World War stages were as reflective of the remnant, deep-rooted Edwardian cultural anxieties about the relationship between women, citizenship and social agency as they were about war-time conditions. Such anxieties were played out in the figure of the female spy or accomplice to espionage.

Spy and espionage plays built on both a fear and fascination with social 'others' and foreign aliens which burgeoned well before the war. Paranoia about the stranger as well as a desire to re-draw the boundaries of what it meant to be an 'English citizen', combine in interesting ways specifically in relation to women. Spy plays exploited representations of women as complicit, untrustworthy and driven by vanity and greed, with those that reframe passive femininity as negative. Lacking the exotic glamour of a duplicitous, and largely imagined figure like Mata Hari, whose dark vampish sexuality came to epitomize betrayal, the stage female spy or espionage heroine often appears to lack understanding, honour or cunning, only to be revealed as a wily, intelligent and courageous heroine, fighting her corner and engaging in a new form of female duty, serving the Allied cause. The paper explores lesser-known short sketches such as Michael Orme's (Mrs J. T. Grein's) *The Woman on the Window Sill*; Terry and Humphries *German Spy/Foiled*; Carleton's *The Secret Service Girl* and full-scale plays such as Terry and Lechmere's *The Man Who Stayed at Home*.

Professor Maggie B. Gale, University of Manchester [currently Leverhulme Major Research Fellow: A Social History of British Performance Cultures 1900 -1939: Law, Surveillance and the Body]

Kate Greaves (University of Southampton)

Authenticating Memory - The Life of Variety Artistes during World War 1

My maternal grandparents were variety artistes, working in the music halls and variety theatres before and during WW1. My grandmother, Florence Caffrey, came from an established music hall family. She was a singer, a principal boy in pantomime, and a chorus girl; reputedly, one of the first Tiller Girls. My grandfather, Samuel Copeman, was an educated man, who ran away to the circus. During this time, he became an acrobat and trapeze artist, before transferring to the variety theatre where he met Florence.

Born in 1913, one of my mother's first memories was sitting on a huge wicker props basket, in the wings of a large theatre, watching a variety show. She remembered, too, her parent's itinerant lifestyle moving, for example, from a pantomime in Nottingham to a variety show in Leeds to summer season in Morecombe; living in theatrical digs along the way. And around her was evidence of the terrible world war. Variety artistes were involved in the recruitment of troops and, through concert parties, the entertainment of the wounded.

Having recently completed an MA in Creative Writing at University of Southampton, I am writing a children's novel set in WW1, which features the young daughter of a music hall family. I wanted to explore the theatre during WW1 and the reality of life for these families. This task might have been easier had my grandmother's treasured archive survived, but, nevertheless, my research has allowed me to authenticate many of my mother's early memories, and gather information on this important area of WW1 studies.

I propose to present my findings on the music hall during WW1, collated through direct research, family archival materials, and recollection.

Thomas Greenshields

The Pipes and Morale in the Great War

In researching the experience of the Highland soldier in the Great War, one important element is the role of the pipes and their significance. In a previous paper it was argued that the principal use of the pipes in the Great War was not to pipe troops into battle but to sustain morale behind the front line. This paper takes the investigation one step further and tries to place the moral effect of the pipes more fully into the context of morale as a whole, for clearly the pipes were just one of a number of influences on morale and their influence is best understood in context.

To this end, the writer has sought in the literature a solid conceptual framework against which to examine the dynamics of morale in the Highland battalions. The central plank has been provided by current British Army Doctrine on morale, supplemented by insights provided by the writer's own research and by work specifically on the Great War by Watson, Sheffield, Holmes, Baynes and others. These sources have been used to generate a model of the way morale works which enables all elements of morale to be related to each other and assessed in context. It shows the complexity of their inter-relationships in a clear manner and offers a basis for comparative study.

Using the model, the paper then describes where and how the pipes input to build morale, drawing attention to the way they stressed identity, links with home, comradeship, etc. It is hoped that the study illustrates the usefulness of understanding morale as a whole before looking at the influence of music upon it, and that the model of morale generated may prove useful to other researchers in this productive borderland between music and military history.

Pip Gregory (University of Kent)

Back and Forth and Back Again: Links to Theatre and War through Cartoon Design (poster presentation)

Throughout the Great War, the theatre was a steady presence in the minds of combatants and civilians alike. The music hall was rapidly gaining popularity for the middle and lower classes before the war, and the theatre with its offerings of Opera and Shakespeare could be seen by many as the higher levels of such entertainments. Yet throughout all of this, cartoons were another method of entertainment consistently returned to by the public on a daily basis.

For many, cartoons were their first contact with theatrical ideas, while for others it was a reminder of what had been before. The theatre could so often be adapted to suit the mood of the day. This paper therefore seeks to address the ways in which the theatre and war were incorporated into daily political struggles and their depictions in newspapers.

Looking at these cartoons can offer the historian insights into the ways in which the public viewed and interpreted the theatrical ideas they were presented with. Following in Scott McCloud's theory of mental completion, it can be suggested that the images provide only a modicum of visual stimulus through which the viewing audience is anticipated to complete the picture and the idea that it presents with foreknowledge of the story being told.

In such a way deeper insights to the social structure, viewing public and perceptions that they had of the war and of the theatre may be inferred through close study of cartoon materials. Wider links may be made connecting specific officers and soldiers to theatrical production by way of these everyday cartoons.

Michael Hammond (University of Southampton)

Blues in the Trenches

This paper will explore the traces of 'the blues' as a musical tradition brought to the trenches of the Great War by African-American soldiers. It will centre on the work of John Jacob Niles, a ferry pilot for the US Army during the First World War who, during his time in France between April of 1918 to Dec 1919, collected the songs of a number of African American soldiers in the various sectors of the Western Front. African American soldiers from all parts of the US shared different performance styles and traditions and important cross-pollinations occurred here that foreshadow the country blues recordings of the 1920s and 30s of Charley Patton, Furry Lewis, Bukka White, Geechie Wiley, Ma Rainey, Elvey Thomas, Blind Willie Johnson and notable others. However this history, as I will show, has been filtered through a discourse of the authentic in which Niles and other folk ethnographers of the time were immersed. 'The blues' was a hybrid of popular and folk forms and the experience of this music at the Front had lasting implications for all who heard it. It laid an important base for the

profound impact jazz and blues has had on both US and European popular music and culture to the present day.

Michael Hammond is Associate Professor in Film at the University of Southampton. He is the author of The Big Show: British Cinema Culture and The Great War (Exeter University Press 2006, reprinted 2010). He has written numerous articles on silent cinema and on issues in contemporary film and culture. He is also co-editor of three books, Silent British Cinema and the Great War (Palgrave/MacMillan 2013), Contemporary US Cinema (Open University/McGraw-Hill, 2006) with Linda Ruth Williams, and The Contemporary Television Series, (Edinburgh University Press, 2005) with Lucy Mazdon. He is currently working on a British Academy funded research project on the impact of the Great War on the aesthetic practices of the Hollywood studios between 1919-1939.

Emma Hanna (University of Kent)

'May he be shamed who thinks badly of it': The work of the Cinema Division, Expeditionary Forces Canteens (Royal Army Service Corps) on the Western Front, 1915-18

Cinema shows were a significant part of servicemen's entertainment on the home and fighting fronts during the First World War. However, very little is known about the organisations and personnel who provided the equipment and film stock to take moving pictures to the troops. This paper is a continuation of the work Emma has done to piece together front line cinema provision by the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) published in the *Historical Journal of Film, Radio & Television* in 2015. With material from the archives of the Royal Army Service Corps, Emma will show that the establishment of the Expeditionary Forces Canteens in the spring of 1915 enabled the creation of a Cinema Division which worked to provide and transport cinema materials to the troops at home and overseas. This paper will provide a case study of how the Royal Engineers regiment made use of this service with a detailed look at how cinema was taken to British troops serving in the Middle East 1917-1919.

*Emma Hanna is a Senior Research Fellow at the University of Kent. She is also a Co-Investigator of Gateways to the First World War, an AHRC-funded centre for public engagement with the centenary of the First World War. Emma published her first monograph *The Great War on the Small Screen (EUP)* in 2009, and she has published a number of articles and chapters about 1914-18 on the themes of contemporary memory and memorialisation, the media, music and cinema. Emma's current research interests focus on wartime modes of entertainment and recreation on the home and fighting fronts, principally music and cinema, and the work of voluntary organisations such as the YMCA. As part of her work with Gateways Emma has acted as historical consultant for the BBC, the British Council, the National Children's Football Alliance, and the Last Post Project. She is currently helping to advise the organising committee on music for the national 'Somme 100' commemorations and the Hallé Children's Choir in Manchester this July. In addition to other outputs Emma is now working on her second monograph, on music and morale during the First World War.*

Jolanta Jagiello

Singing for Tommies: Recruitment Songs of the First World War

An investigation of the power of the popular entertainment of the First World War **Music** Hall and its impact on the recruitment, conscription, and the morale of Tommies. Examining the many songs

produced encouraging young men to join up e.g. 'Now You've Got the Khaki On', 'Kitcheners' Boys' to 'We Don't Want to Lose You, but We Think You Ought to Go' powerfully evocated in Joan Littlewood's 'Oh, What a lovely War!' to their disappearance from the "Greatest hits" collection published in 1915 which contains not one recruitment songs. The Music Hall Stars involved included Marie Lloyd, George Formby, Sr., Harry Lauder, Gertie Gitana and Harry Champion. The focus will be on Musical Hall star Vista Tilley nicknamed 'Britain's best recruiting sergeant' for signing up young men on stage during her show to join the army. An examination of the guise of characters Vista Tilley created 'Tommy in the Trench' and 'Jack Tar Home from Sea' to perform songs such as "The Army of Today's All Right" and 'Jolly Good Luck to the Girl who Loves a Soldier' and their effectiveness.

The paper will frame the analysis of recruitment songs of the First World War within human resource recruitment practices particularly those used to attract volunteers to assess the power of Music Hall Artists and the popular entertainment of day. Does the tactic of passionate advocacy together with persistence and creativity used attract the volunteers in the First World War deeply engrained in the British psyche lead to one in seven of the population volunteering and what part does today's popular entertainment play?

Dr Jolanta Jagiello is an academic, practicing artist, and an independent curator whose curatorial practice is archived on <http://www.artgoingplaces.com>. Jolanta Jagiello curates public art exhibitions Nunhead Cemetery a Commonwealth Graves Commission site in association with the Friends of Nunhead Cemetery (FONC) under the chairmanship of Ron Woollacott MBE, FRSA. Jolanta has formulated a five year strategic plan of First World War Commemoration Public Art Exhibitions in the Mausoleum during May funded by the Southwark Community Fund: Wrenches, Trenches, and Stenches (2014); ANZAC in Spirit: Diggers in Gallipoli (2015); Animals in Service (2016); Women in Front (2017); Messages, Medals, & Memorials (2018). Jolanta also conducts tours of the Music Hall Stars buried in Nunhead Cemetery.

James R. Kelly

Against the Darkness in Dispute: Innovative Programming and Performance at the Birmingham Repertory Theatre 1914-18

'Who knows and for his knowledge stands

Against the darkness in dispute...'

(John Drinkwater, Abraham Lincoln, 1918)

The Birmingham Repertory Theatre, founded in 1913 as a pioneer repertory company, promoted innovative and sometimes challenging programming not only in its first season but also throughout the next four seasons during World War One. This paper argues that Birmingham maintained high art activity alongside more conventional works during this period because of the key role played by John Drinkwater, the theatre's General Manager and one of the Georgian Poets. Drinkwater was linked with Secretary of State for War Winston Churchill's secretary Eddie Marsh (publisher of the Georgian Poetry anthologies), but in his correspondence with Marsh he maintained a scepticism about the war whilst accepting its inevitability and the need to defeat the Germans. His developing friendships from 1915 onwards with activists against war and conscription, notably the Birmingham artist and Quaker, Joseph Southall, and the writer Gilbert Cannan, led him to a more nuanced stance on violence and war, which can be traced in the five plays he wrote and produced in Birmingham during the years 1914-1918. His three-act verse play (*Rebellion*, 1914), examined the role of intellectuals faced with

militarism. In three successive one act plays in verse he depicted the impact of war on women in his study of a group of women waiting helplessly for the return of a man lost outside in a terrible storm (*The Storm* 1915), the uselessness of war and the case for pacifism (*The God of Quiet*, 1916 and *X=0*, 1917) and finally in his longer, six scene prose play with verse interludes (*Abraham Lincoln*, 1918) he made a case for reconciliation between former enemies. Throughout the darkness and dispute of World War One Drinkwater continued to promote an alternative and challenging programme of plays at Birmingham and within it his own careful arguments against war.

Tony Lidington (Promenade Promotions)

“Pierrot Heroes”

This paper focuses on the pierrot concert party as a form of British popular entertainment during the First World War. Illegitimate forms of entertainment (particularly performance) have given rise to our contemporary pre-eminence in popular world music and comedy; pantomime, Punch & Judy and peepshows are all vernacular British artforms which both embody and represent a sense of national culture and identity. As a much neglected form of entertainment, the pierrot concert party is a uniquely British phenomenon - evolving from European roots, but embodying the heroic, the stoic and the absurd, and which met with mass appeal amongst its audiences.

I ran the last-remaining professional pierrot troupe, ‘The Pierrotters’, for 27 years and now teach the form and its history to students. Recently I have been working on two projects in Devon that explore the history of the pierrot tradition: ‘Chin Up!’, which is a Torbay-based project supported by the Armed Forces’ Community Fund, looking at wartime entertainment through the ages. This group has presented a short pierrot show by “The Chin Uppers” at Babbacombe Armed Forces’ Day and will be producing an exhibition, alongside an additional performance to tour around Devon in June 2016. Furthermore, I am working with Devon Artists in Schools Initiative (DAISI) to create another pierrot troupe called “The Poppies” in Teignmouth, for a performance next summer. These groups of young people use original material to create a poignant performance, but in the process, they also learn research skills and engage in archive animation – learning about the cultural context in which the First World War was conducted and how these forms are relevant and effective in performance today.

In reviewing my experiences and considering the legacy of the pierrot concert party, this paper demonstrates how these action research projects have enabled young people to engage with First World War material in an unusual and apparently tangential manner. Through their experience of research into performance, they are able to appreciate some of the ways in which the War was part of a continuum of popular culture, rather than some remote and arcane event in history.

David Linton (Kingston University)

Degeneration/Regeneration – The Remaking of Nation in Wartime West End Revue

The First World War saw a plethora of revues establish themselves at the heart of London’s flourishing popular entertainment zone, the West End and arguably surpass musical comedy as the principal popular form. Why and how did this happen? What was it about revues registration that saw its popularity transcend other entertainments during wartime? I argue that crucial to revue performance’s popularity and success in this period was its engagement with specific strands of a wartime identity discourse of national regeneration and renewal.

During the First World War, a renegotiation of gender roles occurred as women took up the tools of industry in war related production. This provided opportunities for women to break free from the domestic sphere and was pivotal in negotiating patriarchal power structures and contributing to the women's suffrage movement. However in West End revue that negotiation took on a slightly different registration as rather than a breaking down of traditional gender roles and identities as indeed there was in other spheres, I argue that wartime revue performance, displayed a regenerative nationalism that sought a remasculinization of British culture. In often contradictory and complex representations, revue performances perpetuated images of British manliness and womanhood that reasserted patriarchal values and constructed versions of female virtue yet sexually objectified women through the development of the chorus girl persona. Revue correlated the immediacy of wartime through a fragmented vocabulary of performance inscribed with a bewildering variety of national and gender identity constructions on stage. Experimenting with narrative and expressions of speech, movement, design and sound, they displayed ambivalent representations that reflected social and topical concerns.

Focusing on the shows *Business As Usual* (1914) and *By Jingo If We Do!* (1914), I will highlight how revues of this period constructed a shared rhetoric of entertainment and patriotism, through creating pertinent national and gender formations as the political establishment called for propaganda as well as distraction and escapism.

Michelle Meinhart (Martin Methodist College, Tennessee / Durham University)

'It's a Long Way to Tipperary. . .' and Tennessee: Unlikely Musical Exchanges in the English Country House, 1914-1918

During the First World War, many soldiers from throughout the British Empire were sent to England first to train, then in many cases after time at the war front, to recover from wounds. For Canadians and Australians, such healing often took place alongside English Tommies in municipal buildings and other unlikely places throughout England, such as country stately homes. At the forefront of activities in which soldiers engaged to occupy time, boost morale, and foster healing while convalescing was music. Often this music was organized and led by upper-class women eager to do their "bit for King and country." While Tommies—English and dominion alike—were certainly accustomed to singing and listening to musical performances at the front, especially due to the efforts of the YMCA, the raucous musical world they brought with them was new to the Edwardian country house and upper-class ladies' soirees. Associated with British urban music halls and low-brow American culture—all music commonly used in YMCA-led performances at the war fronts—such bawdry songs were not the sentimental parlor room ballads and nineteenth-century opera excerpts Edwardian ladies were used to playing.

This paper highlights the collision of these musical worlds of the trench and country house during the First World War. Drawing on country house sheet music collections, soldiers and women's correspondence and life writing, high society magazines, and newspapers of army battalions and Red Cross hospitals, this paper demonstrates the transnational and trans-class musical exchange of British and dominion Tommies with lady philanthropists disrupted the elite pre-war musical world of the Edwardian parlor. Ultimately such exchanges, in addition to fostering physical and emotional healing, established new and unlikely musical networks within the Commonwealth—networks that complicated former boundaries of class, gender, and empire.

Michelle is Assistant Professor of Music at Martin Methodist College in Tennessee and will be at Durham University on a twelve-month Fulbright fellowship, beginning this July. In 2015 she was a visiting researcher in the history department at the University of Huddersfield, and in 2014 she was a fellow at the National Endowment for the Humanities research institute, "World War I and the Arts: Sound, Vision, Psyche." Currently she is completing a monograph titled *Music, Healing, and Memory in the English Country House During the First World War*, a project which has previously been funded by research grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the American Association of University Women, and the Music and Letters Trust.

John Francis Moss

A march through time: George Frederick Handel's influence on commemoration of the First World War

When Handel's 'Dead March' was first heard in January 1739, it was part of his oratorio *Saul*, based on the first book of Samuel, and is the prelude to an elegy on the death of King Saul and his son Jonathan. By the time of the outbreak of the First World War in August 1914, the 'Dead March' had become an important part of funeral ritual in England, as much a musical expression of commemoration as *The Last Post* would become.

In this short paper, John Francis Moss traces the development of the 'Dead March' in *Saul* from London theatre to the nation's cathedrals, and argues the importance of the piece in the instigation of the Two Minutes' Silence as most-recognised form of collective ritual remembrance in the western world.

After the vagaries of an all-boys Grammar School, and thirty years police service, John finally knocked on the right door when he enrolled on the Sacred Music Studies course run jointly by the Royal School of Church Music and the University of Wales. John's M.A. dissertation on the seasonal rituals of a neo-Pagan kith was awarded the Bangor University School of Music Parry Williams prize in 2012. He is currently engaged researching the forms of liturgy and sacred music used in collective memorial services during the First World War, supervised by Professor John Harper.

John Mullen (Université de Rouen)

Why Singalong? The meanings and uses of the singalong chorus in First World War music hall

The experience of group singing of a refrain was so central to the music hall experience that the songs were often referred to by non music-hall people simply as "chorus songs".⁴ However, the exact contours of this kind of performance have been little studied, and such study is hindered by the fact that all recordings of the time are studio recordings, where audience singalong is not heard. In addition, textual analysis of a large corpus of music hall songs has been almost completely neglected.

My contribution, following on from my recently published full-length study on music hall song,⁵ aims at exploring the reasons for the sing-along chorus, the different ways that the chorus could be used, and some of its ambiguities. It will be based on a corpus of a few dozen hit songs from the war years. It will show that the choice to place certain sentiments in the refrain rather than in the verses is not

⁴ Lena Ashwell, *Modern Troubadours*. Copenhagen: Gyldenal, 1922, p. 19.

⁵ John Mullen, *The Show Must Go On : Popular Song in Britain during the First World War*, Farnham, Ashgate, 2015.

neutral, that the centrality of live music in a pre-radio context has an enormous influence, and that the musical structure of the chorus can sometimes make more complex the sentiments being sung. “Patriotic” refrains, “war-weary” refrains and “escapist” refrains will all be examined, in addition to “anxious” refrains which comment on the enormous social changes going on at the time.

John Mullen is a professor in British history at the University of Rouen in France. He has published widely on the history of British popular music. Articles include a reflection on ‘ethnic’ music festivals and immigrant identity (1960–2000), and a piece on racial stereotyping in music-hall songs from 1880 to 1920. His website is www.johncmullen.net.

Richard Parfitt (Linacre College, Oxford)

‘Come Along and Join the British Army’: Music, Performance and Nationalist Ireland during the First World War

The effect of the First World War on Irish politics was profound. When John Redmond, leader of the constitutional nationalist Irish Parliamentary Party, expressed support for the British war effort and encouraged members of the paramilitary Irish Volunteer movement to join the British army, the movement split. Those unwilling to support the British eventually contributed to the failed 1916 Easter Rising, when nationalist and socialist rebels seized key buildings in Dublin. The threat of conscription in 1918, moreover, fuelled support for the radical nationalist Sinn Fein party, who won a landslide in Irish seats during the 1918 general election.

These events had a similarly significant impact on the nature of political Irish music. The rise of Sinn Fein popularised new and radical songs condemning British rule in Ireland and encouraging revolution. New performance contexts, meanwhile, were created in the form of recruitment meetings, which were often interrupted by bands and protestors. These methods were also employed to disrupt the rallies of the Irish Parliamentary Party. The Easter Rising, furthermore, created scores of political prisoners. The Prisoner of War camps provided a further performance context in which bands and orchestras were formed and concerts held.

This paper proposes an analysis of the songs and performance cultures that characterised Irish political music during the First World War. By employing the contemporary documents of Irish political actors and songwriters – diaries, letters, newspapers etc. – as well as government and police records, it is possible to reconstruct the role of music. Overall, I aim to demonstrate that music provided an important means through which political propaganda was disseminated, and that it allowed nationalists to interpret, navigate and act upon the political context of the War.

Claire Penstone-Smith (Neatishead, Irstead and Barton Turf Community Heritage Group)

“When I come home” original WW1 drama performed by local drama group as part of HLF funded project “Living through WW1 in three Norfolk Broadland villages”

This two year project funded from a Heritage Lottery Fund WW1 Then and Now grant undertook to ensure the heritage of Neatishead, Irstead and Barton Turf - before, during and just after World War One was preserved; that **all** those men from the three villages who served would be remembered on a memorial plaque and that the community would have gained an insight into their lives and that of the villages 100 years ago. My presentation today will talk about the inspiration and production of “When I come home” and how it formed a natural and integral part of the project.

Iza Piekłus (Jagiellonian University)

Following Sweet Lady War straight to the bed of roses – narrations on romance and the natural world in Polish patriotic songs during the First World War

Few days ago, Belarusian writer and journalist Svetlana Alexievich, the author of brilliant and horrifying 'War's Unwomanly Face' (putting the equation mark between notion of woman and life), was awarded the 2015 Nobel Prize in Literature. In fact, in Eastern European cultures, the figure of Motherland and Mother Patria – woman in need that we – the nation – her children – owe our lives – are still present and commonly recognized.

But in Polish patriotic songs popular during the First World War (especially so called Legion Songs) it was the war itself that was described as a Lady or – very often – a young girl: seductive, full of life and in a way – charming, impossible not to be followed, taking lives of the chosen but only after giving it significance and meaning. These songs obviously served as propaganda and means of mobilization in a time when the figure of Mother Patria might not have been that explicit due to the fact that Poland did not exist as a united, independent state at that time, being geographically and politically split between Austria-Hungary, German and Russian Empire. This position resulted in tremendous material and human loss in historical territory of Poland during all the military operations of the Eastern Front and very difficult situation of the inhabitants of Polish origin due to conscription.

I would like to shortly introduce diversity of cultural settings influencing fighting spirit of Polish soldiers during the First World War and describe / present / compare and explain the role of narrations of romance and the natural world in Polish patriotic songs in mobilization and sustaining *esprit de corps* of Polish soldiers / guerrillas in their extremely complex and difficult position as well as to illustrate consistency of popular musical performance of that time with visual arts and high culture's spirit of *fin de siècle*.

Iza Piekłus, psychologist and sociologist, PhD candidate in Social Science at Jagiellonian University, Cracow, Poland / Department of Sociology of Power. My research interests focus on comparative peace and conflict studies, commemorative performances, reconciliation theory and practice and visual anthropology. Currently I am working on two research projects: "Europe and its remembrances: narratives concerning the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz and the end of World War Two" and "Images of War. War of Images. Representation of military conflicts in mass communication and values, symbols, patterns and group identities – case of war in Georgia (2008) and Libya (2011)". Humble admirer of cultural diversity, advocate for intercultural understanding and popular culture addict.

Rachel Richardson

Female impersonation in a cross-dressing world

"It's a hard world where half the people say you should not dress as a man, and the other half want to punish you for dressing as a woman." So wrote Flora Sandes, an Englishwoman in the Serbian army, after being punished for dressing in female (civilian) clothing as a practical joke.

Female impersonation, a well-established aspect of pre-war musical hall culture, was exported to the stages of front and expanded, as an absence of women necessitated cross-dressing for all female roles – comedy or not. Female impersonators were often surprisingly realistic and were almost universally well-received by their audiences, which were usually male but did sometimes include women. My

paper will examine the dialogue of this cross-dressing where women encountered male representation of themselves on the temporary stages of the fronts, particularly within the context of women like Sandes 'unsexing' themselves and taking on male appearances for their 'roles' as war workers. Rather than breaking down gender identities, cross-dressing became a site of play for British men and women, wherein they could explore the realities of their wartime situations while expressing themselves more freely, and where social expectations of traditional gender representation such as appearance and behavior were slightly loosened.

Laura Seddon (University of Portsmouth)

Unity in Sound: International Musical Responses to the Opening Months of War

In December 1914 the Daily Telegraph published *King Albert's Book* as 'a tribute to the Belgian King and people, from representative men and women throughout the world.' Included in this volume, which was sold as a fundraising exercise for the Belgian refugee effort, were examples of sheet music by British, French, Italian, Danish and Norwegian composers. These musical contributions from composers such as Debussy, Elgar, Stanford and Mascagni were arranged to be performed in a domestic setting (song or piano arrangements) and provide a snapshot of what might have been performed in civilian homes during the first Christmas of the war.

This paper will analyse the performance histories of these works and will assess them as propaganda artefacts. This will include Debussy's lullaby response to atrocity, Elgar's use of bells as symbolic representation of Belgian nationhood and the bombastic call to arms of hymns *Hail* by Frederic Cowen and *One Who Never Turned His Back* by Alexander Mackenzie. The works of the two women composers included in the volume, Liza Lehmann and Ethel Smyth will be considered in relation to connections to the suffrage movement and women's collective musical response to the war.

The paper will ultimately argue that the composers included in this collection were considered successful enough to be part of the musical establishment and were, therefore, representing both the musical community and their own country's position at the start of the war. Collectively the sound worlds created in these works contributed to an international sense of unity with both political and cultural resonance. However, the later performance histories of these works indicate that they were also personal responses to grief which were often musically arranged differently from their original conception in order to be performed by individual 'amateur' and often female performers in the home.

Geoff Thomason (Royal Northern College of Music)

What did you play in the war daddy?: the challenge to tradition in Manchester's early Tuesday Mid-day Concerts

Manchester's Tuesday Mid-day Concerts were founded in 1915 as an offshoot of the Committee for Music in Wartime. They came into being at a time when audiences for chamber music in the city were in decline. Using contemporary concert programmes, press reports and unpublished documentation held at both the Royal Northern College of Music and Manchester Central Library, this paper argues that the war and its concomitant marginalisation of Manchester's concert-going German community consolidated rather than created this decline. It also examines the extent to which the early Mid-day Concerts were able to capitalise on wartime patriotism and thus play their own part in challenging

Manchester's hitherto largely German-facing chamber music culture. By attracting new audiences, favouring local performers and showcasing a contemporary non-German repertoire, the Mid-day Concerts were able, not only to stay the decline in Manchester's chamber concerts, but also to set a pattern for similar concerts which continued into the postwar era. Nevertheless, in doing so it risked leaving those performers who had dominated a prewar chamber music culture in an increasingly isolated position and unable to reintegrate fully into a changed musical landscape.

Geoff Thomason is Deputy Librarian at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester, where he has recently completed a Ph.D on the Manchester career of the violinist Adolph Brodsky in the context of foreign influences on the city's musical life in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He also holds Bachelor's and Master's degrees in music from the University of Manchester. He is currently a lead researcher on Making music in Manchester during World War 1, funded through the AHRC's Everyday lives in war project.

As a music librarian he was Chair of the Commission on Service and Training for the International Association of Music Libraries 2008-2014 and has held several executive posts for its UK and Ireland branch, where at present he is Education Officer.

A keen practical musician, he plays clarinet, recorders, piano and organ, has sung with several small chamber choirs, and is active as a composer and arranger as well as an orchestral and chamber player. He is a Liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Musicians.

Victoria Thomas (Coventry University)

The Great War's Risky(qué) Female: Sex and Death in the Dancing of Maud Allan and Anna Pavlova

What role did the figure of the dancing female play in negotiating cultural anxieties about death and dying during the First World War? How might this be understood as a form of what Judith Butler calls "gender trouble"? Finally, how is this gender trouble symptomatic of a form of collective trauma endemic to the early twentieth century? This paper argues for an understanding of collective trauma (Caruth 2013, LaCapra 2001) as stemming from anxieties around femininity and identity played out against the backdrop of the Great War and deeply influenced by the devastating loss of life in the conflict. I explore these anxieties by looking at the female performer Maud Allan who was famous for her danced interpretations of Salomé in pre-War London and who was the cause of a sensational libel suit in 1918 bring together deviant female sexuality and wartime espionage (Walkowitz 2003, Koritz 1995). To theorise the effects of Allan's perceived aberrance, I juxtapose her to ballerina Anna Pavlova, whose tireless international touring made her both respected and a role model for proper femininity. Her untimely death in 1931 from pneumonia provoked an unprecedented international expression of mourning (Fisher 2012). These two examples offer a rich comparison from which to discuss a gender trouble where female identity *cum* sexuality, in particular, can be read as a symptom of crisis (Butler 1997, 1990). The influence of this crisis can be linked to the collective trauma embedded within the socio-cultural cataclysms of the early twentieth century including not only the Great War itself but also the Russian Revolution and the Suffragette movement (Freedman 2003). Through these examples, I argue that gender is a formidable form of what I call a constellation of trauma--a constellation of trauma that left an indelible mark on those that survived the Great War conflagration.

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Julian Walker

Hoop Lane

In 2010 I made a work based on my grandfather's experience as both a soldier and concert party performer during the First World War. In October 1914 my grandfather performed in a concert in Stratford in aid of the Prince of Wales' National Relief Fund; he sang four songs, listed on the programme. He attested in 1915, was called up and wounded in a gas attack in 1916, and again in October 1918, as shown in his diary. The diary also shows where he was (Houplines) when he was wounded.

In 2010 I located, as clearly as possible from trench maps, the area he was wounded in 1918, and sang unaccompanied in a field at Houplines the four songs from the 1914 concert and developed a film, 'Hoop Lane' which will be presented at the conference.

Susan Werbe

Reinterpreting The Great War through the Lens of Art (poster presentation)

The poster examines the weaving of original, historical works of art with contemporary theatre, music and dance to explore both the history of the war and individuals' experiences during the first global conflict of the 20th C. By experiencing original works from the war through 21st C artists' interpretations, contemporary audiences engage with the history in new and thoughtful ways.

I present three examples in which I have been involved as co-creator, producer, and dramaturg:

- A **modern dance composition**, performed at an arts festival in Boston, using fragments from the poetry of Wilfred Owen and Isaac Rosenberg to inform the choreography and contemporary music commissioned to illustrate the themes of war running through the work.

- **Multi-media theatre**, *The Great War Theatre Project: Messengers of a Bitter Truth* (GWTP), with a script fashioned from original war writings – poems, letters, journals, memoirs – from men and women on both sides of the conflict. Background video imagery included paintings, archival still and film footage, as well as contemporary video. Contemporary electronic music juxtaposed the 19th Century military strategies and dominant ethos with 20th Century technological warfare. GWTP was performed for two years in Boston, New York, and during a residency in Letchworth, UK in which students used themes from GWTP to create their own work addressing war and conflict in the 21st Century.
- **Song** – A song cycle of women’s war writings, using the poetry and prose written by women to create a libretto that a contemporary composer will set to music. A women’s vocal ensemble will perform the work.

The common thread of these three pieces is the reinterpretation – through the lens of art – of the history of The Great War, in ways that honor both history and the “testament of experience” left to us by men and women who endured that global conflict.

Vanessa Williams (University of Pennsylvania)

"Near to reality, but not quite": the extramusical labor of Lena Ashwell's Concerts at the Front

As soon as the First World War broke out, actress and impresario Lena Ashwell had the idea of sending musicians and comedians abroad to entertain the troops. In January 1915 her ‘Concerts at the Front’ series was officially sanctioned with the support of Princess Victoria and under the auspices of the Y.M.C.A. Over the next few years, concert parties consisting of male and female performers gave thousands of performances to troops in France, Malta, and Egypt. The concert parties performed in hospitals, Y.M.C.A. huts, and theatres, as well as in fields and make-shift open-air venues. Programmes consisted chiefly of classical favourites and light popular songs, with Ashwell insisting on the avoidance of music-hall songs and “rag-time.”

Ashwell’s publicity campaigns for the concert parties insistently framed them not simply as entertainment but as a medical and educational benefit. The concerts diverted seriously wounded soldiers in hospitals, and also educated working-class troops who, she claimed, would request opera arias rather than music hall choruses. In this paper, I examine Ashwell’s rhetoric in relation to the presence of female artistes—for whom Ashwell obtained special permission to travel to the front—as she cast them as nurses, teachers, and confidantes. I also consider accounts from performers and soldiers that complicate Ashwell’s propaganda. These accounts downplay the educational value of the concerts, and instead ascribe pastoral roles to the female performers because of their exceptional status as women in male-dominated spaces. My paper uses these sources to suggest an expanded conception of women’s contributions to the war effort, accounting for their work as entertainers and also more broadly for their abilities to temporarily bridge some of the physical and emotional boundaries between the Western and Home Fronts.

Vanessa Williams is a fourth year PhD student and Benjamin Franklin Fellow in the Music department of the University of Pennsylvania. Her research focuses on women's music-making in London during the First World War, considering issues of musical labor and gender performance, and ways in which musical production can negotiate social, political, and geographic borders. She received a first-class

degree in Music from the University of Southampton in 2005, and a Masters in Musicology with distinction from the same institution in 2006.