

SONGWRITERS NOTES



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MILITARY SONGWRITING CONTEST

Songs from the Soul of Service for Military Personnel
Winners Announced - Concert June 16th - pg. 6,9

MUSIC IN FILM WORKSHOP- MAY 1
with Award Winning Songwriter,
HARRIET SCHOCK - see page 4

SONG SWAP WORKSHOP
Every First Monday with Annie Benjamin see pg 13

DSA OPEN MICS & SHOWCASES
Every First & Third Thursday with Craig St. Clair pg 5

LIVE MIX April 25th
Every Last Wednesday, pg 13

DSA 2006 Song Contest
Deadline June 30th, pg 7

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● NEXT LYRIC CONTEST ●
● DEADLINE JUNE 13th ●
● SEE PAGE 12 ●
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Could The Next Great Songwriter Be In Uniform?

DOD contest tapping into troops' lyrical talents Article by Patrick Dickson. Used with permission from the Stars and Stripes, © 2006 Stars and Strips.

*I went down to Jeopardy
But Alex just laughed at me
He said son we need someone with a high IQ
And son, that someone clearly just ain't you*

— Army Staff Sgt. Geoffrey Rohrlach, stationed in Germany

WASHINGTON — Johnny Cash wrote songs while an Air Force enlisted guy. Kris Kristofferson did the same while an Army officer. And maybe that next big-time military songwriter is out there.

That's what the Dallas Songwriters Association and the Department of Defense's America Supports You campaign want to find out.

The Songs from the Soul of Service songwriting contest has been soliciting entries from servicemembers stationed around the globe, according to spokesman William Brown.

The contest closed to submissions Feb. 15 with over 400 entries from around the world, including from the United States, Japan, South Korea, Germany, and Iraq and Afghanistan.

"I NEVER expected to be sending in some material while dealing with these knuckleheads out here trying to kill us," one entrant told the organizers via e-mail.

*Please tell the driver to take me home
He cuts down Virginia and up onto I-64
Asks if I'm OK, I say fine, but I'm pretty sure
I've never felt so alone*

-- Army Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Ellis, stationed in Kuwait

On June 16th, a concert will be held at the Killeen Community Center Amphitheater near Fort Hood, Texas, to celebrate the songs and songwriters in the U.S. military.

Music industry professionals, including "Grammy-winning and nominated producers and artists," will make a CD of the best songs, the proceeds of which are to help support charities benefiting military personnel and their families, Brown said.

The songs cover all major genres, with such song titles as "Mefloquine Nightmares," "Why Soldiers Cry," "When I Return To You," "I'm Unbreakable" and "Sometimes He Taketh Away."

One writer, Army Capt. Franke Gracia, submitted "Working Man" in honor of the men in his family who work with their hands.

"This song is embarrassingly simple — three-chord blues is all," Gracia wrote in an e-mail to Stars and Stripes from Afghanistan. "But hey, those songs become hits, too!"

*Well it seems pretty clear to me
You see, I don't need no Ph.D. to ask
Who's the better man for our land
Mr. Enron, or the working man?*

— Army Capt. Franke Gracia, deployed to Afghanistan

Gracia said country singers Aaron Tippin or Toby Keith would be "perfect" to record his hit. It could happen. In addition to industry exposure, Brown said, they are working on getting one or more songs recorded by a big-name artist.

For Gracia, if it happens, it happens. Meantime, he has plenty on his plate.

"I was recently awarded the Bronze Star Medal here in Afghanistan," he wrote. "I am very proud of that. When I go home, I am going to have a very short ceremony with only close family and friends. My uncle, a blue-collar man, a veteran of the ... cont. on page 6...."



Mike Corrado, and Infantry/operations officer, sits with his acoustic Takamine at the entrance of Camp Fallujah, Iraq. (Courtesy to S&S)



Capt. Franke Gracia, 3rd Battalion, 141st Infantry, Task Force Alamo, operating in Afghanistan, has submitted three songs, including "Working Man," for the Songs from the Soul of Service songwriting contest. Photo by Aaron Mankin (Courtesy to S&S)