

PIRATE JENNY UTE LEMPER



Kurt Weill Reimagined

Kurt Weill Reimagined by UTE LEMPER and David Chesky

1) Mack the Knife

Lyrics: Bertolt Brecht • Music: Kurt Weill

From: The Threepenny Opera • English adaptation: Marc Blitzstein

2) Speak Low

Lyrics: Ogden Nash • Music: Kurt Weill

From: One Touch of Venus

3) Surabaya Johnny

Lyrics: Bertolt Brecht • Music: Kurt Weill

From: Happy End • English adaptation: Marc Blitzstein

4) My Ship

Lyrics: Ira Gershwin • Music: Kurt Weill

From: Lady in the Dark

5) Pirate Jenny

Lyrics: Bertolt Brecht • Music: Kurt Weill

From: The Threepenny Opera • English adaptation: Marc Blitzstein

6) Le Grand Lustucru

Lyrics: Jacques Deval • Music: Kurt Weill

From: Marie Galante

7) Die Ballade vom ertrunkenen Mädchen

Lyrics: Bertolt Brecht • Music: Kurt Weill

From: The Flight of Lindbergh

8) Salomon Song

Lyrics: Bertolt Brecht • Music: Kurt Weill

From: The Threepenny Opera



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Celebrating the 125th Anniversary of Kurt Weill

In honor of the 125th anniversary of Kurt Weill, Ute Lemper pays tribute to the composer who has shaped 40 years of her artistic journey. This time, she takes a bold and innovative approach, reimagining his work for a new era.

Collaborating with David Chesky, Ute has created a polyphonic, electronic, and contemporary collage—a cinematic and intense re-exploration of Weill's iconic stories. The songs transcend time, becoming multi-dimensional adventures. Through this unexpected and unique vision, the exotic characters of Weill's world are brought vividly back to life.

"I chose my favorite Kurt Weill songs, including some that are relatively unknown. A century later, it's time to bring him back into our world!" Ute shares.

Ute's selections span Weill's extraordinary career. From his Weimar-era masterpieces, she performs *Mack the Knife*, *Pirate Jenny*, and *The Salomon Song* from *The Threepenny Opera*, *Surabaya Johnny* from *Happy End*, and *The Ballad of the Drowned Girl* from the radio cantata *The Lindbergh Flight*.

From Weill's Paris exile, Ute revives *Le Grand Lustucru* from the play *Marie Galante*.

Finally, she reimagines two gems from Weill's American Songbook: *Speak Low* from *One Touch of Venus* and *My Ship* from *Lady in the Dark*.

This visionary project brings Kurt Weill's timeless works into the contemporary spotlight, celebrating his genius in ways that resonate profoundly with modern audiences.





Mack The Knife

Und der Haifisch, der hat Zähne und die trägt er im Gesicht

Oh the shark has pretty teeth dear
And he shows them pearly white
Just a jack knife has McHeath dear
And he keeps it out of sight

Und er hat Zähne mitten im Gesicht

Jenny Towler turned up lately
With a knife stuck through her breast
And a man walks the embankment
Nonchalantly unimpressed

Jenny ward gefunden mit 'nem Messer in der Brust
Was war Dein Preis

And the ghostly fire in Soho
Seven children at a go
In the crowd stands Mack the Knife but he
Isn't asked and he doesn't know

Er weiss von gar nichts, Macky, das große Feuer in Soho,
sieben Kinder und ein Greiss

And the child bride in her nighties
Who's assailant is still at large
Violated in her slumbers
Macky how much did you charge

Die minderjährige Witwe, jeder kennt sie, Macky, was hast
Du ihr angetan

For there are those in the darkness
And there are those in the night
One can see those in the bright light
But now those in the night

Und man sieht die im Lichte, die im Dunkeln sieht man nicht

Surabaya Johnny

I was just past my sixteenth birthday
When you dropped in one day from the blue
And you said to come with you to Burma
And to leave all the fixing to you
I asked you what job you were doing
And I swear that you answered to me
You had something to do with the railway
And nothing to do with the sea

You talked a lot Johnny,- a lot of lies Johnny
You took me for a ride Johnny all along the line
And I hate you so Johnny
You're grinning then Johnny
Just take that damn pipe out of your mouth, you swine

Surabaya Johnny,
done the worst that you know
Surabaya Johnny,
oh God and I love you so
Surabaya Johnny where can I hide or go
You have no heart Johnny
And I do love you so

I hadn't the chance to wonder how you earned that
particular name
But that coastline consisted of places
Where it turned out you often came
One morning in our loggings
I will hear the sea pounding the rocks
And you'll get up and walk off I silence
And your ship is down there at the docks

You have no heart, Johnny
You're no damn good, Johnny
You're leaving now Johnny
Without a line
And I still love you so Johnny
Like at the start Johnny
Just take that damn pipe out of your mouth you swine

Surabaya Johnny,
done the worst that you know
Surabaya Johnny,
oh God and I love you so
Surabaya Johnny where can I hide or go
You have no heart Johnny
And I do love you so

Speak Low

Speak low when you speak love
Our summer day withers away too soon, too soon
Speak low when you speak love
our moment is swift like ships are drift
We're swept apart, too soon.
Speak low, darling speak love
Love is a spark, lost in the dark too soon, too soon
I see wherever I go, that tomorrow is near,
tomorrow is here and always too soon.

Time is so old and love so brief
Love is pure gold and time a thief.

I wait, darling I wait
The curtain descends and everything ends too soon, too soon
We're late, darling we're late.
Will you speak low to me speak love to me and soon

My Ship

My ship has sails that are made of silk
The decks are trimmed with gold
And of Jam and spice there's a paradise in the hold
My ship's a glow with a million pearls
And rubies fill each bin
The sun sits high in a sapphire sky
When my ship comes in
I can't wait the years
'Til it appears
One fine day one spring
But the pearls and such
They won't mean much
If there's missing just one thing

I do not care if that day arrived
That dream will never be
If the ship I sing doesn't also bring
My own true love tome
If the ship I sing doesn't also bring
My own true love to me

Pirate Jenny

You gentlemen can watch while I'm scrubbin' the floors
And I'm scrubbin' the floors while you're gawkin'
And maybe once you tip me and it makes you feel swell
On a ratty waterfront in a ratty old hotel
And you never guess to who you're talkin'
You never guess to who you are talkin'
Suddenly one night, there's a scream in the night
And you wonder, "What could that a-been?"
And you see me kinda grinnin' while I'm scrubbin'
And you wonder, "What's she got to grin?"
And a ship, a black freighter
With a skull on its masthead
Will be comin' in

You gentlemen can say, "Hey girl, finish the floors
Get upstairs, make the beds, earn your keep here!"
You toss me your tips and look out at the ships
But I'm countin' your heads while I make up the beds
'Cause there's nobody gonna sleep here
Tonight none of you will sleep here
Then that night there's a bang in the night
And you yell, "Who's that kickin' up a row?"
And you see me kinda starin' out the winda
And you say, "What's she got to stare at now?"
And a ship, the black freighter
Turns around in the harbor
getting closer and closer now

Then you gentlemen can wipe off that laugh from your face
Every building in town is a flat one
Your whole stinkin' place will be down to the ground
Only this cheap hotel standin' up safe and sound
And you yell, "Why do they spare that one?"
And you say, "Why do they spare that one?"
All the night through with the noise and to-do
You wonder who's that person lives up there
Then you see me steppin' out into the mornin'
Lookin' nice with a ribbon in my hair
And the ship, the black freighter
Runs the flag up its masthead
And a cheer rings the air!

By noontime the dock is all swarmin' with men
Comin' off of that ghostly freighter
They're movin' in the shadows where no one can see
And they're chainin' up people and bringin' them to me
Askin' me, "Kill them now or later?"
Askin' me, "Kill them now or later?"
Noon by the clock and so still on the dock
You can hear a foghorn miles away
In that quiet of death, I'll say
"Right now"
And they pile up the bodies and I'll say
"That'll learn you"
Then the ship, the black freighter
Disappears out to sea

Le Grand Lustucru

Quel est donc, dedans la plaine
Ce grand bruit, qui vient jusqu'à nous?
On dirait un bruit de chaînes
Que l'on traîne, que l'on traîne
Que l'on traîne sur les cailloux

Quel est donc sur la rivière
Ce grand bruit qui vient jusqu'ici?
On dirait un bruit de pierres
Que l'on jette, que l'on jette
Que l'on jette dedans un puits

C'est le Grand Lustucru qui passe
C'est le Grand Lustucru qui mangera
Tous les petits gars qui ne dorment guère
Tous les petits gars qui ne dorment pas

L'Angélus sonne sur Balanches
Un pigeon tombe du clocher
Quel est donc ce bruit de branches
Que l'on traîne, que l'on traîne
Que l'on traîne sur le plancher?

C'est le Grand Lustucru qui passe
C'est le Grand Lustucru qui mangera
Tous les petits gars qui ne dorment guère
Tous les petits gars qui ne dorment pas

C'est le Grand Lustucru qui passe
Et ce soir, c'est moi qu'il vient chercher
Moi, ce soir, parce que je ne dors guère
Moi, ce soir, parce que je ne dors pas

Die Ballade vom ertrunkenen Mädchen

Als sie ertrunken war und hinunter schwamm
Von den Bächen in die größeren Flüsse
Schien der Opal des Himmels sehr wundersam
Als ob er die Leiche begütigen müsse.

Tang und Algen hielten sich an ihr ein
So dass sie langsam viel schwerer ward.
Kühl die Fische schwammen an ihrem Bein
Pflanzen und Tiere beschwerten noch ihre letzte Fahrt.

Und der Himmel ward abends dunkel wie Rauch
Und hielt nachts mit den Sternen das Licht in Schewebe.
Aber früh ward er hell, dass es auch
Noch für sie Morgen und Abend gebe.

Als ihr bleicher Leib im Wasser verfaulet war
Geschah es (sehr langsam), dass Gott sie allmählich vergaß.
Erst ihr Gesicht, dann die Hände und ganz zuletzt erst ihr Haar.
Dann ward sie Aas in Flüssen mit vielem Aas.

Salomon Song

You saw the wise man Salomon you know what he became
The man saw life and death so clear
He dammed and blamed the hour of birth
and knew that all around was vain

How great and wise was Salomon
And look it wasn't nighttime yet
The consequence was evident
The wisdom brought it to a very end
Oh, envy those who do not know

And now you see Mac Heath and me
God knows how this will end
So brave and strong was our love
How could this happen in its world
Where you can't trust your closest friend

See how they tear us two apart
And look it isn't night time yet
The consequence is evident
The passion brought it to a very end
Oh, envy those who do not love

Credits

Produced by: David Chesky and Ute Lemper

Vocal Arrangements by: Ute Lemper

Music Arrangements by: David Chesky

Recorded by: David Chesky and Ute Lemper

Mixed in 3D Mega-Dimensional sound by: David Chesky
and Ute Lemper

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Project Manager: Enrique Saguya



Recorded in Mega-Dimensional Sound



schönung, ich soll nicht lang warten, denn ich bin allein! Doch das ist so schön, denn ich

Es ist ein festes, das ist schön, ein solches Vergnügen, das man sich hat

Wenn man einen Mann hat, der so schön ist, wie ich, dann ist das ein Vergnügen, das man sich hat