

## Great Voices Sing John Denver

### Some of the best voices in opera are singing John Denver's greatest hits on a new album coming out June 11th

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LOS ANGELES, May 9, 2013 -- /PRNewswire/ -- John Denver and opera fans alike have something to look forward to this summer. On June 11th, legendary music producer, Milt Okun along with composer Lee Holdridge are bringing some of the most famous names in opera to John Denver's famous hit songs: "Great Voices Sing John Denver".

The album features artists such as Placido Domingo, Rod Gilfry, Daniel Montenegro, Shenyang, Danielle de Niese and Rene Pape, among others. The group is comprised of an international group of singers to fully embody who John Denver was - an international man. All the artists were given the option of which song they wished to sing and unbelievably no two artists chose the same song. As with many people, each of the artists had personal stories that went along with their song choice.

It was Milt Okun's wife Rosemary Okun's idea to have opera singers sing some of John's greatest hits. She mentioned this idea one night over dinner with a group of friends and "everyone sat there and looked at me," Rosemary recalls. However, she couldn't let it go. "My feeling was that we *had* to do it. I believed that we owed it to John. Milt and I had been lucky enough to have this wonderful singer and performer in our lives - lives that John enriched immeasurably. And it was a true partnership. John's life was in turn enriched by Milt's work- and maybe by my cooking."

There was no question in Milt's mind that in order to get the ball rolling he needed the good graces and support of Placido Domingo. "The instant I mentioned the idea to Placido, he said yes." Milt says, "He and John had such a warm relationship. I remember the time when we were recording 'Perhaps Love' in 1981 with such fondness. They hit it off immediately and just loved working together."

They also collaborated with Elisa Justice, who co-produced the album. She worked closely with the agents in getting the singers that were requested on board, while coordinating their schedules to get them in the studio. Elisa also brought in singers that had not been thought of, adding enormous variety to the project.

With Placido leading the way, the CD was bound to have any singer that they wanted. The result is a wonderful album comprised of opera stars of all voices and several generations. Thus, bringing their exceptional talents to John's work.

See the Track List: <http://www.ballantinespr.com/News/Okun/JohnDenver-TrackList.html>

Producers: Milt Okun, Rosemary Okun, Elisa Justice Executive Producers: Peter Primont, Mark Shimmel Arranged and Conducted by Lee Holdridge Orchestra Contractor: Frank Capp Orchestra Recorded at Capitol Studios Los Angeles Principal Recording Engineers: John Richards, Charles

Paakkari Additional Recording Engineers: Frank Filipetti, Peter Fuchs, Ed Kelly, Jim Curtis, Mat LeJeune, Alejandro Venguer, Alex Watson Mastering by: Robert Vosgien London Coordinator: Allan Wilson

**About Milt Okun** Milt Okun has worked with world-renowned Placido Domingo, was the conductor for Harry Belafonte, and was the man who brought John Denver to stardom and produced his most loved hits. Okun is also known for transforming three unknown singers who had never worked together into one of the most successful musical acts of their generation, Peter, Paul and Mary. He also founded Cherry Lane Music, the music publishing company for Elvis and DreamWorks among many other household names.

Undisputedly lauded as the man who ensured that John Denver became a household name with such hits as "Rocky Mountain High" and "Sunshine on My Shoulders," Okun also produced and arranged Denver's "Christmas" album and collaborated with Denver on two albums with the Muppets. "Christmas Together" went PLATINUM and GOLD. Okun also served as executive producer for "Rocky Mountain Holiday." It was after this collaboration that a critic famously wrote, "Of all major producers, Okun has the widest range – from Placido Domingo to the Muppets."

For press inquiries please contact: **Lauren Newhouse** [lauren@ballantinespr.com](mailto:lauren@ballantinespr.com) T: (310)454-3080 [www.ballantinespr.com](http://www.ballantinespr.com)

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