



LOREENA MCKENNITT

Breaking of the Sword

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 3, 2017

CANADIAN PRESS RELEASE

Loreena McKennitt releases Vimy tribute song

*Proceeds from digital sales in Canada
will be donated to the Support Our Troops Fund*

STRATFORD, Ont. – A song about love, dedication, and family sacrifice has been released for Remembrance Day by award-winning Canadian recording artist Loreena McKennitt.

The single, entitled “Breaking of the Sword”, was inspired during McKennitt’s participation in April at [The Canadian National Vimy Memorial](#) for the 100th anniversary of the historic Battle of Vimy Ridge where she experienced a palpable sense of profound loss. During the ceremony, she performed “Dante’s Prayer” from her 1997 album *The Book of Secrets*.

“I feel the sentiment of this song is both timeless and universal,” says McKennitt, who, in this new, original piece evokes both her role as an artist, and as an [Honorary Colonel](#) of the Royal Canadian Air Force.

The music weaves together the military family and Canadian communities, with contributions from the Ottawa-based [Central Band of the Canadian Armed Forces](#) and the 90-voice [Stratford Concert Choir](#) located in McKennitt’s home base of Stratford, Ontario and led by director [Ian Sadler](#).

The title of the song is borrowed from a group of statues on the Vimy Memorial called the Defenders, particularly those known as the Breaking of the Sword. [The Canadian National Vimy Memorial](#) consists of 20 symbolic statues, the largest of which is known as Canada Bereft. Sometimes called Mother Canada, it personifies a young nation mourning its dead.

“When I looked at Canada Bereft with her head bowed in grief, I found it so moving and powerful,” says McKennitt. “When you lose a child, that unimaginable loss and longing is felt the world over. It transcends borders and cultures and time itself.

McKennitt’s song is written in the first person from a mother’s perspective. It describes the sunny April morning the child is born and how he grows up to work in the fields and stables alongside her. The war then calls him away where he is killed in battle.

“From a personal standpoint, the closest I have come to witnessing this loss from the immediate family’s experience has been when I attended two repatriation ceremonies,” reflects McKennitt. “The last time the families had seen their loved ones was when they were departing from home. Now, they were coming back in a casket. Witnessing the spouses and children during their moments of dealing with this reality is something I will never forget.

“In my eleven years of being an Honorary Colonel, I have come to realize there are at least three kinds of families experiencing loss in times of sacrifice– the immediate family, the military family, and the communities where our fallen have lived,” says McKennitt. “I have tried to represent each of them in my arrangement, symbolically drawing upon the Central Band of the Canadian Armed Forces, as well as our local community concert choir.”

“In the contemporary sense, families of those who serve continue to make huge compromises and sacrifices to support their loved ones, regardless of their mission or task – from combat to humanitarian and search-and-rescue missions, to the demands of daily training and operations. We, as citizens, owe those who serve, as well as their families, our immense gratitude and at the very least, the act of remembrance.”

As of Friday November 3rd, “Breaking of the Sword” will be exclusively available digitally, via iTunes, Amazon Music Unlimited, Apple Music, Spotify, Google Play Music and more.

McKennitt has also announced that 100 per cent of her Canadian proceeds will be donated to the [Support Our Troops Fund](#). The fund provides financial support and assistance to Canadian Armed Forces members, veterans and their respective families.

Loreena McKennitt’s eclectic Celtic blend of pop, folk and world music has sold over 14 million albums worldwide. Her recordings have achieved Gold, Platinum and multi-Platinum status in 15 countries on four continents. She has twice been nominated for a Grammy Award and has won two Juno Awards, as well as a Billboard International Achievement Award.

In 2014, she was appointed [Honorary Colonel of the Royal Canadian Air Force](#) after serving for eight years as Honorary Colonel of [435 Transport and Rescue Squadron](#), based in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

In 2013, McKennitt was appointed to the rank of Knight of the National Order of Arts and Letters by the Republic of France. She is also a member of the [Order of Canada](#) and the [Order of Manitoba](#). In 2002 and 2012 she was the recipient of Queen Elizabeth II’s Golden and Diamond Jubilee medals. She has performed in some of the world’s most-respected and historic concert venues, from Carnegie Hall to the famous Alhambra Palace in Granada, Spain and for dignitaries including Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and numerous heads of state.

www.LOREENAMCKENNITT.com/vimy

For more information, please contact
Krista Williams or **Carla Sacks** at **Sacks & Co.**
212-741-1000, krista@sacksco.com or carla@sacksco.com