



# The Best of the Krüger Brothers

In the liner notes to the album *Forever and a Day* Uwe wrote that, “When we began our career in 1975, nothing could have prepared us for the journey that lay ahead.” Now as we approach the 40th anniversary of that beginning, it is difficult to comprehend the full extent of what is, by any measure, a truly remarkable journey. We see glimpses of it from time to time. Jens mentions writing music in a castle tower in Switzerland; the song “Carolina in the Fall” tells about the move to the United States. Somewhere in there they hosted a national radio show in Switzerland, Uwe and Joel played at the launch of Microsoft Windows 95, Jens updated the design of the Deering banjo line, they were awarded a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, hosted an annual music festival, established a recording company, collaborated with a ballet troupe, and most recently have received a commission from the Banff Centre for the Arts in Alberta, Canada. They also found opportunities to realize some things that, at one point, would have seemed like unattainable dreams, such as playing on stage with childhood heroes, Doc Watson, Bobby Hicks, and Bill Monroe.

Theirs is a career that has traced a remarkable arc, from a couple of rag-tag musicians busking for spare change in Munich’s Marienplatz, to an international trio playing with symphonies and in concert halls throughout North America and Europe. There are now 15 albums under the Krüger Brothers name, presenting everything from traditional clawhammer tunes to a collaboration with a classical string quartet.

But of course all of those things are really just moments, stops along the way, not the journey itself. When Uwe talks about the journey, he is speaking of those moments, but he’s also speaking of the musical adventure that connects them and provides a context for them; for Uwe, Jens, and since 1995, Joel Landsberg, it has been a consistent path of creativity and discovery. And with that perspective in mind, all of the various moments recede a bit and begin to appear a little less unlikely. These are three musicians who have simply followed their musical curiosity, one discovery leading quite naturally to the next. In so doing, they’ve also shown that the distance between some musical ideas isn’t nearly as great as it might seem, such as the distance between traditional Appalachian folk music and classical music.

As Joel has said about their work as recording artists and performers, they often feel that their role is to share their discoveries with their audiences, as if saying “look at this, look at what we found.” This collection comes from that same place. Each track is a moment, some of them from some time ago, such as “Cork Harbor” and “Alabama Bound,” while others are more recent, such as “The Lights of Our Village” and “People Get Ready.” If they look disparate, this collection shows that, in fact, they really aren’t. All were guided by the same hands, by the same curiosities, and in so doing they all help to tell the larger story of the Krüger Brothers.

This summer, with a premiere at the Banff Centre, the journey continues into new territory, geographically, musically, and collaboratively. And, for the Krüger Brothers, there’s nothing surprising about that at all.

## Artist

Krüger Brothers

## Album Title

Best of the Krüger Brothers

## Label

Double Time Music

## Catalog #

DTM-023

## Artist Description

Jens Krüger, Banjo

Uwe Krüger, Guitar

Joel Landsberg, Bass

## Released

April 30, 2012

## Track Listing

Watches the Clouds Roll By

Black Mountain Rag

People Get Ready

Carolina in the Fall

The Plan

Cork Harbor

The Lights in Our Village

Forever and a Day

Beautiful Nothing

Choices

The New Country

Winterport

Long Black Veil

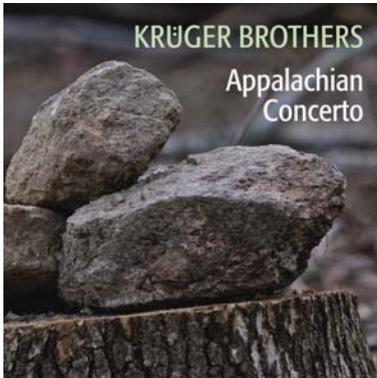
Alabama Bound

Honey Babe Blues

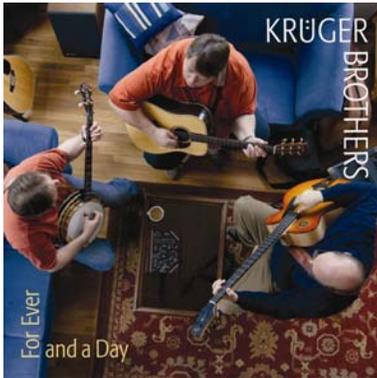
Sweden /

Running Down the Mountain

# The Kruger Brothers



Originally from Switzerland, brothers Uwe and Jens Kruger began playing North American folk music at an early age and were particularly inspired by recordings of Doc Watson, Flatt and Scruggs, Bill Monroe, and other progenitors of country, bluegrass and folk music. Their first public performances were as a duo, busking on the streets of cities throughout eastern and western Europe. After gaining a recording contract as well as a radio show on SRG SSR, the Swiss public broadcaster, they teamed up with bass player Joel Landsberg, inaugurating a trio that has been playing professionally together since 1995. Landsberg is an American citizen from New York, NY. The Kruger Brothers moved to the United States in 2002, and are based in Wilkesboro, NC.



In an ever expanding body of work, Jens Kruger (banjo, vocals), Uwe Kruger (guitar, lead vocals), and Joel Landsberg (bass, vocals) personify the spirit of exploration and innovation that forms the core of the American musical tradition. The honesty of their writing has become a hallmark of the trio's work. Another is the banjo playing and composition of Jens Kruger. Happy Traum has described Kruger as "one of the world's most musically sophisticated and technically accomplished five-string banjo players." Kruger plays in a melodic style that, while it may stem from the three-finger bluegrass style popularized by Snuffy Jenkins and Earl Scruggs, is also differentiated by long melodic passages and a more complex compositional foundation, often building on jazz or classical themes and techniques.



The recording that cemented the Kruger Brothers' sound and song writing, *Up 18 North*, was released in 2002 on the Double Time label. Included were a number of tracks that signalled the direction that the band was to take in future projects. The title track "Up 18 North" is an instrumental piece, with banjo clearly in the foreground, that remains a prime example of the type of close ensemble playing that characterizes the trio's work. The vocal track "Carolina in the Fall" is an early example of the very personal, resonant, and mature song writing that they continue to this day.

Most recently their music has ventured further into the themes and forms of classical music, most obviously in their 2011 release, *Appalachian Concerto*. Through their numerous CD releases, radio and television performances, workshops, and collaborative efforts, the Kruger Brothers continue to provide a unique voice in the world of folk, Americana, and classical music.