

AN INVITATION TO NORTH AMERICA

Early New York



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Henry Hudson and *De Halve Maen*

More than making up for the lack of traditional songs from New Amsterdam are the contemporary compositions of Dutch composer and singer Nanne Kalma. As he explains below, he has written a song-cycle on the very subject that was sorely needed to make this Henry Hudson Quadricentennial Celebration compilation complete.

“The first time that we [with his partner Ankie van der Meer] performed in the USA was in 1994 with our group Liereliet. We performed at the festival in Mystic Seaport and we did some concerts for the Pinewoods folk club in Manhattan. We also gave a concert in the Hudson River Maritime Museum in Kingston.

In 1998 we were in the USA for nearly two months with Ankie and our group Kat yn ’t Seil. We did festivals like Mystic Seaport, Old Songs, New Bedford; we gave school concerts and a lot of concerts in libraries, museums and places that had to do with the history of New Netherlands.

At one of the concerts someone came up to me and asked me: ‘Why don’t you write a cycle of songs about Henry Hudson and *The Half Moon*?’ And I said: ‘Yes, why not?’ because I love to write songs with historical themes and I was very much inspired by New Netherlands history.

In the year 2000 we were invited to participate in the sea-song festival in the Mystic Seaport Museum. And they asked us if we could do a spot of about 15 minutes on the opening concert. The songs should be about the Netherlands-USA relationship. So I wrote a few about Hudson and his ship. *De Halve Maen* was one of them.

Later the VOC-city [Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie/Netherlands East India Company] Enkhuizen asked me to write a show with a VOC-theme. They wanted the show for the occasion of 400 years of the VOC in 2002. So I suggested writing a musical type of show about Henry Hudson, and they liked the idea.

‘Henry Hudson & *De Halve Maen*’ is about the voyage made by Henry Hudson in 1609. In that year Hudson, under contract to the VOC sailed from Amsterdam northward towards the pole to search for a northeastern passage to China. Against orders Hudson changed course and sailed westward to search for the

passage. After crossing the Atlantic Ocean, and after a period of roaming down the east coast of America, he arrived at the mouth of the Hudson River. Hoping for the possibility of a passage, Hudson decided to explore this river . . . The river was navigable up to the point where Albany currently lies . . . When it became obvious that there was no possible northwest passage, Hudson was forced to end the expedition.”

The CD “Henry Hudson & *De Halve Maen*” traces Hudson’s voyage through 34 songs. “Eindelijk Onderweg / Underway At Last” (2001) and “Land In Zicht / Land In Sight” (2000) are on the CD (with a group of singers assuming various roles). “*Halve Maen / Half Moon*” (2000) was recorded separately.

Continuing Nanne Kalma’s historical account:

“Because of breach of contract (he had been specifically forbidden to look for a northwest passage) he didn’t dare return to Amsterdam, and so he sailed to England, where he got into trouble for having worked for the Dutch. [Hudson was English]

The *Half Moon* was impounded in Dartmouth for a time, but eventually Hudson managed to regain the trust of the English. He succeeded in finding people willing to stock the ship and allow him to search once again for the Northwest Passage. This journey was ill fated for Hudson. His crew mutinied and left him behind, together with several faithful men, including his son, in a rowboat on the almost frozen Hudson Bay.

In 1611 it sails in convoy to the Dutch East Indies. The fate of the ship is uncertain. Some sources claim that the English near Java burned a ship called the *Half Moon*—other sources claim that a ship called the *Half Moon* sank near the coast of Mauritius.

The purpose of Hudson’s expedition with the *Half Moon*, the discovery of the Northeast Passage, [or the Northwest Passage—his own idea] was not accomplished. However, his exploration of the Hudson River led to a flurry of activity from the Dutch for that area, with the final result that a colony called ‘New Netherlands’ was founded. On the island of Manhattan, bought from the Indians, was eventually built the city of New Amsterdam.”

Which leads us directly to this book.

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Halve Maen / Half Moon

English Lyrics: Jerry Silverman

By Nanne Kalma

D5 (no f)

Guitar drone throughout verse

Op wel - ke werf dat haar kiel werd ge - legd en wan -
In which ship - yard did the work - ers then lay her keel

neer en in op - dracht van wie build it? men weet het niet
down? Who gave or - ders to build it? His name can't be

E D5

meer. Pas in zes - tien nul acht, dan noemt men haar naam; ver -
found. We first hear of that ship in six - teen - o - eight, For

A

meldt men een tocht van de Hal - ve Maen.
that's when the Half Moon, her an - chor weighed.

Chorus

Dm C Dm C Dm

Oh Hal - ve Maen, waar kwam jij van - daan voor-dat je
Oh, you Half Moon, where did you come from be - fore you

F C7 Dm

zeil - de van Am - ster - dam naar nieu - we kus - ten?
sailed out from Am - ster - dam for far - off coast - lines?

F C7 Dm

— Men her - in - nert zich jou hier van die tocht naar die ri -
— Peo - ple still re - call you here from the trip you made that

A7 Bb F A

vier, die nu de naam draagt van jouw schip - per Hen - ry Hud - son.
year un - to that ri - ver with the name of Hen - ry Hud - son,

Dm A Dm

— Maar hoe is het je ver - gaan, daar - na, Hal - ve Maen?
— But then af - ter - wards what was your fate, oh, Half Moon?

Used by permission of composer Nanne Kalma

Dan in zestien nul negen vertrekt het schip richting ijs;
De noord-oostelijke doorvaart is het doel van de reis.
Maar na amper één poging wordt het roer al gewend
En zet men koers Nieuwe Wereld, waar de kust wordt verkend. *Refrein*

Het doorkruiste de poolzee, het bedwong de oceaan;
In zestien elf is het schip nog naar Oost Indië gegaan.
Maar aan slechts één expeditie dankt het haar faam:
Aan die tocht de-rivier-op verbindt het haar naam. *Refrein*

Bronnen vermelden hoe het jacht *Halve Maen*
Uiteindelijk bij Java door brand is vergaan.
Volgens andere is het schip bij Mauritius gestrand
En ligt het daar nu te slapen voor de kust in het zand. *Refrein*

Then in sixteen-o-nine, to the ice of the north,
For the northeastern passage the ship then sails forth.
But soon after that the ship turns around,
And straight for the shores of the New World is bound. *Chorus*

She sailed 'cross the Arctic, o'er the waves she did roll,
Then in sixteen-eleven—the East Indies her goal.
But only one voyage did bring her great fame,
For that trip up that river we remember her name. *Chorus*

Now, according to some folks the good ship *Half Moon*
In a fire near Java did meet her sad doom.
Others say near Mauritius the ship ran aground,
And is sleeping offshore—undisturbed and unfound. *Chorus*

In sixteen-o-nine on a bright summer's day,
The *Half Moon* dropped anchor in New York Bay.
Henry Hudson, the Captain, took a good look around,
Said, "Boys, this is gonna be one helluva town."

An edited verse from "Listen, Mr. Bilbo," published in *People's Songs*.
Vol. 1, No. 2, March 1946. The original said "Henry Hudson, a Dutchman . . ."



The *Half Moon*, 2006, replica ship. Used by permission of New Netherland Museum

✚ Eindelijk Onderweg / Underway at Last ✚

The third Voyage of Master Henrie Hudson toward Noua Zembla and at his returne, his passing from Farre Ilands, to New-Found Land, and along to fortie foure degrees and ten minutes, and thence to Cape Cod, and so to thirtie three degrees; and along the Coast to the Northward, to fortie two degrees and an halfe, and up the Riuer neere to fortie three degrees.

Written by Robert Ivet of Lime-House

On Saturday the five and twentieth of March, 1609, after the old Account, we set sayle from Amsterdam; and by the seuen and twentieth day, we were down at the *Texel*,* and by twelve of the clock we were off the Land, it being East of vs two leagues off. And because it is a journey vsually knowne, I omit to put downe what passed, till we came to the height of *The North Cape of Finmarke*, which we did performe by the fift of May (*stilo nouo*) being Tuesday. On which we obserued the height of the Pole, and found it to bee 71.degrees and 46.minutes; and found our Compasse to vary six degrees to the West: and at twelue of the clocke, the North Cape did bearre South-west and by South, tenne leagues off, and we steered away East by South, and East.

From the journal of Robert Ivet (the Dutch called him Robert Jouet), First Mate of the *Half Moon*. Transcribed by Brea Barthel. Used by permission of New Netherland Museum/replica ship, the *Half Moon*, 2006. www.halfmoon.mus.ny.us

* An island just off the Dutch coast on the way out to sea from Amsterdam.