



CHAMBER MUSIC SERIES
Sunday, March 1, 2015 at 2:00 P.M.
John Philip Sousa Band Hall
Marine Barracks Annex
Washington, DC

Lieutenant Colonel Jason K. Fettig, Director

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)
transcribed by Marcel Grandjany

Bourrée's Double from Violin Partita No. 1

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

Gavotte en Rondeau from Suite BWV 1006a

MSgt Karen Grimsey, harp

Arvo Pärt (b. 1935)
arranged by Beat Brinner

Fratres (1977)

SSgt Joseph DeLuccio and SSgt Trevor Mowry, oboe
GySgt Michelle Urzynick and SSgt Andrew Dees, clarinet
MSgt Christopher McFarlane and GySgt Bernard Kolle, bassoon
GySgt Hilary Harding and GySgt Jennifer Paul, horn
GySgt Steven Owen, percussion
GySgt Robert Singer, conductor

Franz Biebl (1906–2001)
arranged by Royce Lumpkin

Ave Maria (Angelus Domini) (1964)

Giovanni Gabrieli (1554–1612)
arranged by Eric Crees

Sonata Pian e Forte

MGySgt Charles Casey, MSgt Chris Clark,
GySgt Samuel Barlow, GySgt Darren Bange,
GySgt Timothy Dugan, GySgt Preston Hardage,
SSgt Christopher Reaves, and MSgt Karl Johnson, trombone
GySgt Robert Singer, conductor

INTERMISSION

Olivier Messiaen (1908–92)

Quatuor pour la fin du temps (1941)

Liturgie de cristal
Vocalise, pour l'Ange qui annonce la fin du Temps
Abîme des oiseaux
Intermède
Louange à l'Éternité de Jésus
Danse de la fureur, pour les sept trompettes
Fouillis d'arcs-en-ciel, pour l'Ange qui annonce la fin du Temps
Louange à l'Immortalité de Jésus

SSgt Patrick Morgan, clarinet
SSgt Karen Johnson, violin
SSgt Charlaire Prescott, cello
SSgt Christopher Schmitt, piano

The U.S. Marine Band will perform Sunday, March 8 at 2:00 P.M. in the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center at Northern Virginia Community College, Alexandria Campus. The program will feature the works of Scandinavian composers.

www.marineband.marines.mil | (202) 433-4011 | www.facebook.com/marineband | www.twitter.com/marineband

PLEASE NOTE: The use of recording devices and flash photography is prohibited during the concert. In addition to works of the U.S. Government (as defined by 17 U.S.C. § 101 et seq.), this performance may also contain individuals' names and likenesses, trademarks, or other intellectual property, matter, or materials that are either covered by privacy, publicity, copyright, or other intellectual property rights licensed to the U.S. Government and owned by third parties, or are assigned to or otherwise owned by the U.S. Government. You should not assume that anything in this performance is necessarily in the Public Domain.

PROGRAM NOTES

Bourrée's Double from Violin Partita No. 1

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

transcribed by Marcel Grandjany

Gavotte en Rondeau from Suite BWV 1006a

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

Johann Sebastian Bach came from a long line of prodigious musicians. By the time he was born in 1685, the Bach family had produced two generations of composers and young Johann Sebastian was immediately exposed to music. His parents died when he was ten years old and the remainder of his upbringing was placed in the hands of his elder brother, Johann Christoph. Christoph also was a musician, an organist in Ohrdruf, Germany, but was rumored to be wildly jealous of young Sebastian's talent. Although he tutored the young Bach in music, he denied him access to the great organ works of the day, including the music of Johann Pachelbel, Johann Jacob Froberger, and Dietrich Buxtehude. Johann Sebastian would secretly "borrow" the volumes at night while his brother slept, and copy the music by hand in the moonlight. The legend holds that this activity began the eventual deterioration of his eyesight, leaving him blind by the time of his death. The passing of Johann Christoph in 1700 allowed the 15-year-old Sebastian to embark on his career in earnest.

Bach's music is satisfying on many levels; from his mastery of form and harmonic language to his melodies that have survived for more than 300 years. There is also an element of showmanship, pushing the technical abilities of his instrumentalists to the point where, to this day, it remains some of the most challenging music ever written. Bach often transcribed his own music for different instruments, and these pieces reimaged for solo harp are a continuation of that tradition. Bourée's Double was originally composed for violin, and the Gavotte en Rondeau was originally written for lute.

Fratres (1977)

Arvo Pärt (b. 1935)

arranged by Beat Briner

Since the late 1970s, Estonian composer Arvo Pärt's music can best be described with the word "tintinnabuli," defined as "of or relating to bells or the ringing of bells." Pärt often describes his musical aesthetic as the sound that bells make after they have been rung. A well-tuned bell has the interesting acoustical property of producing many different pitches simultaneously. A church bell tuned in E, for example, will simultaneously sound an E in three or four octaves as well as a minor third, a major third, and a fifth. *Fratres* is a good example of this tintinnabuli sound because the entire piece consists of a sequence of eight or nine major/minor chords played repeatedly at a very slow tempo. This chord sequence is interrupted slightly by quiet percussion taps. The overall effect is mesmerizing and unique. Pärt has reworked *Fratres* for eighteen different chamber and solo instrumental settings since its original version in 1977.

Ave Maria (Angelus Domini) (1964)

Franz Biebl (1906–2001)

arranged by Royce Lumpkin

Sonata Pian e Forte
Giovanni Gabrieli (1554–1612)
arranged by Eric Crees

Many people are unaware of the trombone's historic and close association with the church. Invented in Europe sometime in the mid-1400s, the basic shape of the trombone with its characteristic slide has remained largely unchanged since its invention. It soon found an active role in the church; most often doubling choir parts, necessitating the need for soprano, alto, tenor, and bass trombones. This tradition of trombones being used in the church was apparently so common that it caused Martin Luther to substitute the word "trombone" for "trumpet" in his translation of the Bible in 1522. Trombones were considered a sacred instrument by many in the German Lutheran tradition. In fact, Felix Mendelssohn said, "The trombone is too sacred for frequent use." Ludwig van Beethoven wrote a trombone quartet for All Souls Day that was later performed at his own funeral.

These two transcriptions fall into the long tradition of the trombone's association with sacred music. German composer Franz Beibl's *Ave Maria* was originally written for a vocal trio and choir but has been transcribed many times due to its popularity. Giovanni Gabrieli specifically called for trombones in his *Sonata Pian e Forte*. This piece is notable because it is the first piece of music that calls for dynamics. It is also notable because Gabrieli assigned parts to specific instruments (One violin, one cornett, six trombones) as opposed to the usual practice at the time of simply allowing the musicians to sort out the instrumentation themselves.

Quatuor pour la fin du temps (1941)
Olivier Messiaen (1908–92)

I saw a mighty angel descend from heaven, clad in mist; and a rainbow was upon his head. His face was like the sun, his feet like pillars of fire. He set his right foot on the sea, his left foot on the earth, and standing thus on sea and earth he lifted his hand to heaven and swore by Him who liveth for ever and ever, saying: There shall be time no longer; but on the day of the trumpet of the seventh angel, the mystery of God shall be finished. (Book of Revelation 10: 1-2, 5-7)

Conceived and written in the course of my captivity, *Quatuor pour la fin du temps* (Quartet for the End of Time) was performed for the first time in Stalag 8-A on January 15, 1941, by Jean Le Boulaire, violinist; Henri Akoka, clarinetist; Etienne Pasquier, cellist; and myself at the piano. It is directly inspired by this excerpt from *The Revelation of St. John*. Its musical language is essentially transcendental, spiritual, catholic. Certain modes, realizing melodically and harmonically a kind of tonal ubiquity, draw the listener into a sense of the eternity of space or time. Particular rhythms existing outside the measure contribute importantly toward the banishment of temporalities. (All this is mere striving and childish stammering if one compares it to the overwhelming grandeur of the subject!)

This quartet contains eight movements. Why? Seven is the perfect number, the creation of six days made holy by the divine Sabbath; the seventh in its repose prolongs itself into eternity and becomes the eighth, of unfailing light, of immutable peace.

- I. *Liturgie de cristal* (Liturgy of crystal)—Between the morning hours of three and four, the awakening of the birds: a thrush or a nightingale soloist improvises, amid notes of shining sound and a halo of trills that lose themselves high in the trees. Transpose this to the religious plane: you will have the harmonious silence of heaven.
- II. *Vocalise, pour l'Ange qui annonce la fin du Temps* (Vocalise, for the angel who announces the end of Time)—The first and third parts (very short) evoke the power of that mighty angel, his hair a rainbow and his clothing mist, who places one foot on the sea and one foot on the earth. Between these sections are the ineffable harmonies of heaven. From the piano, soft cascades of blue-orange chords, encircling with their distant carillon the plainchant-like recitativo of the violin and cello.
- III. *Abîme des oiseaux* (Abyss of the birds)—Clarinet solo. The abyss is Time, with its sadnesses and tediums. The birds are the opposite of Time; they are our desire for light, for stars, for rainbows, and for jubilant outpourings of song!
- IV. *Intermède* (Interlude: Scherzo)—Of a more outgoing character than the other movements but related to them, nonetheless, by various melodic references.

- V. Louange à l'Éternité de Jésus (Praise to the eternity of Jesus)—Jesus is here considered as one with the Word. A long phrase, infinitely slow, by the cello expatiates with love and reverence on the everlastingness of the Word, mighty and dulcet, “which the years can in no way exhaust.” Majestically the melody unfolds itself at a distance both intimate and awesome. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”
- VI. Danse de la fureur, pour les sept trompettes (Dance of fury, for the seven trumpets)—Rhythmically the most idiosyncratic movement of the set. The four instruments in unison give the effect of gongs and trumpets (the first six trumpets of the Apocalypse attend various catastrophes, the trumpet of the seventh angel announces the consummation of the mystery of God). Use of extended note values, augmented or diminished rhythmic patterns, non-retrogradable rhythms—a systematic use of values which, read from left to right or from right to left, remain the same. Music of stone, formidable sonority; movement as irresistible as steel, as huge blocks of livid fury or ice-like frenzy. Listen particularly to the terrifying fortissimo of the theme in augmentation and with change of register of its different notes, toward the end of the piece.
- VII. Fouillis d’arcs-en-ciel, pour l’Ange qui annonce la fin du Temps (Cluster of rainbows, for the angel who announces the end of Time)—Here certain passages from the second movement return. The mighty angel appears, and in particular the rainbow that envelops him (the rainbow, symbol of peace, of wisdom, of every quiver of luminosity and sound). In my dreamings I hear and see ordered melodies and chords, familiar hues and forms; then, following this transitory stage I pass into the unreal and submit ecstatically to a vortex, a dizzying interpenetration of superhuman sounds and colors. These fiery swords, these rivers of blue-orange lava, these sudden stars: Behold the cluster, behold the rainbow!
- VIII. Louange à l’Immortalité de Jésus (Praise to the immortality of Jesus)—Expansive violin solo balancing the cello solo of the fifth movement. Why this second glorification? It addresses itself more specifically to the second aspect of Jesus—to Jesus the man, to the Word made flesh, raised up immortal from the dead so as to communicate His life to us. It is total love. Its slow rising to a supreme point is the ascension of man toward his God, of the Son of God toward his Father, of the mortal newly made divine toward paradise.

And I repeat anew what I said above: All this is mere striving and childish stammering if one compares it to the overwhelming grandeur of the subject!

Olivier Messiaen

Olivier Messiaen was born in Avignon, France, the son of a literature scholar and a poet. Not long after World War I began, he went to stay with his uncle in Grenoble, where he began playing piano and composing. After the war, the family moved to Paris and Messiaen entered the Conservatoire. He did not adhere to any particular style or “school” of composition, but from very early on was forming his own individual musical voice. His influences included his faith, the rhythms of India and Greece, and even bird song.

Messiaen was called to military service at the outbreak of World War II, and was taken a prisoner of war in May 1940. During the winter of 1940-41 at the Görlitz internment camp in Silesia he composed *Quatuor pour la fin du temps* to perform with his fellow inmates. The première performance of his most ambitious work to date took place in the POW camp. Upon his release in May 1941 he was appointed as professor of harmony at his alma mater, and he did not retire until 1978. He also taught analysis and composition, and his students included Karlheinz Stockhausen and Iannis Xenakis. By the time of Messiaen’s passing, many honors had been bestowed upon him, including the naming of a mountain in Utah Mount Messiaen.