THE PRESIDENT'S OWN

Lieutenant Colonel Jason K. Fettig, Director

CHAMBER MUSIC SERIES
Sunday, October 12, 2014 at 2:00 P.M.
John Philip Sousa Band Hall
Marine Barracks Annex
Washington, DC

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

Allegro assai from Sonata No. 3 in C, BWV 1005

SSgt Christopher Franke, violin

Sir Malcolm Arnold (1921–2006)

Quintet, Opus 73 (1961)

Allegro vivace
Chaconne: Andante con moto
Con brio

SSgt Benjamin Albright and GySgt Robert Singer, trumpet
GySgt Hilary Harding, horn
SSgt Christopher Reaves, trombone
GySgt Paul Mergen, tuba

Amilcare Ponchielli (1834–86)

Paolo e Virginia

GySgt Erika Sato, violin
MGySgt Charles Willett, clarinet
GySgt AnnaMaria Mottola, piano

Sergei Prokofiev (1891–1953)

Sonata in C, Opus 56 (1932)

Andante cantabile
Allegro
Commodo (quasi Allegretto)
Allegro con brio

SSgt Karen Johnson and GySgt Erika Sato, violin

INTERMISSION

Paul Harvey (b. 1935) — Three Etudes on Themes of Gershwin (1990)

"I Got Rhythm"
"Summertime"
"It Ain't Necessarily So"

GySgt Tracey Paddock, clarinet

Igor Stravinsky (1882–1971) — *Histoire du Soldat (The Soldier's Tale)* (1918)

The Soldier's March
Airs by a Stream
Pastoral
The Royal March
The Little Concert
Three Dances: Tango; Waltz; Ragtime
The Devil's Dance
Great Chorale
Triumphal March of the Devil

SSgt Chaerim Smith, violin
SSgt Joseph LeBlanc, clarinet
GySgt Bernard Kolle, bassoon
GySgt Robert Singer, trumpet
GySgt Timothy Dugan, trombone
MSgt Aaron Clay, double bass
GySgt Thomas Maloy, percussion

The Fall Chamber Music Series will continue Sunday, Oct. 19 at 2:00 P.M. in John Philip Sousa Band Hall at the Marine Barracks Annex in Washington, D.C. The program will feature the Marine Big Band and Combo.

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PLEASE NOTE: The use of recording devices and flash photography is prohibited during the concert.

PROGRAM NOTES

Allegro assai from Sonata No. 3 in C, BWV 1005

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

Completed in 1720, Johann Sebastian Bach's set of Six Sonatas and Partitas for solo violin provides some of the most difficult challenges for any violinist. While there were a few composers that had written works for unaccompanied violin, Bach set a new benchmark with the virtuosity and complexity of these compositions. But the reverence with which violinists and concertgoers treat these works was not realized until the middle of the nineteenth century when celebrated violinist Joseph Joachim helped to popularize and establish them as an essential part of the modern violin repertoire. Of the six works, three are Sonatas and three are Partitas, with the difference coming from the varying forms of the movements contained within. The Sonatas each consist of four movements (slow-fast-slow-fast) and start with a prelude followed by a fugue. The third movement is generally more lyrical, with the fourth and final movement taking the form of a livelier up-tempo dance. The Partitas, on the other hand, are much less formal in their overall design. They tend to include dances like the allemande, sarabande, and gigue, with Bach's own special flair providing variety from the traditional uses of the dances.

The Sonata No. 3 in C is one of the most difficult and demanding of the six works. It is said that even the great violinist Jascha Heifetz would suffer nervous bow-shakes and break out in a cold sweat when playing the Sonata. The Allegro assai is the fourth and final movement of the Sonata and is written in a lively and whirling dance style which displays the violin at its most virtuosic.

Quintet, Opus 73 (1961)

Sir Malcolm Arnold (1921–2006)

Sir Malcolm Arnold was born in Northampton, England. He studied the trumpet and performed with the London Philharmonic Orchestra until the end of the 1940s when he began to devote himself entirely to composition. Arnold composed numerous works in nearly all classical genres, including many compositions for wind and brass band. He is also well regarded for his film music. His music written for *The Bridge on the River Kwai* (1957) earned him an Academy Award.

Arnold's Opus 73 is the first, and better known, of two brass quintets. The work was commissioned by the New York Brass Quintet and has become a core piece of the repertoire. The virtuosic demands of all the brass instruments makes this work a challenge for the performers while Arnold's light and energetic modern compositional style, well rooted by strong rhythmic pulse and tonality has made the work a favorite among concertgoers.

Arnold is fond of "dueling" trumpet motives and he often showcases the trumpets as a duet playing apart from the low brass trio. This can be heard as the work opens with a flourish between the two trumpets echoed by a stately trio of the horn, trombone, and tuba. The second movement takes the form of a chaconne and offers a dark and foreboding contrast to the joyful exuberance of the first movement with a trombone solo offering contrast to the smooth flowing counterpoint of the other voices. The third movement of the work commences with a boisterous exchange of fanfares from the trumpets followed by diversions into formal sections exhibiting latin jazz rhythmic influences. The return of the trumpet fanfares, and a final "whoop" from the horn, bring the work to an exciting conclusion.

Paolo e Virginia
Amilcare Ponchielli (1834–86)

Born near Cremona, Italy, Amilcare Ponchielli began his musical studies with his organist father, and later received a scholarship to study at the Milan Conservatory. Following completion of his formal education, Ponchielli settled in Cremona to become a music teacher and organist. He also served as assistant to the director of Cremona's Teatro della Concordia, which led to duties directing several opera productions. His own first full-length opera, *I promessi sposi*, received its première in Cremona in 1856. During the 1860s, Ponchielli's subsequent operas met with limited success, and he supported himself as a municipal bandmaster. Tapped by famed publishing house G. Ricordi as a possible successor to Giuseppe Verdi, Ponchielli received a Ricordi commission for his opera, *I lituani*, which premiered at Milan's La Scala in 1874, to respectable reviews. It was his next opera, *La Gioconda*, that firmly established his reputation as an accomplished composer; the opera's "Danza delle ore" ("Dance of the Hours") remains a staple of orchestral repertoire to this day. Ponchielli continued composing operas and other works, and in his final years was also the chairman of the Composition Department at the Milan Conservatory, where his students included Puccini and Mascagni. He died in Milan in 1886.

Though celebrated for his operas and ballets, Ponchielli also wrote several works featuring the clarinet. Best-known are the *Quartet for Woodwinds*, and the clarinet duet, *Il Convegno*, each of which were written in versions accompanied by piano or orchestra. Never published during his lifetime are the *Ricordanze della Traviata* (on themes from Verdi's *La Traviata)* for flute, oboe, clarinet, and piano, and *Paolo e Virginia* for violin, clarinet, and piano. Composed in 1877, just after the initial success of *La Gioconda*, the title *Paolo e Virginia* stems from the popular eighteenth century French romance novel by Jacques-Henri de Saint-Pierre, *Paul et Virginie*; the novel remained so well-known even a hundred years after its initial publication that it was the subject of several musical settings and works of art (the most famous being Auguste Cot's painting *The Storm*). *Paolo e Virginia* contains several of the elements for which Ponchielli was highly-regarded: a gift for melodies that are at once tuneful, dramatic, and unique; the use of spirited dance rhythms (noticeable in the work's final Allegretto section); and an ability to write idiomatically for individual instruments. Occasionally dismissed as a trivial composer and 'mere bandmaster', Ponchielli's skillful writing for winds shows that, as one critic observed, "He did not bring the band into the orchestra, but rather, the orchestra into the band."

Sonata in C, Opus 56 (1932)
Sergei Prokofiev (1891–1953)

Sergei Prokofiev was a prodigiously talented Russian composer and pianist who wrote his first short piano pieces at age five. At only twelve years old, he enrolled in the prestigious St. Petersburg Conservatory at the urging of noted composer and conservatory instructor Alexander Glazunov. Due in part to his numerous successes at such a young age, he developed somewhat of a reputation as the *enfant terrible* of his generation of Russian composers. Indeed, many of his early works found him reacting strongly to the constricting traditions of Russian late-Romanticism, though often with a puckish irreverence that was perhaps more endearing than troubling to the traditionalists. Prokofiev, like so many of his artistically minded contemporaries, left Russia at the onset of the October Revolution in 1917, although it is unclear whether he truly intended to defect; he visited his homeland in 1927 and returned for good in 1936 where he lived until his death, on the same day as Stalin's, in 1953.

Chamber music composition was an infrequent and perhaps alien activity for Prokofiev. He was not a string player nor did he have string players among his acquaintances. In spite of this, in his Sonata in C, Opus 56, Prokofiev managed to place his unmistakable mark on this exciting and sometimes

disorienting piece. Prokofiev had been studying the Beethoven string quartets and was particularly interested in Beethoven's ability to combine two violin lines into one sound. The intertwining of the two violins makes it impossible at times to distinguish one from the other. The piece is written in the sonata da chiesa form of slow-fast-slow-fast. Prokofiev's rebellious compositional style which contrasts the tough, astringent modernist with the lyrical traditionalist gives this sonata its distinctive sound.

Three Etudes on Themes of Gershwin (1990)

Paul Harvey (b. 1935)

American composer and pianist George Gershwin (1898–1937) dropped out of high school in 1915 to begin his musical career as a "song plugger," promoting and selling songs for a publishing company on New York City's Tin Pan Alley. His early success writing his own songs and arrangements propelled Gershwin to collaborations on musicals and other projects, leading to the composition of original orchestral works (notably *Rhapsody in Blue* and *An American in Paris*, in the mid-1920s), musicals such as *Girl Crazy* (1930), and his opera, *Porgy and Bess* (1935). His music fuses elements of jazz with classical compositional technique, and is uniquely American. Sadly, Gershwin's life was cut short by a brain tumor, and he died at age thirty-eight.

Despite his short life, George Gershwin's music substantially shaped the musical landscape of twentieth century America, and its influence extended well beyond American borders. British composer, clarinetist, and saxophonist Paul Harvey, born in the same year that Gershwin's opera *Porgy and Bess* was first performed, used three of Gershwin's best known songs in his *Three Etudes on Themes of Gershwin* to create a synthesis of Gershwin's jazz-flavored classicism and Harvey's own contemporary compositional techniques. Each movement references a Gershwin song, and each is dedicated to a clarinetist-friend of Harvey's.

"I Got Rhythm," popularized in Gershwin's musical *Girl Crazy*, is notable in its original form for its syncopation and for its harmonic progression, known as "rhythm changes," which is the foundation for numerous popular jazz tunes. The aria "Summertime" and the cheeky "It Ain't Necessarily So" both appear in Gershwin's folk opera *Porgy and Bess*. "Summertime" is heard throughout the opera in various permutations, and "It Ain't Necessarily So" expresses the doubts of a main character about some of what is written in the Bible. Harvey manipulates melodic and rhythmic components of these beloved Gershwin tunes to create a work that is at any given moment, humorous, haunting, raucous, lyrical, virtuosic, or jazzy, and which admirably demonstrates Harvey's knowledge of the many roles the clarinet is capable of assuming.

Histoire du Soldat (The Soldier's Tale) (1918)

Igor Stravinsky (1882–1971)

The story of *Histoire du Soldat* was distilled from Alexander Afanasiev's collection of Russian tales, which had been the source for several other Igor Stravinsky works. In 1918, Stravinsky was in Switzerland, cut off from his Russian family estates and the royalties of his Russian publishers by World War I. In a discussion with the Swiss writer C. F. Ramuz, the idea occurred to Stravinsky to create a stage work for the purpose of making money: The two men would collaborate on something simple, with two or three characters (portrayed by a narrator, actor, and dancer) and a handful of instrumentalists. Stravinsky translated the Afanasiev stories about a soldier and the devil to Ramuz (who knew no Russian), and the scenario was worked out between them. The result was a compact, portable show that was easy to take on a tour. Stravinsky created a sense of universality by moving away from his large "Russian" sound, and incorporating music from Spain ("Tango," "Royal March"), Vienna ("Valse"), Lutheran Germany ("Petit Choral," "Grand Choral"), and even America ("Ragtime"). The first

performance, and notably Stravinsky's favorite, was given in the Lausanne Municipal Theatre in Switzerland on September 28, 1918. Unfortunately, Stravinsky's dream of continuing the show was shattered by the global Spanish Influenza epidemic. Most of the cast and crew became severely ill and the production was cancelled.

The piece opens with the cornet and trombone illustrating a soldier, Joseph, returning to his hometown on military leave (I. The Soldier's March). The soldier, resting on the bank of a stream, pulls out his fiddle and begins tuning it (II. Airs by a Stream). The Devil appears, disguised as a little old man carrying a butterfly net, and startles the soldier. The Devil offers Joseph a book promising wealth in exchange for the fiddle and invites the soldier to spend three days with him. Joseph accepts. On the third day, Joseph returns to his hometown and is shocked to find that he has been tricked by the Devil and has actually been away for three years. In desperation, Joseph begins to read the Devil's book hoping it will provide some help. He soon begins to discover its special power. Despite his instant wealth, the soldier misses his former life and longs to "be alive again, as others live." The Devil sells his fiddle back to the soldier, but he is no longer able to play (III. Pastoral). Joseph knows that his former life can never be recovered and decides to move to another village.

When he arrives, he learns of a princess who lies ill in bed. The King has proclaimed that she will marry any man who can come cure her of her illness. Joseph decides he will go see the King (IV. The Royal March) and upon his arrival, discovers that the Devil is already there. In order to rid himself of the Devil's power, Joseph decides to lose the one thing that is the Devil's: his fortune. In a series of card games, Joseph manages to lose his entire fortune, finally freeing himself from the Devil's grasp and is able to play the violin once again (V. The Little Concert). Relieved, the soldier arrives at the princess's room and begins to play for her. Feeling healed from his presence, she rises from her bed and begins dancing with the soldier (VI. Tango; Waltz; Ragtime). The Devil tries to interfere with the couple but the soldier continues to play in an attempt to force him into exhaustion (VII. The Devil's Dance). The Devil collapses to the music and the couple embraces. The Devil warns Joseph that he is forbidden to leave the castle grounds or else the Devil will regain control over him.

Some time after their marriage, the Princess, curious about the soldier's past, urges him to revisit his hometown. Nostalgic for his mother and hometown, they decide to visit. It is in this movement (VIII. Grand Chorale) that the narrator speaks the moral of this story:

> "You must not seek to add
> To what you have, what you once had;
> You have no right to share
> What you are with what you were.
>
> No one can have it all,
> That is forbidden.
> One must learn to choose between.
>
> One happy thing is every happy thing:
> Two, is as if they had never been."

In a final act of power, the Devil is there to greet him and carries the soldier away for the last time (IX. Triumphal March of the Devil).