



UNITED STATES MARINE BAND

Wednesday, July 22, 2015 at 8:00 P.M.

U.S. Capitol, West Terrace

Thursday, July 23, 2015 at 8:00 P.M.

Sylvan Theater

Lieutenant Colonel Jason K. Fettig, conducting

Lieutenant Colonel Jason K. Fettig, Director

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John Philip Sousa\* (1854–1932)

March, “Congress Hall”

Dmitri Kabalevsky (1904–87)  
transcribed by Donald Hunsberger\*

Overture to *Colas Breugnon*

Louis Spohr (1784–1859)  
transcribed by J. R. Brubaker

Allegro moderato from Clarinet Concerto No. 3 in F minor  
*MGySgt John Mula, soloist*

Charles Ives (1874–1954)  
transcribed by John Sinclair

Country Band March  
*GySgt Robert Singer, conducting*

Michael Gandolfi (b. 1956)

*Vientos y Tangos* (2002)  
*GySgt Robert Singer, conducting*

Randol Alan Bass (b. 1953)

*Casey at the Bat*  
*MSgt Kevin Bennear, baritone*  
*GySgt Robert Singer, conducting*

Franz Liszt (1811–86)  
transcribed by C. Hellmann

Polonaise No. 2 in E

*MSgt Kevin Bennear, concert moderator*

## *Program Notes*

### **March, “Congress Hall”**

John Philip Sousa\* (1854–1932)

More than anyone else, John Philip Sousa is responsible for bringing the United States Marine Band to the level of excellence upheld today. As a composer, he wrote the best known and most loved marches in the repertoire; as Director, he was an innovator who shaped the future of the Marine Band.

Sousa was born in 1854 in southeast Washington, D.C., near the Marine Barracks where his father Antonio played trombone in the Marine Band. Sousa studied piano and most orchestral instruments, excelling on the violin. When at age thirteen young Sousa was almost persuaded to join a circus band, his father intervened, enlisting him as an apprentice musician in the Marine Band. Sousa remained in the band until he was twenty, only to return five years later as the seventeenth director. Sousa led “The President’s Own” until 1892, and shortly after, formed his own Sousa Band, which toured extensively for the next four decades, both in the United States and abroad.

Congress Hall is the name of a historic inn at Cape May, New Jersey. Cape May was and is today a popular east coast resort area, and in 1882 the U. S. Marine Band made its first appearance there under Sousa’s direction. The band had created little interest outside Washington until Sousa assumed leadership in 1880. News of its surprising excellence spread, and it was invited to play this engagement at Cape May from August 20 to 26, 1882. Sousa returned the compliment by composing this march and dedicating it to the proprietors of the inn, H. J. and G. R. Crump.

Final paragraph: Paul E. Bierley, *The Works of John Philip Sousa* (Westerville, Ohio: Integrity Press, 1984), 76. Used by permission.

A recording of this march, the full score and parts, and a video of the score synchronized with the audio are available in Volume 1 of [“The Complete Marches of John Philip Sousa.”](#)

### **Overture to *Colas Breugnon***

Dmitri Kabalevsky (1904–87)

transcribed by Donald Hunsberger\*

Russian-born composer and teacher Dmitri Kabalevsky is perhaps best known for his work in the field of children’s music. In addition to the many works he wrote for young performers, both choral and instrumental, Kabalevsky also developed a system of musical education for children. He was lauded by the people of his homeland for the traditional and accessible nature of his compositional style as well as his strong sense of civic duty, expressed through his work in education.

Kabalevsky’s opera *Colas Breugnon* is based on the French writer Romain Rolland’s rather racy novel about life in Burgundy, France, during the sixteenth century. While the opera itself was ultimately successful, the overture has more permanently established itself in the symphonic repertoire. Its fast-paced, light-hearted spirit, coupled with its French nationalistic flair and traditional roots, have made the Overture to *Colas Breugnon* an audience favorite.

## **Clarinet Concerto No. 3 in F minor**

Louis Spohr (1784–1859)

transcribed by J. R. Brubaker

*MGySgt John Mula, soloist*

Louis Spohr was an innovative and prominent German composer, violinist, teacher, and conductor. He composed symphonies, operas, and oratorios; violin and clarinet concerti; and various chamber works, all in a style that bridged the Classical and Romantic periods. Other contributions include the invention of the rehearsal mark (or letters) and the violin chinrest. Spohr's musical career began early and sensationally. At age fifteen, he was hired by Duke Karl Wilhelm Ferdinand of Brunswick as a chamber musician and soloist. Following many successful concert tours and rave reviews, Spohr was appointed to the post of concertmaster in the court of Gotha in 1805.

A few years later, the most brilliant clarinetist in Germany arrived in Gotha to commission a concerto from the concertmaster. Johann Hermstedt and Spohr shared many interests and had much respect for each other. This collaboration led to four clarinet concertos, all premièred by Hermstedt. He had so much appreciation for Spohr's compositions that, rather than having the composer make adjustments to the score, Hermstedt made alterations to his instrument instead. By expanding it from five keys to thirteen, this modification increased the range and capabilities of the clarinet.

The Clarinet Concerto No. 3 in F minor had its première on July 27, 1821 in Alexisbad. Considered the most virtuosic of the four concerti, the third concerto showcased Hermstedt's limitless technique and exciting energy. The opening Allegro moderato movement is dramatic with its range of dynamics and interplay between the solo and tutti sections.

## **Country Band March**

Charles Ives (1874–1954)

transcribed by John Sinclair

Charles Ives is recognized as one of the greatest American composers of the twentieth century, but he did not receive such accolades during most of his lifetime. In fact, he made his living as a successful insurance salesman. When his unique and progressive music finally saw the light of day, however, he earned a Pulitzer Prize in 1947 for his Third Symphony.

Ives was born in Danbury, Connecticut, where his father, George Ives, was a Civil War bandmaster and leader of the Danbury Cornet Band. Ives attended Yale University, studying organ and composition, but both his father's influence and his own early musical experiences in Danbury had as much impact on his musical sensibilities as his formal education. The elder Ives was intrigued by unplanned musical moments, like two bands playing in unrelated keys as they marched down the street in a parade, and George would often encourage Charles to explore unconventional sounds such as playing the accompaniment of a tune in one key on the piano while singing the melody in an unrelated key.

Some of these unusual sounds are found in Ives' Country Band March, the composer's affectionate valentine to the enthusiastic haphazardness of the community bands he heard as a young man in Danbury. Ives revels in the cacophony produced by these amateur musicians making early entrances, playing "wrong notes," and cheerfully but inappropriately blurting out quotations of popular songs of the day, including "Arkansas Traveler," "Battle Cry of Freedom," "The British Grenadiers," "The Girl I Left Behind Me," "London Bridge," "Marching Through Georgia," "My Old Kentucky Home," "Yankee Doodle," and quotes of two very familiar Sousa marches. This dense but exuberant music often has simultaneous melodies competing for the audience's attention, and the percussionists bringing up the rear frequently add or drop beats as the group struggles to stay together.

## ***Vientos y Tangos (2002)***

Michael Gandolfi (b. 1956)

Michael Gandolfi was born in the Boston suburb of Melrose, Massachusetts. His earliest musical involvement was in rock and jazz improvisation beginning at age eight as a self-taught guitarist. As his improvisational skills developed, he became increasingly interested in music composition and began formal study in his early teens. He received his bachelor and masters degrees in composition from the New England Conservatory of Music, as well as fellowships for study at the Yale Summer School of Music and Art, the Composers Conference, and the Tanglewood Music Center. He is currently a faculty member of the New England Conservatory of Music and the Tanglewood Music Center. Gandolfi is also the recipient of numerous awards including grants from the Fromm Foundation, the Koussevitzky Music Foundation, the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation, and the American Academy of Arts and Letters. He explains the work in his own words:

*Vientos y Tangos (Winds and Tangos)*, completed in 2003, was commissioned by The Frank L. Battisti 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday Commission Project and is dedicated to Mr. Battisti in recognition of his immense contributions to the advancement of concert wind literature. It was Mr. Battisti's specific request that I write a tango for wind ensemble. In preparation for this piece, I devoted several months to the study and transcription of tangos from the early style of Juan D'Arienzo and the "Tango Nuevo" style of Astor Piazzolla to the current trend of "Disco/Techno Tango," among others. After immersing myself in this listening experience, I simply allowed the most salient features of these various tangos to inform the direction of my work. The dynamic contour and the various instrumental combinations that I employ in the piece are all inspired by the traditional sounds of the bandoneon, violin, piano, and contrabass.

I would like to express my gratitude to Mr. Battisti for his inspirational leadership as director of the New England Conservatory Wind Ensemble for over thirty years. I first heard Mr. Battisti's work when I was a student at the New England Conservatory in the late 1970s. I was instantly moved by his high artistic standards, his ability to motivate young musicians, and the respect for composers, past and present, that he always eloquently expressed to his students. I would also like to thank Dr. Frederick Harris, Jr., for his professionalism, collegiality, and adept work in organizing the commission project.

## ***Casey at the Bat***

Randol Alan Bass (b. 1953)

*MSgt Kevin Bennear, baritone*

Baseball legend George Herman "Babe" Ruth was the undisputed king of home runs throughout the mid-1920s. Ruth led the New York Yankees to multiple world championships during this time, including record-setting back-to-back sweeps of their World Series opponents in 1927 and 1928. By 1932, Ruth's career was winding down, but he appeared in his final World Series that year facing the Chicago Cubs. During the fifth inning of game three, after having already homered, Ruth confidently stepped to the plate and gestured to the deepest part of the park in center-field, as if to predict the location of a home run. On the very next pitch, Ruth hit a bomb that traveled past the flagpole to the right of the scoreboard and ended up in temporary bleachers just outside Wrigley Field's outer wall. At the time, the center field corner was 440 feet away, placing estimates of the hit at nearly 500 feet, a monstrous distance even by modern standards. Although the moment of Ruth's gesture was caught on film, there is significant debate over its true meaning. Nevertheless, reporters immediately played up the "called shot" angle of the story, and Ruth slyly played along when questioned about it. The legendary hit was Ruth's last World Series home run and put an exclamation point on one of the most astounding careers in major league baseball history.

Although Ernest L. Thayer's playful poem "Casey at the Bat" was originally published decades before Ruth rose to fame, the character of "Mighty Casey" seems custom-tailored to the iconic baseball player. But while Ruth spent his career winning games with his deadly swings, the hero of Thayer's tale suffers a decidedly different fate. Composer Randol Alan Bass's lively and evocative musical backdrop for this poem was commissioned by the Dallas Symphony and premiered in April 2001 by the symphony with television personality Pat Sajak narrating. Bass then transcribed the work for "The President's Own" U.S. Marine Band in 2001.

## **Polonaise No. 2 in E**

Franz Liszt (1811–86)

transcribed by C. Hellmann

Franz Liszt was a Hungarian composer, pianist, conductor, and teacher. His virtuosity and showmanship on the piano was said to be unmatched in Europe during his playing years. As a composer, Liszt embraced musical experimentation, a central philosophy of the "Neudeutsche Schule" ("New German School"). In addition to works for piano, Liszt composed music for organ, voice, and orchestra. He was also instrumental in the popularizing and revival of works by transcribing them for piano.

Composed in 1851, the Polonaise No. 2 in E does not quite follow the footsteps of the elegant polonaises of Frederic Chopin, considered the best known in classical music. Instead, this one by Liszt is bold and symphonic, with an effective fusion of lyrical lines over musical pyrotechnics.