



Lieutenant Colonel Jason K. Fettig, Director

CHAMBER MUSIC SERIES  
Sunday, October 16, 2016 at 2:00 P.M.  
John Philip Sousa Band Hall  
Marine Barracks Annex  
Washington, DC

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

Allegro from Sonata No. 5, Opus 24, “Spring Sonata”

*GySgt Russell Wilson, piano*

*GySgt Erika Sato, violin*

Antonio Vivaldi (1678–1741)

*L'estate (Summer)* from

Concerto No. 2 in G minor, Opus 8, RV 315, *The Four Seasons*

Allegro non molto

Adagio e piano – Presto e forte

Presto

*SSgt Chaerim Smith and SSgt Foster Wang, violin*

*GySgt Tam Tran, viola*

*MGySgt Marcio Botelho, cello*

*MSgt Glenn Dewey, bass*

*SSgt Christopher Schmitt, piano*

Astor Piazzolla (1921–92)

Otoño Porteño from *The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires* (1969)

*GySgt Russell Wilson, accordion*

*SSgt Sheng-Tsung Wang and SSgt Chaerim Smith, violin*

*GySgt Tam Tran, viola*

*MGySgt Marcio Botelho, cello*

*MSgt Glenn Dewey, bass*

*SSgt Christopher Schmitt, piano*

Frédéric Chopin (1810–1849)

Etude in A minor, Opus 25, No. 11, “Winter Wind”

*SSgt Christopher Schmitt, piano*

INTERMISSION

Willie “The Lion” Smith (1893–1973)

“Echoes of Spring”  
*GySgt Russell Wilson, piano*

George Gershwin (1898–1937)

“Summertime” (1935)  
*MSgt Alan Prather, guitar and vocal*  
*GySgt Brian Turnmire, guitar*  
*GySgt Tam Tran, violin*  
*MSgt Glenn Dewey, bass*

Joseph Kosma (1905–69)

“Autumn Leaves” (1935)  
*GySgt Brian Turnmire, trumpet*  
*MSgt Greg Ridlington, alto saxophone*  
*GySgt Russell Wilson, piano*  
*MSgt Glenn Dewey, bass*  
*GySgt Steven Owen, drum set*

Felix Bernard (1897–1944)  
lyrics by Richard B. Smith

“Winter Wonderland” (1934)  
*GySgt Brian Turnmire, trumpet and vocal*  
*MSgt Alan Prather, guitar*  
*GySgt Russell Wilson, piano*  
*MSgt Greg Ridlington, alto saxophone*  
*MSgt Glenn Dewey, bass*  
*GySgt Steven Owen, drum set*

The Fall Chamber Music Series will continue Sunday, Oct. 23 at 2:00 P.M. in John Philip Sousa Band Hall at the Marine Barracks Annex in Washington, D.C. The program will include works by Telemann, Beethoven, and Wagner.

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# PROGRAM NOTES

## **Allegro from Sonata No. 5, Opus 24, “Spring Sonata”**

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

Gentle radiance, freshness and optimism, birds chirping—Ludwig van Beethoven seems to have perfectly captured the beauty of early spring in his fifth violin sonata. Yet, unlike his Pastoral Symphony of 1808, which includes headings from the composer such as “Pleasant, cheerful feelings aroused on approaching the countryside,” Beethoven did not title this sonata. Instead, the “Spring” nickname was assigned by the publisher after Beethoven’s death.

Though Beethoven did not directly suggest pastoral imagery, he would have been aware that the key of F major was traditionally associated with nature themes and he possessed a lifelong love for the natural world. He spent summers in the countryside and enjoyed long walks outdoors: “How happy I am to be able to walk among the shrubs, the trees, the woods, the grass and the rocks! For the woods, the trees and the rocks give man the resonance he needs.”

The ten violin sonatas, while not as stylistically influential as Beethoven’s piano sonatas or symphonies, are intimate partnerships between two instruments Beethoven knew well. Famous as a performer and teacher of the piano, Beethoven also undertook serious studies on the violin during his childhood and again as an adult while living in Vienna. The two instruments sing beautifully, at times as individuals and at times as a unified voice, in this first movement of the “Spring Sonata.”

## **“L’estate (Summer)” from Concerto No. 2 in G minor, Opus 8, RV 315, *The Four Seasons***

Antonio Vivaldi (1678–1741)

Antonio Vivaldi’s *Four Seasons* are his best known and most played works from among his more than 600 concertos and hundreds of works of other genres. *The Four Seasons* are actually four concertos for solo violin with string orchestra accompaniment, and are part of a set of twelve concertos titled *Il cimento dell’armonia e dell’invenzione* (The Contest between Harmony and Invention) published in 1727. There is a sonnet for each of the seasons/concertos, possibly written by Vivaldi himself. Vivaldi went so far as to include the sonnets alongside the music in the score, indicating clearly the programmatic nature of the music. The “orchestra” used for this performance is one instrument per part, slim by baroque standards, but not entirely unusual.

## **“Otoño Porteño” from *The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires* (1969)**

Astor Piazzolla (1921–92)

Astor Piazzolla, the son of Italian immigrants, was born in Mar Del Plata, Argentina, grew up in New York City, and studied in Paris. This cosmopolitan lifestyle is reflected in his music, which incorporated jazz and classical into traditional tango music, resulting in a new style termed nuevo tango.

Between 1965 and 1970, Piazzolla wrote a piece to represent each of the four seasons for his quintet of violin, piano, electric guitar, double bass, and bandoneon, the accordion-like instrument which he himself played. Piazzolla applied the same adjective to each season, porteño, meaning “from a port city” and used most often to refer to Buenos Aires, where Piazzolla lived when his career in tango began to blossom.

In Buenos Aires, autumn arrives in March, heralding the mild Argentinean winter; regardless, the

humidity of a subtropical port city hangs over all four seasons. “Otoño Porteño,” or “Buenos Aires Autumn,” follows a form often used by Piazzolla for his tangos: fast, slow, fast, slow, coda. In this case, the slow sections feature quasi-improvised evocative melodies, while the fast music’s dance rhythms are punctuated by string percussive techniques, including chicharra, or “cicada,” in which the bow is rubbed over the winding of the string.

### **Etude in A minor, Opus 25, No. 11, “Winter Wind”**

Frédéric Chopin (1810–1849)

Frédéric Chopin composed his second set of etudes, Op. 25, in 1837, dedicating them to Marie D’Agoult, mistress of his good friend, the composer-pianist Franz Liszt. Although etude translates to “study” in French, these pieces are far more than academic exercises. Because of their musical content and expressiveness, they are often performed in concert as a complete set.

Op. 25, No. 11 begins with a simple melody two measures long, which then repeats as an echo with a calm major accompaniment. After a brief pause, this same melody is framed in an utterly contrasting harmony, volume, intensity, and character, forming the musical essence of the rest of the piece.

Unlike Franz Liszt, Chopin preferred not to give his pieces names in order to avoid influencing the listener’s imagination. Perhaps he felt that any representation his music had of the world outside was not so much in the realm of the physical, but of the spiritual; not directly representational of the fury of wind and frigid air, but instead of the tempestuous hopelessness of human despair. Chopin’s “Winter Wind” etude represents these primal emotional states far more clearly than it does a seasonal squall, but, given its soaring arpeggios and minor tonality, it is no wonder many listeners and critics equated the tumultuous texture and cold violence of its underlying harmonies with the harsh inevitability of a winter tempest.

### **“Echoes of Spring”**

Willie “The Lion” Smith (1893–1973)

Willie “The Lion” Smith of New York City was, like Fats Waller, Eubie Blake, and James P. Johnson, one of the top masters of the stride piano jazz style during the height of the genre’s popularity in the 1920s and 30s. Some sources say he earned his nickname “The Lion” because of his aggressive fighting as a gunner in France during the First World War. Other sources say he earned it because of his fiercely competitive stride piano playing at rent parties (neighborhood fundraisers for people who can’t afford to pay their rent) and at “cutting contests” in which pianists try to outplay each other, often at smoky night clubs. Smith, always with a cigar and bowler hat, won most of these duels and rose to the top as “king of the jungle.”

His style is described by Billy Strayhorn as “a strange mixing of counterpoint, chromatic harmony, and arabesque devices, as fresh to the ear as spring water for the palate.” In 1939 at age 46, he recorded one of his most famous compositions, “Echoes of Spring,” which was inspired by the trees and clouds at a park in New York during a beautiful spring morning. Composed between the ragtime and boogie-woogie eras, this elegant work is a prime example of stride piano at its finest.

**“Summertime” (1935)**  
George Gershwin (1898–1937)

George Gershwin’s “Summertime” has its beginnings in a novel called *Porgy* by American author DuBose Heyward, in which the title character is a beggar in Catfish Row, a slum in Charleston, South Carolina. In 1926 Gershwin read the novel and was inspired to collaborate with Heyward to create the opera *Porgy and Bess*. Nine years later, in 1935, two years before Gershwin’s untimely death at age thirty-nine, the opera debuted in New York City with an all African-American cast.

Gershwin took a poem in the novel, and gave it a melody based on the pentatonic scale, giving it the quality of an African-American folk-song. He called it “Summertime,” and made it the opening song of the opera, a lullaby sung by a character named Clara. “Summertime” became one of the most popular jazz standards and has been recorded by more than 33,000 musicians. This arrangement is based on the version recorded by American folk singer and guitarist Doc Watson and his son Merle in 1972.

**“Autumn Leaves” (1935)**  
Joseph Kosma (1905–69)

Hungarian-French composer Joseph Kosma grew up in Budapest and studied composition at the Franz Liszt academy with Béla Bartók. After graduating, he moved to Paris and worked as a composer for French films. Unfortunately, when Nazis occupied France during World War II, they forced him to live under house arrest in the Alpes-Maritimes region and forbade him to compose music. Despite this restriction, Kosma managed to smuggle a few of his compositions to filmmakers with help from other composers.

In 1946, two years after the end of Germany’s occupation of France, Kosma wrote a melody based on a poem by his friend Jacques Prévert, a French poet and screenwriter. The poem was called “Les Feuilles Mortes” which literally translates to “The Dead Leaves.” The song was first performed in a movie on which the two men collaborated, called “Les Portes de la Nuit” (Gates of the Night), which is about a homeless man in the aftermath of World War II. Shortly after the movie’s release, Johnny Mercer wrote English lyrics to “Les Feuilles Mortes” and called it “Autumn Leaves.” Since then, the song has become a standard among jazz players because of its logical harmonic movement through the circle of 5ths. Like “Summertime,” it has been recorded by thousands of musicians. This arrangement is based on the version by Julian “Cannonball” Adderly from his 1958 album “Somethin’ Else” featuring himself and Miles Davis.

**“Winter Wonderland” (1934)**  
Felix Bernard (1897–1944)  
lyrics by Richard B. Smith

Lyricist Richard B. Smith grew up thirty miles northeast of Scranton, Pennsylvania, in the town of Honesdale. In 1934, Smith was suffering from tuberculosis and was being treated at the West Mountain Sanitarium, which is where he wrote the lyrics to “Winter Wonderland” after visiting Honesdale’s Central Park and seeing it covered in snow.

He was a member of the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) in which he collaborated with New York pianist, radio show host, and composer Felix Bernard. Together, they completed the music and lyrics to “Winter Wonderland,” which has since become a standard song heard every winter season, recorded by more than 200 musicians. This arrangement is based on trumpeter Chris Botti’s version from his album *December* recorded in 2006.