



MARINE CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Sunday, April 23, 2017 at 4:00 P.M.

Howard Community College

Columbia, Maryland

Lieutenant Colonel Jason K. Fettig, conducting

**Lieutenant Colonel Jason K. Fettig, Director**

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### **Towers of London**

Sir Arthur Sullivan (1842–1900)

Overture to *Iolanthe*

Benjamin Britten (1913–76)

Suite on English Folk Tunes, Opus 90,  
*A Time There Was...* (1966–75)

Cakes and Ale: Fast and Rough

The Bitter Withy: Allegretto

Hawkin' Booby: Heavily

Hunt the Squirrel: Fast and Gay

Lord Melbourne: Slow and Languid

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958)

Concerto in F minor for Bass Tuba and Orchestra (1954)

Prelude: Allegro moderato

Romanza: Andante sostenuto

Finale – Rondo alla tedesca: Allegro

*GySgt Franklin Crawford, soloist*

### **INTERMISSION**

Joseph Haydn (1732–1809)

Symphony No. 104 in D, *London*

Adagio; Allegro

Andante

Menuet: Allegro

Finale: Spiritoso

The U.S. Marine Band will present its annual Young People's Concert on Sunday, April 30 at 2:00 P.M. in the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center at Northern Virginia Community College, Alexandria Campus.

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# PROGRAM NOTES

## Overture to *Iolanthe*

Sir Arthur Sullivan (1842–1900)

Sir Arthur Sullivan is best known for his collaborations with W. S. Gilbert, the clever and witty librettist with whom Sullivan wrote such famous operettas as *H.M.S. Pinafore* (1878) and *The Pirates of Penzance* (1879). In addition to his work as one half of the most famous creative duo in the history of operetta, Sullivan was also a highly skilled composer of orchestral and chamber music in his own right, as well as hymns including “Onward, Christian Soldiers.”

Sullivan collaborated with Gilbert on a total of fourteen operettas. By the time the pair debuted *Iolanthe*, their seventh project together, they had achieved a string of hits and each new work was met with much anticipation. *Iolanthe* premièred on November 25, 1882 and ran for nearly 400 performances. It was staged at the newly-built state-of-the-art Savoy Theatre in London and was the first production in the world to utilize fully electric lighting and special effects that previously were not possible with gas-lit productions.

The plot of the operetta, which is also known as *The Peer and the Peri*, centers around the fairy Iolanthe, who has been banished from fairyland because she married a mortal, which is forbidden by fairy law. Her son Strephon, an Arcadian shepherd, is therefore half fairy and half mortal (his upper half is immortal, but his legs are human). Strephon desires to marry Phyllis, a Ward of Chancery, but so does a majority of the government’s House of Peers. Phyllis does not know that Strephon is half fairy and when she sees him embracing a seemingly young woman, she is brokenhearted. The woman is really Strephon’s mother, who being a fairy had never grown old, but the damage is done and it sets off a confrontation between the fairy world and the Peers within the aristocracy.

The operetta serves in many ways as a satire and critique of several aspects of British government and society, which was a favorite theme of both Gilbert and Sullivan’s and a sure-fire way to capture the attention and delight of the public of the time. However, the iconic duo packaged the singing material in such buoyant absurdities that the criticism was masked just enough to encourage good humor from all sides. As is so often the case in Gilbert and Sullivan’s works, Sullivan’s music is an equal match to the wit of Gilbert’s words, and the Overture to *Iolanthe* perfectly captures the tone of the adventure to come as the curtain rises.

## Suite on English Folk Tunes, Opus 90, *A Time There Was...* (1966–75)

Benjamin Britten (1913–76)

Benjamin Britten was one of Great Britain’s greatest composers of the 20th century, and like so many brilliant composers before him, his relationship with music began early. His father was an amateur musician and recognizing his son’s talent, he arranged for him to have private composition lessons with the renowned British composer and teacher Frank Bridge. Britten eventually entered the Royal College of Music in London in 1930 but was dissatisfied with the instruction he received there, and was especially disheartened by the negative opinions many of the faculty held of his beloved mentor Bridge’s music.

Despite these experiences at college, Britten’s career flourished as a young composer. He was only twenty-four years old when he wrote his exceptional *Variations on a Theme by Frank Bridge*. He left for the United States in 1939 and began work on his first opera *Paul Bunyan*, based on the libretto by Wystan Hugh Auden, but soon returned to England to complete what would be his greatest success up to that point, the opera *Peter Grimes*. It was also around this time that he composed his now-famous educational showcase work for orchestra *The Young Person’s Guide to the Orchestra*. In 1947, Britten founded the English Opera Group and the Aldeburgh Festival in an effort to use his status as a leading English composer to introduce and promote lesser known composers.

The Suite on English Folk Tunes was written toward the end of Britten’s life shortly after he underwent heart surgery in 1973. He had suffered a stroke during the operation and became woefully depressed that he would not compose again. By the summer of the following year, Britten was making some progress in his recovery and had been keeping busy revising some earlier work. At the time, most of his closest friends and confidants had gone to New York to prepare the Metropolitan Opera première of Britten’s *Death in Venice* while the composer remained in the care of his nurse, Rita Thompson. Around this time, his publisher Donald Mitchell approached Britten with an idea. In 1966, Britten had made a setting of the English folk song “Hankin Booby” for the opening of Queen Elizabeth Hall in London, and since that time

the little tune had been somewhat of a musical orphan in his catalogue. Britten had often talked of finding a larger context for the folk tune setting and that idea provided the kernel for the suite. Britten identified several well-known English folk tunes, either collected at the beginning of the 20th century or found in the seventeenth century publication *Playford's Dancing Master* and he fashioned them into several movements, each with a title taken from one of the songs quoted. More than just arranging the tunes, however, Britten reimagined each one in an entirely new context, sometimes quoting only parts of the tunes and weaving the melodies in and out of the texture of his own special musical language.

The subtitle for the suite came from a line in Thomas Hardy's "Winter Words." It is clear from the opening measures that there is a coarseness to many of the interpretations of these tunes and one can't help but hear the context of Britten's struggles with his life and health at the time. Britten acknowledges in the forward to the score that all of the tunes used in the suite are heard in fragments, save for one. The last movement, Lord Melbourne, is presented in its entirety, sung out with notable melancholy by a solo English Horn. The tune was collected from an English folk singer by composer Percy Grainger, to whom the suite is dedicated. After the jaunty and often-rough nature of several of the movements that precede Lord Melbourne, the tone shifts dramatically at the end of the suite. As he completed the work in November 1974, Britten's nurse noted that the venerable composer had reached a point of acceptance that his condition would never significantly improve. As the suite subsides, radiant and peaceful, there is a sense that Britten was perhaps making peace with his own mortality. The suite was premiered in 1975 at the Aldeburgh Festival and Britten died the following year.

### **Concerto in F minor for Bass Tuba and Orchestra (1954)**

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958)

Perhaps more than any other English composer, the music of Ralph Vaughan Williams is inextricably connected to the rich folk song tradition of his native country. Vaughan Williams studied composition and organ at the Royal College of Music in London and earned a doctorate from the University of Cambridge in 1901. He struggled to find his identity as a composer, however, until he joined the English Folk Dance and Song Society of London. His discovery of this tremendous treasure trove of inspiration prompted Vaughan Williams to travel throughout the English countryside, collecting little known tunes from native singers. He also extensively researched the history of English music, taking particular interest in the Tudor period. He published his first set of folk songs in 1903 and subsequently incorporated many of them into his own compositions. Vaughan Williams' original style helped to refresh and redefine contemporary English music, and when Edward Elgar died in 1934, Vaughan Williams assumed the role of England's leading composer.

The celebrated Concerto for Bass Tuba and Orchestra was composed in 1954 for the London Symphony Orchestra and their principal tubist Philip Catelinet. The work was part of the fiftieth anniversary celebration of the orchestra and was first performed on June 13, 1954, conducted by Sir John Barbirolli. Although a concerto for solo tuba was considered unusually innovative at the time, the work itself is fairly traditional, both in its musical language and its form. Cast in three classically crafted movements along with two grand cadenzas, Vaughan Williams' composition was the first of its kind and remains the most widely known concerto for the instrument. In the orchestra, the tuba is often relegated to providing foundational bass lines for the orchestra, but Vaughan Williams' work gives the instrument a new identity, showcasing its frequently untapped capacity for lyricism and agility. Although the musical material is entirely original, Vaughan Williams's affinity for English folksong is clearly evident in the work, with elements evocative of traditional sea songs and folk dances permeating every aspect of the concerto.

### **GySgt Franklin Crawford, soloist**

Tuba player Frank Crawford of Cheboygan, Mich., joined "The President's Own" United States Marine Band in June 2000. He was appointed assistant principal tuba in February 2016. Gunnery Sgt. Crawford began his musical training at age 8. After graduating in 1996 from the Interlochen Arts Academy in Michigan, he attended Indiana University in Bloomington where he studied with Daniel Perantoni. He also studied with the late David Randolph of Interlochen Arts Camp and Jeannie Little of the Interlochen Arts Academy. Gunnery Sgt. Crawford received his bachelor of music degree from the University of Maryland in College Park in 2007, where he studied with Toby Hanks. In 2011, he received his master's degree from the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., where he studied with David Fedderly.

## **Symphony No. 104 in D, *London***

Joseph Haydn (1732–1809)

Although more than two centuries have passed since Franz Joseph Haydn's death in 1809, few composers have been able to match his far-reaching musical influence and astonishing prolificacy. In total, he penned at least 104 symphonies, sixty-eight string quartets, forty-seven piano sonatas, twenty-six operas, and numerous cantatas and masses. Haydn's long and productive career spanned the late Baroque through the entire Classical period and more specifically, coincided with the most significant period of development of the classical symphony. Haydn's own bountiful catalogue of symphonies undoubtedly had a principal impact on both the evolution and popularity of the form that continues to dominate the classical repertoire to this day. In fact, his achievements were so significant that history has bestowed upon him the indelible, if unofficial, monikers of the "father of classical music" and the "father of the symphony."

Haydn spent a significant portion of his professional career employed by the wealthy and powerful Hungarian Esterhazy family. As Kapellmeister at the Esterhazy's sprawling palace thirty miles outside of Vienna, Haydn was expected to rehearse, conduct, manage, and regularly compose for as many as twenty-five instrumentalists, half a dozen singers, and a choir exclusively employed by the Prince. In turn, Haydn was afforded everything he needed for the task and was considered one of the most prominent figures of the court, enjoying the services of his own footman and maid. The Esterhazy's resident orchestra generally included seven string players, one flute, one bassoon, and pairs of oboes and horns, although additional instrumentalists could be acquired as necessary. Indeed, the instrumentation for many of the symphonies Haydn wrote for performances at the Esterhazy palace confirm these numbers, although most of his later symphonies employ an expanded instrumentation that resulted from his work with other orchestras during travels to Paris and London beginning in the mid-1780s. When his third patron Prince Nikolaus died in 1790, Haydn was permanently released from his residency at the palace and allowed to travel even more frequently. Although he no longer lived at the estate, Haydn maintained Vienna as his permanent home and he remained in partial service to the Esterhazy family until his death.

Haydn's most productive residencies away from his home in Vienna were his two extended visits to London between 1791 and 1795. He was invited to England by the impresario Johann Peter Salomon and commissioned to write six symphonies. During his first trip, Haydn spent two concert seasons in London to present these new symphonies, performing numbers 95, 96, and 97 during the 1791 season and numbers 93, 94, and 98 in 1792. His time there was so successful that he was scarcely back in Austria before returning to London in 1794 to give the premières of his final six symphonies. These last twelve works, collectively known as the "London" or "Salomon" symphonies, contain some of Haydn's most ambitious and enduring music, representing the culmination of the composer's life work.

Haydn's final symphony in his remarkable oeuvre was number 104. The work was composed in 1795 while he was living in London and premiered at the King's Theatre on May 4 of that year. The concert was entirely made up of Haydn's works and conducted by the composer. By this time, he had become quite well-known throughout the city and the premiere of his newest symphony was a tremendous success. Haydn wrote in his diary "The whole company was thoroughly pleased and so was I. I made 4000 gulden on this evening: such a thing is possible only in England."

Although the last twelve symphonies of Haydn are known as the "London" symphonies, many of these works took on their own individual nicknames and, somewhat arbitrarily, Symphony No. 104 is itself known as the "London" symphony. Perhaps this moniker was a nod to the fact that this would turn out to be the last, not only of the "London" symphonies, but of the entire collection of a genre so expertly defined and developed by Haydn. His final installment is also possibly his most substantial and finest effort, bringing to fruition a lifetime of work, experience, and musical experimentation.

Cast in the four movements that had become the custom of the late Classical period, the symphony opens with a dramatic unison for the orchestra that outlines the grand D major theme to come. The sprightly Allegro that ensues is built upon a single theme which Haydn brilliantly develops through the course of the movement, employing all of the colorful forces of the orchestra. The second movement features a lovely and lilting theme in G major first introduced in the strings. The tune explores a series of interesting keys and rhythmic variations and features several members of the woodwind section, most notably the solo flute.

The traditional minuet occupies the third movement of the symphony, although in a decidedly Haydn-esque form. Over the course of composing his symphonies, Haydn began to infuse the normally staid minuet with a rustic charm informed as much by folk dancing as the formal dances found in the ballrooms of the aristocracy. The minuet gives way to a boisterous final movement. The folk influence continues here, with an opening drone and an exuberant tune that is thought to have originated as a Croatian folk song. After a creative development section, the return of the main key is cleverly delayed with an unexpected extension in the surprising key of F-sharp minor. Haydn eventually relents, however, and returns full force to D major for the grand conclusion to this incredible final offering by "the father of the symphony."