



Lieutenant Colonel Jason K. Fettig, Director

CHAMBER MUSIC SERIES
Sunday, May 14, 2017 at 2:00 P.M.
John Philip Sousa Band Hall
Marine Barracks Annex
Washington, DC

Robert Schumann (1810–56)

Fantasiestücke, Opus 73

Zart und mit Ausdruck (Tenderly and with expression)

Lebhaft, leicht (Lively, light)

Rasch und mit Feuer (Quick and with fire)

SSgt Caroline Bean Stute, cello

GySgt Russell Wilson, piano

Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847)

String Quartet No. 2 in A minor, Opus 13

Adagio; Allegro vivace

Adagio non lento

Intermezzo: Allegretto con moto

Presto

SSgt Karen Johnson and SSgt Chaerim Smith, violin

SSgt Sarah Hart, viola

SSgt Charlaine Prescott, cello

INTERMISSION

Paul Reade (1943–97)

Suite from *The Victorian Kitchen Garden* (1989)

Prelude
Spring
Mists
Exotica
Summer

MGySgt Elizabeth Matera, clarinet

MGySgt Karen Grimsey, harp

Vincent Rose (1880–1944), Al Jolson (1886–1950),
and B. G. (“Bud”) DeSylva (1895–1950)

“Avalon” (1920)

GySgt Tam Tran, violin

GySgt Russell Wilson, piano

GySgt Brian Turnmire, guitar

MGySgt Aaron Clay, double bass

Oswaldo Golijov (b. 1960)

Movido, urgente from *Last Round* (1996)

String Quartet I

SSgt Chaerim Smith and MSgt Janet Bailey, violin

MSgt Christopher Shieh, viola

SSgt Charlaire Prescott, cello

String Quartet II

SSgt Karen Johnson and SSgt Foster Wang, violin

SSgt Sarah Hart, viola

SSgt Caroline Bean Stute, cello

MGySgt Aaron Clay, double bass

The Marine Chamber Orchestra will perform Sunday, May 21 at 2:00 P.M. at the National Gallery of Art
in Washington, DC. The program will feature works by Rameau, Leclair, and Mozart.

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PROGRAM NOTES

Fantasiestücke, Opus 73

Robert Schumann (1810–56)

Composed within the span of two days in February 1849, Robert Schumann's *Fantasiestücke* (Fantasy Pieces) was originally written for clarinet and piano, with additional versions composed for cello with piano and violin with piano. It is comprised of three short movements, each depicting a specific mood or emotional state of mind. The first piece, titled "Tenderly and with expression," begins in A minor with hints of melancholy but eventually brightens into A Major, creating a sense of hope and optimism. Schumann continues in the key of A Major for the second piece, "Lively, light," and uses chromatic triplet figures in F Major between the cello and piano to create a playful dialogue. In the final piece, "Quick and with fire," the feeling of inward reflection is interrupted by impetuous outbursts and accelerates into a triumphant close.

Although the title of the work might imply that these movements should be played separately, Schumann indicates to play them *attacca* or "without pause" creating the illusion that these three pieces are actually one large work with contrasting emotions and moods presented in quick succession. Perhaps this is indicative of Schumann's own mental state at the time he composed this piece. Depression, demonic visions, and several phobias plagued the composer throughout most of his life. After an attempted suicide in 1854, Schumann was admitted into a mental asylum where he would eventually die, at the age of forty-six, in 1856.

String Quartet No. 2 in A minor, Opus 13

Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847)

By the time Felix Mendelssohn had composed his A minor Quartet in 1827, he already had several successful compositions to his name, including his popular Octet of 1825. Growing up in a prominent German family, he studied piano, violin, and composition from an early age. He learned the art of counterpoint through the music of J. S. Bach and he also studied the Viennese classical style of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Franz Joseph Haydn. However, it was Mendelssohn's preoccupation with the late Ludwig van Beethoven quartets that influenced his Opus 13 most profoundly.

Beethoven's final five string quartets first appeared in print in 1827, which was also the year of his death. These late works received, at best, a lukewarm reception. Mendelssohn, however, was fascinated by them; he studied all the scores he could obtain. He wrote that this study prompted him to think especially about how to relate the individual movements of a piece to an organic whole. In the A minor Quartet, he resolves this issue by uniting the work with references to a specific song, quoting it at times and sharing material between movements. In June 1827, Mendelssohn wrote the music and words to "Frage" (Question), a love song written for Betty Pistor, a friend and colleague of Mendelssohn's:

"Is it true that you always wait for me there in the leafy path by the grape arbor and ask the moonlight and the little stars about me? Is it true? What I feel can only be understood by someone who feels it with me, and who will stay forever true to me."

This song underlies the entire quartet and is printed along with the quartet's score. Mendelssohn wrote to a friend, "The song that I sent with the quartet is its theme. You will hear it - with its own notes - in the first and last movements, and in all four movements you will hear its emotions expressed." The dotted long-short-long rhythm of the song's central question, "Is it true?" can be heard in the first movement, and the finale quotes the end of the song.

The piece opens with the simple chords of a slow introduction, similar to Beethoven's "Heiliger Dankgesang" of his Op. 132 quartet. "Is it true?" asks the first violin and the viola responds with a lone E. The question causes a descent into pain as the other parts join to play the E ominously together and the viola's

trilling propels us into the Allegro vivace. The long-short-long rhythm pattern is first introduced by the viola and then the violin and continues throughout the movement. The Adagio movement has a slow fugal section which is modeled after the middle section of the slow movement of Beethoven's Op. 95. The subjects of both fugues are sinuous melodies that slide down chromatically, moving from viola to second violin and then to the other voices. Like the Beethoven model, the fugue goes through a series of increasingly complex variations with cross-rhythms in the different instruments. Mendelssohn begins the third movement with a somber nocturne, but then quickly transports us into the fairy world of his *Midsummer Night's Dream* with delicate lightness for a few carefree minutes. The final movement begins with another distinct characteristic of Beethoven's late string quartets: a soaring violin recitative with the lower voices in unison tremolo. As themes from the different movements are telescoped together throughout the Presto, the movement subsides into the music that began the first movement, and then the quartet ends with a quotation of the second half of "Frage" - "What I feel can only be understood by someone who feels it with me, and who will stay forever true to me."

Suite from *The Victorian Kitchen Garden* (1989)

Paul Reade (1943–97)

The Victorian Kitchen Garden was a thirteen-part British television series produced in 1987 by Keith Sheather for BBC2. It followed a master gardener, Harry Dodson, and horticultural expert, Peter Thoday, as they recreated a kitchen garden of the Victorian era in Leverton, Berkshire, United Kingdom. Determined to make the recreation as authentic as possible, the team painstakingly searched for plants that a Victorian head gardener would have had available. The tools and techniques they used were also authentic to the time. The theme music and soundtrack was written by English composer, Paul Reade, who then arranged the music from the show into a five movement suite for clarinet and harp. Born in Lancashire, Reade studied at the Royal Academy of Music in London and worked at the English National Opera as an accompanist and vocal coach. His compositions include music for several children's movies as well as the theme music for *Antiques Roadshow*. His work on *The Victorian Kitchen Garden* earned him an Ivor Novello award in 1991 for best TV theme music.

"Avalon" (1920)

Vincent Rose (1880–1944), Al Jolson (1886–1950), and B. G. ("Bud") DeSylva (1895–1950)

Very few people would associate the violin with jazz since it is so closely tied to the Euro-classical or the American bluegrass and country music genres. However, the violin is indeed a traditional jazz instrument, specifically in the "gypsy jazz" genre from the 1930s. This music was pioneered by guitarist Django Reinhardt and violinist Stephane Grappelli after they formed the Quintette du Hot Club de France. Reinhardt came from a nomadic tribe, the Romani, originating in Northern India. This gypsy group made its way through the Middle East, Northern Africa, and eventually to Europe. Reinhardt loved the big band and swing music of his era and was influenced by jazz greats like Duke Ellington, Count Basie, and Louis Armstrong. Gypsy jazz is the fusion of his ethnic gypsy roots and his love for jazz.

"Avalon," written by Al Jolson, Bud DeSylva, and Vincent Rose in 1920, is a song that references the resort town on Santa Catalina Island off the coast of California. The vocal version sung by Al Jolson was immensely popular and reached the number two position in the charts in 1921. Legal troubles followed Jolson's success when Giacomo Puccini's publishing company, Ricordi, sued the composers in 1921 for plagiarism. The courts ruled in favor of Ricordi determining that the opening of "Avalon" was strikingly similar to the melodic material from the aria, "E lucevan le stele" from Puccini's *Tosca*, except in a Major key. Lawsuits and legal matters aside, "Avalon" has become a jazz standard, particularly popular in the "gypsy jazz" genre highlighted by Reinhardt's two separate recordings with Coleman Hawkins and the Quintette du Hot Club de France.

Last Round (1996)
Osvaldo Golijov (b. 1960)

“Two quartets confront each other, separated by the focal bass, with violin and violas standing up as in the traditional tango orchestras. The bows fly in the air as inverted legs in crisscrossed choreography, always attracting each other, always in danger of clashing, always avoiding it with the immutability that can only be acquired by transforming hot passion into pure pattern.”

These are the words composer Osvaldo Golijov uses to describe his composition, *Last Round*, an homage to the last great tango composer, Astor Piazzolla. Osvaldo Golijov grew up in an eastern Jewish household in La Plata, Argentina. Born to a piano teacher mother, Golijov was surrounded by classical chamber music, Jewish liturgical and klezmer music, and the tango music of Piazzolla. He borrowed the title for this piece from a short story on boxing by Julio Cortázar as an imaginary chance for Piazzolla’s spirit to “fight one more time.” The piece is conceived as an “idealized” bandoneon, a small accordion-like instrument without keyboard that was invented in Germany to serve as a portable church organ. In the 1920s, it found its way into the slums of Buenos Aires and has since become synonymous with the tango.

Golijov opens the piece with fiery rhythms from both quartets – almost as if in battle against each other – while two violins screech in glissandos above the fray. The chaos is quickly forgotten as the bass begins the section Golijov has indicated in the score “macho, cool and dangerous.” This theme returns again but never with the same indication – there is always a sense of pushing forward until the end of the piece when the idealized bandoneon, for which this piece is based, comes to a “violent and sudden compression.”