



UNITED STATES MARINE BAND
Wednesday, August 9, 2017 at 8:00 P.M.
U.S. Capitol, West Terrace
Thursday, August 10, 2017 at 8:00 P.M.
Sylvan Theater
Captain Ryan J. Nowlin, conducting

Lieutenant Colonel Jason K. Fettig, Director

John Philip Sousa* (1854–1932)
edited by the United States Marine Band

March, “El Capitan”

Percy E. Fletcher (1879–1932)
transcribed by Brant Karrick

Vanity Fair

Herman Bellstedt (1858–1926)
arranged by Donald Hunsberger*

“Napoli”
SSgt Anthony Bellino, cornet soloist

Aaron Copland (1900–90)
transcribed by Kenneth Singleton

“The Promise of Living” from *The Tender Land*

Karl L. King (1891–1971)

March, “Barnum and Bailey’s Favorite”

Stephen Flaherty (b. 1960)
lyrics by Lynn Ahrens
arranged by Captain Ryan Nowlin*

“Make Them Hear You” from *Ragtime: An American Story*
MSgt Kevin Bennear, baritone

John Williams (b. 1932)
transcribed by Jay Bocook

The Cowboys Overture

MSgt Kevin Bennear, concert moderator

PROGRAM NOTES

March, “El Capitan”

John Philip Sousa* (1854–1932)
edited by the United States Marine Band

John Philip Sousa’s love for musical theater gave birth to fifteen original operettas. Of the fifteen, none was more successful than his 1895 collaboration with librettist Charles Klein and lyricist Tom Frost titled *El Capitan*. Set in Peru during Spanish rule, the whimsical plot revolves around the Viceroy Don Medigua who masquerades as Spain’s opposing rebel leader El Capitan. As El Capitan, he succeeds in leading the rebel forces to defeat at the hands of the Spanish army. Sousa completed the music on August 29, 1895, and it was first produced at the Tremont Theatre in Boston on April 13, 1896. It was performed almost continuously for the next four years including a run of 112 performances in New York City.

Sousa saw the opportunity to create a new march by borrowing several of the tunes from the operetta and skillfully stitching them together into a new work. For the first strain he selected Don Medigua’s song “You See in Me” from Act I. The second strain was based on the second act “Behold El Capitan,” sung by the chorus. The trio featured music from the grand finale of the operetta, “We Beg Your Kind Consideration.” The march was completed on April 30, 1896, just two weeks after the Boston première of the operetta, and it quickly became a regular part of the Sousa Band repertoire.

Vanity Fair

Percy E. Fletcher (1879–1932)
transcribed by Brant Karrick

Though his music is a rare treat in the modern concert hall, English composer Percy Fletcher enjoyed tremendous success during his lifetime. He specialized in writing for musical theater and was best known for his popular songs and light orchestral suites. He studied violin, piano, and organ, but made his living as a director of musicals in the London theater world, acting as director at the Savoy, Prince of Wales, Daly’s, Drury Lane, and from 1915 until his death in 1932, His Majesty’s Theatre. Fletcher was a pioneer in the repertoire for brass bands; his 1913 tone poem *Labour and Love* paved the way for accomplished composers such as Ralph Vaughan Williams and Gustav Holst to write for the same ensemble.

Fletcher described his *Vanity Fair* as “a comedy overture in which several characters from [William Makepeace] Thackeray’s novel are portrayed” and it is easy to imagine the piece as the introduction to a musical comedy. An opening fanfare gives way to a lyrical middle section after which the spirited fanfare returns with renewed energy, propelling the overture to the finish—or perhaps to the opening of curtains onstage. Originally scored for light orchestra, this lively piece was transcribed for concert band by Brant Karrick, director of bands at Northern Kentucky University in Newport.

“Napoli”

Herman Bellstedt (1858–1926)
arranged by Donald Hunsberger*
SSgt Anthony Bellino, cornet soloist

Cornetist Herman Bellstedt emigrated from Germany to the United States in 1867. His father was a musician and encouraged his son’s obviously prodigious talents. In 1873, Bellstedt played his first cornet solo with a band and was billed as “the Boy Wonder.” This was followed by regular performances with the top bands of the day and led to his employment with the Sousa Band from 1904 to 1905, where he played alongside legendary cornetists Herbert L. Clarke and Walter Rogers. During a nearly thirty-five year career performing with many of the nation’s most prominent bands, Bellstedt composed numerous cornet solos which featured acrobatic arrangements of popular songs such as “The Girl I Left Behind Me,” “Comin’

Through the Rye,” and “Turkey in the Straw.” In 1913, Bellstedt became a professor at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music.

“Napoli,” one of Bellstedt’s most famous solos, is a playful yet challenging theme and variations based on the well-known Italian song “Funiculì, Funiculà.” The song was originally written in 1880 by Luigi Denza to commemorate the opening of the funicular railway which scales Mount Vesuvius in Naples.

“The Promise of Living” from *The Tender Land*

Aaron Copland (1900–90)

transcribed by Kenneth Singleton

Considered by many as the “Dean of American Composers,” Brooklyn, New York, native Aaron Copland often painted his ballet music with evocations of rural America, despite his urban background. Though the composer studied composition with Nadia Boulanger in Paris, he sought to define an American sound in his works.

Copland’s only full-length opera, *The Tender Land*, was commissioned by Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein to celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of the League of Composers. The libretto was written by Copland’s friend Erik Johns (using the pseudonym Horace Everett) and was inspired by James Agee’s book *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*. The New York City Opera premièred the work at City Center Theater on April 1, 1954.

In the composer’s own words, the opera “calls for a cast of five principal singers and takes place in a lower middle-class farm in the American Midwest. Time is the present. The subject concerns the coming to maturity of a young girl.” Appearing at the end of the first act, “The Promise of Living” is a beautiful and touching quintet performed by polarizing characters. The use of the folk hymn “Zion’s Walls” underscores the themes explored in the opera, namely community, love, hope, and promise.

March, “Barnum and Bailey’s Favorite”

Karl L. King (1891–1971)

Raised in Canton, Ohio, Karl King was undoubtedly influenced both by the rich tradition of band music of the Midwest as well as the most popular form of entertainment at the time, the circus. Very much a self-made man, King began his musical education with the purchase of a cornet, paid for with money earned from a paper route. As a young musician, he played several brass instruments as well as the piano, but ultimately settled on the baritone, which he played in several circus bands between 1910 and 1913, among them the Barnum and Bailey band. It was during this time that King became well known for his ability to compose circus marches quickly (often by oil lamp in crowded circus tents). At the beginning of the twentieth century, there were very few compositions that fit the rhythm and pacing of circus performances, and composers were in demand. King composed more than 188 marches and rousing circus “screamers,” and is considered to have done for the circus march what John Philip Sousa did for the patriotic march. King began a long conducting career in 1914, initially directing circus bands and ultimately becoming the Bandmaster of the Fort Dodge Municipal Band, all the while continuing to compose.

King was performing with the Barnum and Bailey Band in 1913 under Ned Brill when Brill asked him to write a special march. “Barnum and Bailey’s Favorite,” dedicated to Brill, became King’s most famous march as well as the theme music of the circus. The piece, not surprisingly, has a lively baritone part and, like most of his other circus marches, is considered to be among the more difficult compositions in the body of American march music.

“Make Them Hear You” from *Ragtime: An American Story*

Stephen Flaherty (b. 1960)

lyrics by Lynn Ahrens

arranged by Captain Ryan Nowlin*

MSgt Kevin Benneer, baritone

The musical *Ragtime*, based on the 1975 classic novel by E. L. Doctorow, tells the story of three very different groups in the United States in the early twentieth century. Coalhouse Walker Jr., a talented Harlem musician, represents the African American community; Mother embodies the upper-class suburbanite as the matriarch of a wealthy white family in New Rochelle, New York; and the story of Eastern European immigrants is told by Tateh, a Jewish immigrant from Latvia. The individual, very human stories shared in *Ragtime* are the threads that make up the broader tapestry of the story that is the melting pot of early twentieth century America.

Ragtime received thirteen Tony Award nominations in 1998, and won the awards for Best Original Score, Best Book, and Best Orchestrations. Marine Band Assistant Director Captain Ryan Nowlin arranged many of these award winning orchestrations for concert band, including “Make Them Hear You.” He says of his work that he was “looking to emphasize the broader themes of the show: the promise of America, the American Dream ... the hope that the country represents, and continues to represent for millions. We wanted to underscore the principles of justice, the necessity of change, and the promise to future generations.”

The Cowboys Overture

John Williams (b. 1932)

transcribed by Jay Bocook

One of the most popular and successful American orchestral composers of the modern age, John Williams is the winner of five Academy Awards, twenty-three GRAMMYs, four Golden Globes, three Emmys, and seven BAFTA Awards from the British Academy of Film and Television Arts. Best known for his film scores and ceremonial music, Williams is also a noted composer of concert works and a renowned conductor.

The Cowboys Overture is based on music from the 1972 film of the same name directed by Mark Rydell that starred John Wayne, Roscoe Lee Browne, Bruce Dern, Colleen Dewhurst, and Slim Pickens. The outer sections of the Overture are exuberant, with elements of the popular hoe-down and the flavor of Aaron Copland, while the central portion is more lyrical and peaceful. It is a fun-filled and rousing score brimming with American “can do” spirit and optimism.