



UNITED STATES MARINE BAND  
Sunday, March 25 at 2:00 P.M.  
Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center  
Northern Virginia Community College  
Alexandria Campus  
Captain Ryan J. Nowlin, conducting

Colonel Jason K. Fettig, Director

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**For “The President’s Own”**

Jonathan Leshnoff (b. 1973)  
transcribed by Captain Ryan J. Nowlin\*

*Starburst* (2010)  
*transcription world première*

Edward Gregson (b. 1945)

*Allegro Deciso* from Concerto for Tuba  
*Robert Black, guest soloist*  
*Winner of the 2018 Marine Band Concerto Competition*

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)  
transcribed by Thomas Knox\*

*Toccatà, Adagio and Fugue in C, BWV 564*  
*Col John R. Bourgeois, USMC (Ret.), conducting*

John Philip Sousa\* (1854–1932)

*March, “Semper Fidelis”*  
*Col John R. Bourgeois, USMC (Ret.), conducting*

**INTERMISSION**

John Williams (b. 1932)

*Fanfare, “For ‘The President’s Own’”*

Gustav Holst (1874–1934)

*Prelude and Scherzo, Hammersmith, Opus 52*

Georges Bizet (1838–75)  
arranged by MGySgt Donald Patterson\*

*“Habanera” from Carmen*  
*GySgt Sara Sheffield, mezzo-soprano*

James Barnes (b. 1949)

*Fantasy Variations on a Theme by Niccolò Paganini, Opus 71*  
*GySgt Sara Sheffield, concert moderator*

\*Member, U.S. Marine Band

The U.S. Marine Band will perform Sunday, April 8 at 2:00 P.M. in the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center at the University of Maryland.  
The program will feature a live re-enactment of one of the Marine Band’s famous “Dream Hour” broadcasts.

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## ***PROGRAM NOTES***

Throughout the 220-year history of the organization, the United States Marine Band has commissioned and premiered hundreds of new compositions, transcriptions, and arrangements from the pens of leading composers. Many of these time-honored works have made their way into the standard repertoire of concert bands the world over. Today's program, presented as part of our *Living History Concert Series*, will feature a small sampling of this music written especially for "The President's Own."

### ***Starburst (2010)***

Jonathan Leshnoff (b. 1973)

transcribed by Captain Ryan J. Nowlin\*

Praised by *The Washington Post* as "clearly one of the more gifted young American composers" of this generation, Jonathan Leshnoff is described by *The New York Times* as "a leader of contemporary American lyricism." Leshnoff's current projects include commissions from the Dallas, Nashville, and Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestras and the United States Marine Band. His music has recently been featured on the Marine Band's *Arioso* release and the Atlanta Symphony's all-Leshnoff recording, *Innerspace*. *Starburst* was completed in 2010 for a joint commission by the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, Kansas City Symphony, and Fundación Orquesta de Extremadura in western Spain. The piece has been performed more than fifty times by orchestras around the world, and today's performance marks the long-awaited première of the work's arrangement for band. As noted by Baltimore Symphony Orchestra annotator Janet E. Bedell:

Leshnoff chose the name *Starburst* because 'the word has a lot of energy to it and I like the image of light.'

He adds that the piece has 'lots of orchestral shimmer' with its emphasis on fast patterns in the upper woodwinds and strings. *Starburst* is structured in two parts. Two important motives are developed at the beginning: a running or 'fleeting' motive in the woodwinds and a rhythmically crisper, more detached idea in the strings. The music climbs to a big outburst, and then a clarinet cadenza in a much slower tempo leads to the second phase. The fleeting motive returns in a march-like, repetitive guise. From then on, the piece gets bigger and bigger until it explodes at the end—just like its name.

Describing the work's première performance in *The Baltimore Sun*, reviewer Tim Smith called *Starburst* "a curtain-raiser in the best sense of the word, full of energy and anticipation. The composer's most distinctive talent may be for creating deeply lyrical themes, but here, his focus is on propulsion and creating a sense of almost frantic searching...."

### ***Allegro Deciso from Concerto for Tuba***

Edward Gregson (b. 1945)

Edward Gregson is an English composer who studied at the Royal Academy of Music in London. He served as the principal professor of music at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester, England, from 1996 to 2008, when he retired from his academic career to focus on composing. Gregson has been commissioned to write works for several major orchestras, including the BBC Philharmonic, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, and Bournemouth Symphony. In addition to his orchestral compositions, he has written music for the theater, film, and television. Gregson is also a conductor, well known for premiering works of other living English composers.

The Concerto for Tuba was commissioned by Besses O'Th'Barn Band and is dedicated to John Fletcher, who premiered the work with Gregson conducting. The first movement features two contrasting themes, the first rhythmic and the second lyrical. The composer includes a brief reference to the opening theme of another cornerstone of the tuba repertoire: the Tuba Concerto in F minor by Ralph Vaughan Williams.

## **2018 United States Marine Band Concerto Competition Winner**

### **Robert Black, tuba**

This year marks the tenth anniversary of the United States Marine Band's Concerto Competition for high school musicians. Supported by the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation, the winning student receives a \$2,500 scholarship and an opportunity to perform their solo with "The President's Own." This competition has identified a number of up-and-coming musicians throughout the past ten years, many of whom have been featured on NPR's "From the Top" program and have performed with world-class ensembles. The co-winners of the first competition included oboe player Timothy Gocklin and tuba player Ibanda Ruhumbika. After graduating from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, and Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut, Gocklin is currently performing with the Akropolis Reed Quintet, an award-winning ensemble that champions "the next generation of maverick musicians," according to its website. In addition to performances and recordings, Akropolis has commissioned more than twenty-five new woodwind quintet selections and delivers essential educational outreach throughout the Midwest region. Ruhumbika has also made a career for himself as a professional musician. While he attended The Juilliard School in New York, he and some friends formed Stay Human, a band comprised of the unusual combination of saxophone, washboard, tuba, trombone, drums, piano, and harmonica (melodica). After years of honing their sound in live performances and recording albums, Stay Human, led by Jon Batiste, became the house band on "The Late Show with Stephen Colbert" in September 2015.

Now, ten years later, a tuba player has once again claimed the top prize. Robert Black is a junior at Vernon Hills High School in Illinois. He studies with Scott Tegge, who teaches at Northern Illinois and DePaul Universities. Black received honorable mention in the Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestras Concerto Competition in 2018, and first chair in the Illinois All-State Band. The year before, he received honorable mention for the Birch Creek Burton Concerto Competition, sat first chair in the Illinois All-State Orchestra, and won the North Suburban Wind Ensemble Concerto Competition. Black also performed in the masterclasses at The Pokorny Low Brass Seminar in Redlands, California, in 2016. He has been a member of the North Suburban Wind Ensemble and the co-principal tuba of the Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestra for two years. He has been a member of the Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestra for six years. Black is also a member of Vernon Hills High School Choir and Chamber Choir and is in his twelfth year of studying piano. Outside of music, Black is an Eagle Scout, and has received the National Catholic Committee on Scouting's Ad Altare Dei award and the Grand Slam Award for traveling to all of the Boy Scout of America high-adventure bases.

### **Toccata, Adagio and Fugue in C, BWV 564**

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

transcribed by Thomas Knox\*

When asked to describe the organ, scholar and organist Arthur Wills responded that it was "a large wind instrument." Wills also noted that "the development of the instrument was to be on strongly imitative lines – ranks based on flute, oboe, trumpet, and trombone timbres, and so on...." It is in this context that Thomas Knox prepared his transcription of Johann Sebastian Bach's Toccata, Adagio and Fugue in C. The music, which Bach conceived with organ stops for flute, oboe, trumpet, and trombone, is performed in this transcription using the full instrumentation of the modern wind band.

Transcription of music from one medium to another has occasionally been viewed as controversial; yet it was an art practiced in Bach's time and before. Wills noted that some of the earliest organ compositions were transcribed from vocal material, a practice that continued throughout the succeeding centuries. Wills described Bach as "an inveterate transcriber." One method by which Bach learned and perfected his compositional skill was copying and transcribing the works of other composers, as well as his own. Among Bach's known transcriptions are works by Antonio Vivaldi.

The tradition of adapting Bach's music for various ensembles has continued with transcriptions by Arnold Schoenberg, Anton Webern, Igor Stravinsky, Sir Edward Elgar, and most prominently, Leopold Stokowski, who became famous for his virtuoso orchestral transcriptions of a number of Bach's organ works. Although Stokowski's audiences were far more enthusiastic about his Bach transcriptions than were the more traditional music critics, even the most critical acknowledged the effectiveness of Bach in transcribed form. Stokowski was trained as an organist, and it was often said that whether in his own Bach transcriptions or in music of other composers, he

conducted the symphony orchestra as if he were playing a huge organ. Stokowski once commented about his Bach transcriptions for orchestra, “[the] feeling is the important thing, whether it is played by pipes in an organ or pipes like the flute and trumpet. They’re all pipes, those instruments. The important thing is not so much the instruments ... but the feeling that the music expresses.” It is interesting to note that Stokowski also produced several Bach transcriptions for winds, including the Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor, Air from Suite No. 3, and the chorale-prelude “Wir Glauben all in einen Gott.”

Toccata, Adagio and Fugue in C was composed between 1712 and 1717, during Bach’s tenure as organist at the Ducal Chapel in Weimar, Germany. This was Bach’s first major appointment, and he devoted a large part of his compositional energies to writing works for organ. The Toccata, Adagio and Fugue in C is unique among Bach’s organ works in its three-movement form, compared to the more common two-movement Prelude and Fugue or Toccata and Fugue structures. The addition of a slow second movement and the virtuosic writing of the two outer movements have led some scholars to draw comparisons between this work and the three-movement concerto.

This transcription for band was prepared by Thomas Knox, former chief arranger for the United States Marine Band, at the request of the organization’s twenty-fifth director Colonel John R. Bourgeois, USMC (Ret.). The work became a staple in the band’s repertoire, having been performed hundreds of times during his seventeen-year tenure as director.

### **Colonel John R. Bourgeois, USMC (Ret.), Director Emeritus**

Director Emeritus Colonel John R. Bourgeois, USMC (Ret.), was the twenty-fifth director of “The President’s Own” United States Marine Band. His acclaimed career spanned nine presidential administrations, from Presidents Dwight D. Eisenhower to Bill Clinton. Bourgeois is a graduate of Loyola University in New Orleans. He joined the Marine Corps in 1956 and entered “The President’s Own” as a French hornist and arranger in 1958. Named Director of the Marine Band in 1979, Bourgeois was promoted to colonel in 1983 and retired from active duty in 1996.

As Director of “The President’s Own,” Bourgeois was music advisor to the White House. He selected the musical program and directed the band on its traditional place of honor at the U.S. Capitol for four Presidential inaugurations, a Marine Band tradition dating to 1801. He regularly conducted the Marine Band and the Marine Chamber Orchestra at the White House.

Bourgeois conducted his final concert as Director of “The President’s Own,” July 11, 1996 (the band’s 198th birthday), at DAR Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C. More than 3,500 people, including prominent musicians and government dignitaries, attended the gala event. Former Presidents Bill Clinton, George H. W. Bush, and Jimmy Carter, as well as former First Lady Nancy Reagan sent letters of gratitude and praise that were read at the concert. Secretary of the Navy John H. Dalton hailed Bourgeois as “a national treasure” and presented him with the Distinguished Service Medal from President Clinton. Marine Corps Commandant General Charles C. Krulak compared Bourgeois to the band’s seventeenth director, John Philip Sousa, saying, “Our Corps has not only had John Philip Sousa, we have now had a John Bourgeois. His legacy will never be forgotten by the Marine Corps or our nation.” The change of command received national attention, being covered by CNN, ABC, CBS, *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *The Washington Post*. ABC’s Peter Jennings selected Bourgeois as the Evening News “Person of the Week.”

Since retiring from the Marine Band, Bourgeois has been actively involved in music as a guest conductor, has published new editions of classic band compositions, and is a visiting professor in a chair endowed in his name at Loyola University.

### **March, “Semper Fidelis”**

John Philip Sousa\* (1854–1932)

It is unfortunate that President Chester A. Arthur, the man responsible for this march, did not live to hear it. In a conversation with John Philip Sousa, then leader of the U.S. Marine Band, he expressed his displeasure at the official use of the song “Hail to the Chief.” When Sousa stated that it was actually an old Scottish boating song, the President suggested that he compose more appropriate music. Sousa responded with two pieces, not just one. First he composed “Presidential Polonaise” (1886). Then, two years after Arthur’s death, he wrote “Semper Fidelis.”

The march takes its title from the motto of the U.S. Marine Corps: *Semper Fidelis* is Latin for “always faithful.” The march’s trio is an extension of an earlier Sousa composition, “With Steady Step,” one of eight brief trumpet and drum pieces he wrote for *The Trumpet and Drum* (1886). It was dedicated to those who inspired it – the officers and men of the U.S. Marine Corps. In Sousa’s own words: “I wrote ‘*Semper Fidelis*’ one night while in tears, after my comrades of the Marine Corps had sung their famous hymn at Quantico.” For the first performance, Sousa demonstrated his flair for theatrics:

We were marching down Pennsylvania Avenue, and had turned the corner at the Treasury Building. On the reviewing stand were President Harrison, many members of the diplomatic corps, a large part of the House and Senate, and an immense number of invited guests besides. I had so timed our playing of the march that the ‘trumpet’ theme would be heard for the first time, just as we got to the front of the reviewing stand. Suddenly, ten extra trumpets were shot in the air, and the ‘theme’ was pealed out in unison. Nothing like it had ever been heard there before – when the great throng on the stand had recovered its surprise, it rose in a body, and led by the President himself, showed its pleasure in a mighty swell of applause. It was a proud moment for us all.

“*Semper Fidelis*” subsequently gained recognition as the official march of the U.S. Marine Corps. Sousa regarded it as his best march, musically speaking. It became one of his most popular marches, and he once stated that it was the favorite march of Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany – before World War I, of course. It was played by the Sousa Band in many foreign countries and always received acclaim as a well-known composition. Few knew that it had been sold outright to the publisher for the unbelievably low sum of \$35.

### **“For ‘The President’s Own’”**

John Williams (b.1932)

The work of John Williams has become an important part of the American musical lexicon, and has proliferated popular culture across the globe on a scale that is arguably unlike any composer since John Philip Sousa. His music for film, television, and the concert stage, as well as countless significant national and international events has played a major role in defining the most recent chapter in the evolution of the “American sound.”

Williams was born in Queens, New York, in 1932. The son of a jazz drummer, he studied piano and composition at the University of California, Los Angeles. After a three-year enlistment as a musician in the Air Force, he continued his study at The Juilliard School while moonlighting as a jazz and studio pianist in New York City. He had established a successful career composing for television when he met an ambitious young director named Steven Spielberg in 1974, and the two began one of the most incredible artistic partnerships in modern filmmaking. That year, they collaborated on a film called *The Sugarland Express* starring Goldie Hawn and a year later teamed up again for *Jaws*, which garnered the 1976 Academy Award for Best Original Score. Williams ranks among the most honored film composers of all time, with five Academy Awards, four Golden Globes, twenty-one GRAMMY awards, and seven British Academy of Film and Television Arts awards. In addition to his multiple wins, his fifty-one Oscar nominations are the most ever achieved by a living person.

Williams’ close relationship with the Marine Band began in 2003, when he accepted an invitation to conduct the ensemble in a gala concert of his music given at the Kennedy Center in celebration of the organization’s 205th anniversary. He returned for an encore performance in 2008, and the band was also chosen by the composer to perform for him when he received the Kennedy Center Honor in 2004. Williams graciously penned his first original work for winds in more than four decades as a token of esteem for “The President’s Own” in 2013, in celebration of the Marine Band’s 215th anniversary. Generously named for the ensemble by the composer, the piece combines virtuosic, intertwining lines with a series of playful themes and bright fanfares that brilliantly capture the many colors and textures of Williams’ inimitable music.

### **Prelude and Scherzo, *Hammersmith*, Opus 52**

Gustav Holst (1874–1934)

After the incomparable success of a work like *The Planets*, a composition that created an immediate and lasting sensation, many composers might have been tempted to repeat themselves, recycling the ideas, forms, and melodies that resulted in such a triumph. This was definitely not the case with Gustav Holst, who seemed almost

allergic to the notion of success. According to *The [London] Times*, with the creation of *The Planets*, Holst had “achieved the position, rare for an Englishman, of being a really popular composer.” But being a popular composer was not something in which Holst was even remotely interested. Studious and quiet by nature, he resented the social demands that fame made upon him, especially when the demands took away valuable time from composition. According to his daughter Imogen, “He cared very little about material possessions. The only personal belongings he treasured were Beethoven’s tuning fork, which was sent to him by an unknown admirer, and the key that let him into his soundproof music-room at St. Paul’s School during weekends and holidays. The things in life that gave him most pleasure were things that could not be bought with money. He enjoyed long walks on the Cotswold Hills, or in beech woods, or across open moors.”

Holst’s love of walking was not limited to the picturesque English countryside, for he also enjoyed perambulating through the busy streets of London. He was especially keen on exploring a particular neighborhood known as Hammersmith, a district that provided the inspiration for his most ambitious work for military band. According to the composer,

As far as the work owes anything to outside influences, it is the result of living in Hammersmith for thirty-five years on and off and wanting to express my feelings for the place in music. There is no programme and no attempt to depict any person or incident. The only two things that I think were in my mind were (1) a district crowded with cockneys which would be overcrowded if it were not for the everlasting good humor of the people concerned, and (2) the background of the river, that was there before the crowd and will be there presumably long after, and which goes on its way largely unnoticed and apparently quite unconcerned.

While Holst states that there is no “programme” for *Hammersmith*, the work is a vivid musical portrayal of these two contrasting elements: the quiet river and the teeming cockney district. Each of the work’s five sections paints a scene that correlates to one of these images. The omnipresent river is introduced in the opening bars with a lugubrious, rolling ostinato in the tubas and euphoniums. Over this gentle undulation, the horns offer a stark and haunting melody that evokes one of Holst’s early morning walks on the misty banks of the Thames. The horns yield their tune to the flutes and bassoons as daylight gradually creeps into the quiet and peaceful setting. The first hint of a change in scenery is offered by the piccolo, perhaps suggestive of a tune whistled by a cockney merchant setting up shop for the day. When this tune is repeated more coarsely by the trumpets, our walker realizes that the quiet and reflective portion of his outing has ended, and he hurries to discover what the crowded marketplace has to offer. The dance-like tunes of this second scene are alluring, pulling the walker farther and farther into the crowded district until the kaleidoscopic presentation of melodies creates a surreal, carnival-like atmosphere. The third scene again reveals the river, where our walker has perhaps retreated to find comfort and solace in the quiet sounds of nature. But the temptations of the marketplace are too strong, and the fourth scene suggests that the walker is once again among the cockneys. In the cacophony one can almost hear the shouts of vendors and shrieks of laughter, detect the intermingled odors of food, smoke, and bodies, and see the greasy, toothless faces of the cockney peddlers. As the music reaches maximum volume and intensity, just at the moment when it seems the center cannot hold, the scene abruptly shifts back to the eternal and constant river. As the Thames escorts the walker home in the final scene, it seems to reassure him that it will always be there, “largely unnoticed and apparently quite unconcerned.”

*Hammersmith* was commissioned by the BBC in 1930, but did not receive its première until 1932 when it was performed by the U.S. Marine Band at the American Bandmasters Association convention in Washington, D.C., under the direction of Captain Taylor Branson. The performance was to have been conducted by Holst, who was in the United States at the time, but the composer had to cancel due to an illness. He died two years later at age fifty-nine, never having heard what is widely considered to be his greatest work for band.

### **“Habanera” from *Carmen***

Georges Bizet (1838–75)

arranged by MGySgt Donald Patterson\*

Georges Bizet’s career was plagued by setbacks and disappointment. He composed approximately thirty operas that met with little commercial success, and only six survive in a performable format. Even his greatest achievement, the opera *Carmen*, was received in 1875 with puzzlement by the public because of its risqué content and frank characterizations. Bizet died believing it was a failure. *Carmen* only posthumously achieved its place as

one of the most popular and beloved operas ever written. Originally, Bizet believed that he had based the aria “Habanera” on an authentic folk tune, but he later discovered that it was a composition by Spanish composer Sebastián de Iradier, a contemporary of Bizet’s, who had published “El arreglito” in 1864 as part of the *Fleurs d’Espagne* song collection. Bizet noted the source in the vocal score.

### **Gunnery Sergeant Sara Sheffield, mezzo-soprano**

Mezzo-soprano vocalist and concert moderator Gunnery Sergeant Sara Sheffield joined “The President’s Own” United States Marine Band in May 2005, becoming the first featured female vocal soloist in Marine Band history. Gunnery Sgt. Sheffield began her musical instruction on piano at age nine and voice at age sixteen. After graduating from Jacksonville (Texas) High School in 1997, she attended the University of North Texas in Denton and earned a bachelor’s degree in vocal performance in 2001. In 2008 she was named a regional finalist in the Mid-Atlantic Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. She earned an executive master’s in business administration from George Mason University in 2016 in Fairfax, Virginia. Prior to joining “The President’s Own,” Gunnery Sgt. Sheffield was a member of the U.S. Army Band’s Army Chorale at Fort Myer in Arlington, Virginia.

As a Marine Band vocalist and concert moderator, Gunnery Sgt. Sheffield is a soloist at White House State Dinners and the Commandant of the Marine Corps’ residence, and is a featured performer in the annual musical productions of Washington’s Gridiron Club and Military Order of the Carabao. She performs regularly in the Washington, D.C., area and across the country during the band’s annual concert tour.

### **Fantasy Variations on a Theme by Niccolò Paganini, Opus 71**

James Barnes (b. 1949)

Commissioned by Colonel John R. Bourgeois for the United States Marine Band, “Fantasy Variations on a Theme by Niccolò Paganini” was premièred thirty years ago at the 1988 Music Educators National Conference convention in Indianapolis, Indiana. In the years following the première, the band performed this work on several national tours, including on its first tour of Russia.

Of the work the composer notes:

The set of twenty variations is based on the famous theme of Paganini’s “24th Caprice in A Minor” for solo violin, which, of course, is the same theme used by Brahms and Rachmaninoff for their famous compositions, as well as by more contemporary composers (such as Lutoslawski and Blacher). For many years I had intended to write a set of variations on this clever theme for wind band, but I was waiting for the opportunity to write it for a really superb group of players, so that I could write whatever I wanted to say. When Col. Bourgeois approached me about writing a piece for the Marine Band, I told him on the spot what my plan was.

I had been thinking of the piece and improvising portions of it at the piano for so long that, when I finally had the chance to start work on it in late December 1987, I wrote the sketches for it in one week. After completing the piece, I realized why so many composers have used the theme. First, the harmonic progression is much more interesting than the tune itself, but when put together, the melody and the harmony are fantastic, and, secondly, it is impossible to get the tune out of your mind. When working on it, I couldn’t stop whistling the tune. I would wake up in the middle of the night and hurry to write another variation. I rushed to finish sketching this work so I could get that silly little tune out of my head.

When I began work on this piece, I realized that the various modern settings of this *very* 19th-century theme were neither complimentary nor effective. The interplay between the melody and the harmony is such a crucial factor on the impact of this tune that to go too far afield from the original version is detrimental to the overall effectiveness of the theme. I decided that, like Brahms and Rachmaninoff, I would stay with the basic harmonic progression that Paganini used. The reason I wrote the piece in A minor is because Paganini’s “Caprice” (which is itself a set of nine virtuosic variations) is in A minor. I did this out of respect for the composer’s original intentions.

My overall concept was to use the variation technique to showcase every solo instrument and/or every instrumental section of the modern wind band. In doing so, it was my intent to give the Marine Band a work they could play almost anywhere for almost any kind of audience: a piece full of energy, drama, and even a little humor.