



Colonel Jason K. Fettig, Director

UNITED STATES MARINE BAND
Sunday, March 31, 2019 at 2:00 P.M.
Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center
Northern Virginia Community College
Alexandria Campus
Captain Bryan P. Sherlock, conducting

Song and Dance

John Corigliano (b. 1938)

Gazebo Dances

Overture
Waltz
Adagio
Tarantella

Rolf Wilhelm (1927–2013)

Concertino for Euphonium and Concert Band (1998)

Allegro ma non troppo
Andante ma non troppo, piacevole
Moderato con animo

Peyton Sills, guest soloist

Winner of the 2019 Marine Band Concerto Competition

Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873–1943)
transcribed by Paul Lavender

Lento assai; Allegro vivace from *Symphonic Dances*, Opus 45

INTERMISSION

Aaron Copland (1900–90)
arranged by Thomas Knox*

Old American Songs, Set One

“The Boatmen’s Dance”
“The Dodger”
“Long Time Ago”
“Simple Gifts”
“I Bought Me a Cat”

MSgt Kevin Benneer, baritone

Robert Russell Bennett (1894–1981)
edited by Edward Higgins

Suite of Old American Dances

Cake Walk
Schottische
Western One-Step
Wallflower Waltz
Rag

The Marine Big Band will present the annual Young People’s Concert on Sunday, April 7 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

Gazebo Dances

John Corigliano (b. 1938)

American composer John Corigliano has created more than 100 works and has received numerous awards including the Pulitzer Prize, the Grawemeyer Award, three Grammy Awards, and an Academy Award. While *Gazebo Dances* was his only work for band for many years, Corigliano returned to composing for that medium when commissioned by The University of Texas Wind Ensemble in Austin. The resulting work was his grandiose Symphony No. 3, *Circus Maximus*, scored for wind orchestra and multiple additional ensembles positioned throughout the concert hall. Corigliano currently serves on the composition faculty at the Juilliard School in New York and at Lehman College, City University of New York.

The composer provided the following note about the work:

Gazebo Dances was originally written as a set of four-hand piano pieces dedicated to certain of my pianist friends. I later arranged the suite for orchestra and for concert band, and it is from the latter version that the title is drawn. The title, *Gazebo Dances*, was suggested by the pavilions often seen on village greens in towns throughout the countryside, where public band concerts are given on summer evenings. The delights of that sort of entertainment are portrayed in this set of dances, which begins with a Rossini-like Overture, followed by a rather peg-legged Waltz, a long-lined Adagio, and a bouncy Tarantella.

Concertino for Euphonium and Concert Band (1998)

Rolf Wilhelm (1927–2013)

Born in Munich, composer Rolf Wilhelm began studying piano at age seven. Showing early promise, he was admitted to the Vienna Academy of Music at age fifteen, where he continued his piano studies and began the exploration of music theory. His education was soon interrupted by compulsory service in World War II, during which time he was held as a prisoner of war. Once he was released in 1945, Wilhelm resumed his studies at the Munich Academy of Music and completed his degree in 1948. His compositions included more than 250 radio programs, 500 television scores, and sixty-five movie soundtracks, including collaborations with Academy Award-winner Ingmar Bergman. Wilhelm also wrote incidental music for the theaters in Munich and Vienna, as well as concert works for ensembles of every size.

Regarding the piece, Wilhelm wrote:

In July 1997 the International Tuba and Euphonium conference was held...at Riva del Garda. During those days that I spent at Lake Garda under sunny Italian skies, I met so many outstanding international instrumentalists and heard so much fascinating and wonderfully interpreted music that I spontaneously resolved to compose a new piece for euphonium. It would be a companion piece to my 1983 Concertino for Tuba and Wind Ensemble, which we also performed there. This new work is also a short, uncomplicated piece, striving solely to express the love of music and *joie de vivre*.

The Concertino is composed in three movements, beginning with an Allegro ma non troppo that displays the technical virtuosity of the euphonium and ends with a short cadenza. The second movement is a simple, yet expressive song, demonstrating the lyrical qualities of the instrument, and the third is a moderate and rollicking dance movement.

2019 United States Marine Band Concerto Competition Winner
Peyton Sills, euphonium

This year marks the eleventh 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 eleven years, many of whom have been featured on NPR's "From the Top" program and have performed with world-class ensembles.

Euphonium player Peyton Sills is a senior at Madison Central High School in Madison, Mississippi. He has been a member of the Mississippi Lions All-State Band in 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019. He was selected as an alternate for the 2018 Leonard Falcone International Euphonium and Tuba Festival, in the Student Division. In addition, Sills received the Most Outstanding Musician Award from performing with the Mississippi Bandmasters Association All-State Concert Band.

Lento assai; Allegro vivace from *Symphonic Dances*, Opus 45

Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873–1943)

transcribed by Paul Lavender

Born to Russian parents who were both amateur pianists, Sergei Rachmaninoff began piano studies at age four and soon displayed marvelous talents in both piano and composition. By age twenty, Rachmaninoff had met Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky and was being mentored by the great composer. Rachmaninoff embraced a compositional style influenced by Tchaikovsky, which combined Russian Romanticism with balletic grace and moody expressiveness. The Russian Revolution of 1917 caused Rachmaninoff and his family to relocate to the United States, where due to financial obligations, he devoted most of his time and energy to a busy performance schedule, thus reducing his compositional output. "Perhaps the incessant practice and eternal rush inseparable from life as a concert artist takes too much toll of my strength," Rachmaninoff admitted.

Fortunately, he retained enough creative energy to compose one more work in his later years. *Symphonic Dances*, Opus 45 was composed in 1940 and dedicated to and premiered by Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra. The work parallels Rachmaninoff's own musical and personal journey. Originally wanting to symbolize the three stages of life by titling the movements "Morning," "Noon," and "Twilight," Rachmaninoff infused the work with many of his sentiments regarding life, death, and salvation. The Lento assai; Allegro vivace is the third and final movement from this work. This twilight movement's beginning is dark and somber and features musical quotes of the "Dies irae" melody from the medieval Mass for the Dead. The music gradually rises to an optimistic and triumphant close, underscored by Rachmaninoff's own inscription in the manuscript: "I thank Thee, Lord!"

***Old American Songs*, Set One**

Aaron Copland (1900–90)

arranged by Thomas Knox*

Benjamin Britten first met Aaron Copland in England in 1938, and Copland was at least partially responsible for encouraging Britten's wartime sojourn to the United States the following year. The two composers became friends during Britten's American residency and remained close after Britten returned home. In 1950, Copland set a diverse collection of traditional American songs for voice and piano in his own inimitable compositional style. Copland mined every corner of traditional American music to compile his set of five *Old American Songs*, tapping into the sources of Negro spirituals, campaign songs,

Shaker tunes, and children's ditties. Soon after their completion, he shared the songs with Britten, who immediately requested that the set be given its première at his Aldeburgh Music Festival in Suffolk, England. The songs were performed by Britten's longtime collaborator and partner, tenor Peter Pears, with Britten at the piano on June 17, 1950. In January of the following year, Copland himself accompanied famed baritone William Warfield in the American première of the set. This first collection was so well received that Copland created a second set of five *Old American Songs* in 1952 and later reset both collections for voice and orchestra. The orchestrated version of the original *Old American Songs* set was premièred by William Warfield and the Los Angeles Philharmonic on January 7, 1955.

"The Boatman's Dance" was credited to Daniel Decatur Emmett, composer of "Dixie," and was penned in 1843. It is a celebration of the bawdy Ohio River boatmen, juxtaposing a repeated declamatory cry, "Hey, ho, the boatman row, sailin' on the river on the Ohio," against lively and vigorous verses recounting the boatmen's daily lives.

"The Dodger" was a nineteenth-century American folk tune and campaign song. It appeared during the 1884 presidential campaign of Grover Cleveland and satirized a number of professions, three of which remain in Copland's version: the political candidate, the preacher, and the lover. Cleveland apparently used the tune to belittle his opponent James Blaine. The version known today is based on a Library of Congress recording by Emma Dusenberry. It was transcribed and first published by Charles Seeger in a little Resettlement Administration songbook.

Copland found "Long Time Ago" in a collection at the Brown University Library in Providence, Rhode Island (along with "The Boatmen's Dance"). George Pope adapted the lyrics in 1837, and Charles Edward Horn set the words to music. Copland's open and gentle setting reflects the wistfulness of the lyrics that recall a love that perished long ago.

"Simple Gifts" was written by Joseph Brackett around 1848. Brackett joined the Shakers in Gorham, Maine, when his father's farm served as the nucleus of a new Shaker settlement. This now-famous Shaker song was largely unknown outside Shaker communities until it was used by Copland as the centerpiece of his score for the Martha Graham ballet *Appalachian Spring*, which was first performed in 1944. Copland's setting of "Simple Gifts" for this song set is remarkably similar to one of its incarnations in *Appalachian Spring*. William Warfield later explained that the composer tried to achieve a recitative quality by putting the chords on the off-beats, to be sure it wouldn't be sung with a regular rhythmic feeling.

The final song of the first set, "I Bought Me a Cat," was a playful children's nonsense song identifying a list of animals purchased by the singer along with their characteristic calls. Like the well-known tune "Old MacDonald Had a Farm," each verse introduces a new procurement (including a wife), accompanied by a different treatment of the animated and humorous orchestration.

Master Sergeant Kevin Bennear, baritone

Baritone vocalist and concert moderator Master Sergeant Kevin Bennear joined "The President's Own" United States Marine Band in January 2000, becoming the third featured vocal soloist since the position was established in 1955. He began his musical instruction at age nine. After graduating in 1990 from Elk Garden High School in Elk Garden, West Virginia, he attended Potomac State College in Keyser, West Virginia, and earned a bachelor's degree in music in 1996 from West Virginia University (WVU) in Morgantown, where he studied with Peter Lightfoot. He earned a master's degree in vocal performance in 1999 from the University of Tennessee (UT), in Knoxville, where he studied with George Bitzas.

Master Sgt. Bennear has performed with the UT Opera Theater, WVU Opera Theater, Theatre West Virginia, and the Knoxville Opera Company, where he played the role of Sharpless in Giacomo Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* with noted soprano Stella Zimbalis of the Metropolitan Opera. He also taught voice as a graduate teaching assistant at UT.

Suite of Old American Dances
Robert Russell Bennett (1894–1981)
edited by Edward Higgins

Robert Russell Bennett was an icon in the world of theater music. Between 1920 and 1976, Bennett provided orchestrations for all or part of more than 300 Broadway musicals. He received an Academy Award for his music in the movie version of *Oklahoma!* Bennett was also a very accomplished composer of classical music and studied extensively under Nadia Boulanger, who was widely considered one of the most influential composition teachers of the twentieth century. Many of Bennett's articles and texts continue to stand the test of time as the gold standard in their respective fields.

Suite of Old American Dances is an original composition for wind band. It is a collection of "barn dances" representative of those recalled from Bennett's childhood. The dances include Cake Walk, Schottische, Western One-Step, Wallflower Waltz, and Rag. The composer described the music as "native American dance forms...treated in a 'riot' of instrumentation colors." Bennett went on to write that "there was no particular purpose in mind...except to do a modern and, I hope, entertaining version of some dance moods of my early youth. Another purpose was to do a number with no production tie-up!" As with all of his compositions, the *Suite of Old American Dances* offers a glowing example of Bennett's distinctive harmonies, effortless counterpoint, and rhythmic vitality.