

OVERTURES

"THE PRESIDENT'S OWN"
United States Marine Band
Colonel John R. Bourgeois, Director

Verdi

Johann Strauss

Berlioz

Wagner

Lalo

Dvorák

Sullivan

OVERTURES

"THE PRESIDENT'S OWN" United States Marine Band

Colonel John R. Bourgeois, Director

- | | | |
|---|--|-------|
| 1 | <i>Carneval Overture, Op. 92</i> —Antonín Dvorák | 9:30 |
| | Transcribed by Herbert L. Clarke | |
| 2 | <i>Overture to The Flying Dutchman</i> —Richard Wagner | 11:13 |
| | Transcribed by Mark Hindsley | |
| 3 | <i>Overture to Benvenuto Cellini</i> —Hector Berlioz | 9:55 |
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| 4 | <i>Overture to Il finto Stanislao</i> —Giuseppe Verdi | 5:23 |
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| 5 | <i>Overture to Giovanna d'Arco</i> —Giuseppe Verdi | 8:30 |
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| | Transcribed by Lucien Cailliet | |
| | Total Time | 73:08 |

The word overture is derived from the French term *ouverture*, meaning a work in two or three sections which served as an introduction to a larger musical or dramatic work. The term has been loosely applied to compositions by Bach, forms which more accurately consist of an overture and series of dance movements, and to English works of the 18th century, multi-movement compositions which resemble symphonies more than the overtures we know today.

As a musical form, the overture dates from the 17th century when it was used as a prelude to a dramatic work, opera, or ballet. The overture set the mood, allowed the audience to become comfortable in their

seats, and often gave a brief preview of the principal musical themes heard later in the evening.

In its dramatic context, an overture differs from a prelude, a musical form similar in structure and placement before the main work. Where the overture usually finishes with a brilliant flourish and a definite break before the opening scene of the opera, the prelude tends to end in a more subdued fashion, often blending into the first act without pause. Composers were known to create a separate "concert ending" for those works without a clearly-defined finale. The revised ending allowed a more satisfying conclusion for concert hall presentation.

If overtures must be classified, they may be divided into two broad categories: the dramatic overture and the concert overture. The dramatic overture precedes a larger work and is usually, although not exclusively, drawn from the musical material which comes later. The manner in which these musical themes are incorporated may be as simple as the French-style *potpourri* overture, essentially a medley of themes from the opera, or the composer may choose a more complex and extended treatment. In either case, the overture is a functional piece of music which sets the mood and style for the main body of the performance.

The concert overture varies little in outward appearance from the dramatic overture ex-

cept that it is not part of a larger work. The popularity of overtures as concert hall fare led many composers to create concert overtures based on literary subjects (such as Berlioz' *King Lear*) or some other event or experience (such as Mendelssohn's *Hebrides Overture*, written after a visit to the Scottish isles).

Overtures remain one of the most effective sources of music from operetta and grand opera. While operatic excerpts have always been popular with audiences, critics have commented that operatic music lifted from its dramatic context was wholly unsatisfying. The opinion on this issue has ranged from annoyance to outrage. Some compare such operatic excerpts with reading isolated pages from a novel. Oth-

ers have described instrumental excerpts as "great, bleeding hunks" dismembered from the whole, with Richard Wagner's operas falling prey most often to this comment.

The beauty of the overture is that it has been crafted by the composer into a neat package intended to stand alone. The selection of melodies, transitions, pacing, and ending are of the composer's imagination and design, not the product of overzealous conductors or concert promoters who desire to pad concert programs with operatic highlights.

Until the 20th century, when a unique, original repertoire for the concert band began to emerge, much of the

non-march music performed by American bands was drawn from orchestral music and significantly from that of grand opera. The allure of operatic music for bands was a function of both need and desire. In the absence of a large body of original music for winds, this music was essential to fill out concert programs. Without recordings and radio, audience demand for operatic music was great and players undoubtedly found this repertoire both musically satisfying and enjoyable. Those wind instrumentalists and conductors who performed with local opera companies as well as bands must have realized the potential for sharing repertoire between opera house and bandstand.

Research into European bands and their music has yielded evidence of overtures for wind instruments composed in 1795 by French composers Etienne Mehul and Charles-Simon Catel, and the *Overture für harmoniemusik*, Op. 24 by Felix Mendelssohn from 1824. The strong influence of European bandmasters and musicians who immigrated to the United States (especially those from Italy) was more closely allied with the symphonic and operatic repertoire of the day than the chamber ensemble wind music in the tradition of Haydn and Mozart.

The Marine Band's tradition of performing overtures can be traced to concerts in the 1830's featuring Daniel-François Auber's overture to *Le Cheval de Bronze* (*The Bronze Horse*). The

band performed excerpts from Verdi's opera *Nabucco* in 1848, the year of the opera's American premiere, and performed the Anvil Chorus from Verdi's *Il Trovatore* at the White House in 1857 for President James Buchanan's 60th birthday. Under the leadership of Francis Scala (Director 1855-1871), the band continued to perform French overtures such as Auber's *Masaniello* (performed at the White House during the Lincoln administration), and began to show the influence of Scala's Italian heritage in performances of selections from Verdi's *Un Ballo in Maschera*, *Il Trovatore*, *La Traviata*, *Giovanna d'Arco*, and *I Vespri Siciliani*. Familiar overtures by Rossini, Wagner, Berlioz, Massenet, Suppé, and Weber appeared regularly on Marine

Band concert programs, as did more obscure overtures such as the *Overture Triomphale* by Gaute and *The Twilight Hour* by Boettger, works we must assume have earned their place in obscurity.

The overtures on this recording represent a cross section of those in the Marine Band's present-day repertoire. The selection of composers and individual works was based upon an evaluation of each composer's style and the effectiveness with which that style was carried through in the transcription for band. By definition, these overtures are virtuoso showpieces for any ensemble, particularly when intricate technical passages for strings are assigned to the wind choirs of the band. In tracing the development of wind playing in

the United States, scholars have noted the development of technique and instrument manufacture as a result of the technical demands of this music.



Antonín Dvořák's *Carneval Overture*, Op. 92 was composed in 1891. It was originally conceived as one of a series of three overtures which would, in the composer's words, "portray the great creative forces of the universe: nature, life, and love." Dvořák completed the first overture, which he entitled *In Nature's Realm*. He then abandoned the idea of the original trio of over-

tures in favor of three separate concert overtures, continuing with *Carneval* (originally entitled *Bohemian Carneval*), and completed the set with *Otello*. *Carneval Overture* is dedicated to Prague University and received its premiere under Dvořák's direction on April 28, 1892, in Prague.



The fate of Richard Wagner's opera *The Flying Dutchman* seems nearly as dramatic as that of the Dutchman himself. The libretto is based upon an old legend recorded in Heinrich Heine's 1831 book *Memoiren des Herren von Schnabelwopski* about a Dutch

sea captain who, in punishment for blasphemy, is condemned to sail his ship until redeemed by a faithful woman. Wagner heard this story from sailors aboard the ship on which he sailed from Riga to Paris, a trip during which the ship was battered by storms and driven off course. Upon reaching Paris, Wagner wrote the libretto in an attempt to interest the Paris Opera in the production. In a strange turn of events, the Paris Opera bought Wagner's libretto but commissioned Pierre-Louis Dietsch to compose the music. This version, entitled *Le Vaisseau fantôme*, was produced in 1842 and was a failure. After completing *Rienzi*, Wagner decided to write his own music for the *Dutchman* libretto. The new opera was given four performances in Dresden in 1843

but it was not until its 1865 revival that *The Flying Dutchman* received acclaim.



Le Roi d'Ys (*The King of Ys*) was the second opera of French composer Edouard Lalo. Following the success of his *Concerto in F* and his *Symphonie Espagnole*, Lalo undertook an opera based upon the old French legend of a city submerged beneath the sea (the same legend which inspired Claude Debussy's prelude for piano *Le Cathédrale Engloutie*). The overture was completed in 1876 and was performed in Paris on November 12th of that year, however,

the opera was not performed until 12 years later. After numerous revisions and changes, the complete production was introduced with great success at the Opéra Comique on May 7, 1888.



Despite the enormous success of *Die Fledermaus*, Johann Strauss preferred to compose the waltzes and polkas for which he had become so famous rather than becoming exclusively a composer of operettas. Strauss' second most familiar operetta is *The Gypsy Baron* (*Die Zigeunerbaron*). The plot follows Sandór Barinkay as he returns home to

claim his ancestral land only to discover that it has been overtaken by Gypsies. After an appropriate amount of operetta plot-twisting, he falls in love with one of the Gypsies (Saffi) who is, in fact, a princess. *The Gypsy Baron* premiered in Vienna in 1885 as part of the celebrations for Strauss' 60th birthday.



As previously noted, the operas of Giuseppe Verdi have provided a wealth of music for the concert band. Both works selected for this recording are among Verdi's lesser-known overtures but have been in the

repertoire of the Marine Band virtually since their operatic premieres. *Il finto Stanislao* (originally entitled *Un giorno di Regno*) is Verdi's only truly comic opera (apart from the very different *Falstaff*) and his only *buffo* (comic) overture.

The libretto by Felice Romani is based upon the 1808 play by Alexandre Vincent Pineu-Duval entitled *Le Faux Stanislaus*. In another case of recycled librettos, Romani had originally written his libretto for the Bohemian composer Adalbert Gyrowitz. This version was not successful in its 1818 La Scala production and Romani was eager to see the libretto used again. In spite of Verdi's wife's ill health (she would soon die of encephalitis

at age 27), he completed this comic opera in 1840 and it was premiered on September 5th of that year. *Il finto Stanislao* (*The False Stanislao*) is Stanislas Lescinski, who was king of Poland in the first half of the 18th century. The story relates how Lescinski fled Paris and travelled to Warsaw disguised as a coachman to escape conspirators while a French chevalier was chosen to impersonate him in France, thereby confusing his enemies. Conveniently enough, the false Stanislas does good deeds in his role and assures the romantic future of two young lovers in time for the final curtain. This new transcription for band by Walter Kalischnig was dedicated to Colonel John Bourgeois and the U.S. Marine Band.

Giovanna d'Arco is based upon Friedrich Schiller's 1801 drama *Die Jungfrau von Orleans* for a libretto by Temistocle Solera. (Solera would later deny any connection with Schiller's drama, insisting that his libretto was entirely original.) Following the 1843 publication of historical documents of Joan of Arc's trial in France, Verdi was inspired to write the opera. In another of a series of commissions from the impresario Merelli, Verdi began work in December 1844 and the opera received its premiere in February 1845, making it one of Verdi's most amazing creative efforts. One of the notable features of the overture to *Giovanna d'Arco* is the central *concertante* section for flute, oboe, and clarinet.

Arthur Sullivan

Sir Arthur Sullivan and W.S. Gilbert carved out a place for themselves and redefined operetta with their brilliance. As a composer outside of operetta, Sullivan is less well-known (his hymn *Onward Christian Soldiers* notwithstanding). *Overture di Ballo* is one of Sullivan's four concert overtures. It was commissioned by the Birmingham Triennial Festival and premiered in August 1870. Essentially cast in the form of a dance suite, the overture embodies the grace and lilt of Sullivan's stage works.

Hector Berlioz

Benvenuto Cellini was Hector Berlioz' first full-length opera. Having read the memoirs of Benvenuto Cellini, the Florentine goldsmith and sculptor who lived from 1500-1571, and having seen Cellini's "Perseus" statue in Florence, Berlioz was inspired to compose the opera following his return to France from Italy. Berlioz requested the libretto from the poet and dramatist Alfred de Vigny but he was unable to supply the *Cellini* libretto. The task was referred to Léon de Wally, who collaborated with August Barbier on the project while de Vigny managed to offer suggestions and criticisms along the way. The premiere on September 10, 1838, was reported

as "a fiasco." The overture received, in Berlioz' words, "exaggerated applause" from the audience and was more warmly received than any other part of the opera. The overture was published as a separate concert work and was dedicated by Berlioz to

his friend Ernest Legouve. It remains one of Berlioz' most brilliant efforts, marked by the gargantuan instrumentation (including timpani parts for three players), much of which is preserved in this turn-of-the-century French edition.

"THE PRESIDENT'S OWN" United States Marine Band

The Marine Band traces its origin to the fifers and drummers who marched with the Continental Marines during the Revolutionary War. The band was officially established by an Act of Congress signed by President John Adams on July 11, 1798, making the Marine Band America's oldest musical organization. In 1801, the band moved to its present location at Marine Barracks, Washington, D.C., and performs in John Philip Sousa Band Hall, home of "The President's Own."

The Marine Band's Presidential debut took place on

New Year's Day, 1801, at a reception hosted by President John Adams. In March of that year, the band performed for the inauguration of Thomas Jefferson. Since that time, the band has performed for every Presidential inauguration. Jefferson has been described as the "godfather" of the Marine Band and his personal interest in the organization led him to give the Marine Band the title "The President's Own."

From the earliest days of our nation, the Marine Band's primary mission has been to provide music for the President of

the United States. Whether performing for South Lawn arrival ceremonies, State dinners, receptions, or accompanying famous entertainers, Marine musicians appear at the Executive Mansion more than 200 times annually.

John Philip Sousa, the band's 17th Director, was largely responsible for establishing the Marine Band as the world famous musical organization it is today. He served as Director from 1880-1892 and during that time began to write the marches which would earn him the title "The March King." Sousa inaugurated the Marine Band's annual concert tour in 1891, a tradition continued to the present day.

Today's Marine Band is comprised of 143 of the nation's

finest musicians, many who are graduates of our nation's best music schools and conservatories. Musicians are selected at auditions much like those of major symphony orchestras. Once selected, musicians enlist in the U.S. Marine Corps and report directly for duty with "The President's Own." More than 90 percent of Marine Band musicians are career professionals who serve with the band for 20 years or more.

The band's 25th Director is Colonel John R. Bourgeois. A native of Louisiana, he was accepted into "The President's Own" in 1958 as a French Hornist and member of the arranging staff. He later served as Operations Chief of the band, and was appointed Director in May 1979.

As Director of the U.S. Marine Band, Colonel Bourgeois is musical advisor to the White House.

The United States Marine Band continues the tradition of excellence which earned it the

title "The President's Own." Whether in White House performances, public concerts, or national and international tours, the music of the Marine Band is the music of America.

" THE PRESIDENT'S OWN "
United States Marine Band

Colonel John R. Bourgeois, Director

Personnel for this recording

PICCOLO

MGySgt Gail A. Bowlin

FLUTE

GySgt Gail L. Dempster

MGySgt Leslie L. Hunt III

GySgt Kathryn N. Diener

OBOE

MGySgt Elizabeth A. Schaefer

MSgt Michelle Foley

SSgt Mark R. Christianson

ENGLISH HORN

SSgt Mark R. Christianson

E-FLAT CLARINET

SSgt John R. Barclay

B-FLAT CLARINET

MGySgt Merlin O. Petroff

GySgt Lisa A. Kadala

GySgt Ruth A. Schlenker

SSgt Jeffrey M. Strouf

SSgt Frederick D. Lemmons

SSgt Charles H. Willett

MGySgt Terry R. Moore

GySgt Robert W. Cassel

SSgt Christopher Winton

SSgt Jay E. Niepoetter

SSgt John C. Norton

MSgt Joel P. Lusby

GySgt Richard T. Heffler, Jr.

SSgt Jihoon Chang

SSgt Elizabeth A. Gish

ALTO CLARINET

GySgt Olive U. Blackall

BASS CLARINET

GySgt Barbara A. Haney

E-FLAT CONTRA ALTO CLARINET

GySgt Olive U. Blackall

MSgt Thomas W. Fox

BASSOON

SSgt Roger C. Kantner

GySgt Dyane L. Wright

MSgt David G. Wright

ALTO SAXOPHONE

MGySgt Ronald C. Hockett

SSgt Audrey E. Cupples

TENOR SAXOPHONE

GySgt Irvin D. Peterson, Jr.

BARITONE SAXOPHONE

GySgt Vincent L. Patterson

CORNET

MGySgt David L. Sorenson

MGySgt John C. Wright

SSgt Richard B. Lehman

GySgt W. Andrew Schuller

SSgt Nancy E. Taylor

MSgt Roy C. Griffin

SSgt Cole J. Uhrig

FLUGELHORN

GySgt Steven M. Matera

GySgt Michael R. Montgomery

TRUMPET

MGySgt J. Carlton Rowe

SSgt John R. Hagstrom

FRENCH HORN

GySgt William J. Zsembery, Jr.

MSgt Donald L. Dosch

SSgt Brett B. Widenhouse

SSgt Michael J. Indykiewicz

SSgt Amy M. Horn

EUPHONIUM

GySgt Michael J. Colburn
SSgt Paul S. Kellner, Jr.

TROMBONE

GySgt Bryan R. Bourne
MGySgt Daniel K. Williams
MSgt John E. Schaefer

BASS TROMBONE

MGySgt Thomas D. Wilson III

TUBA

MGySgt Thomas R. Lyckberg
SSgt John M. Cradler
SSgt Thomas D. Holtz

PERCUSSION

MSgt Matthew B. Becker
MSgt Thomas H. Prince
MGySgt Wayne W. Webster
MSgt Jeffrey W. Gilliam
SSgt Donald A. Spinelli
SSgt Steven D. Searfoss

STRING BASS

GySgt Peter S. Berquist

HARP

MSgt Phyllis A. Mauney

LIBRARIAN

SSgt Theresa Renner

STAGE MANAGER

MSgt Earl T. Hurrey
SSgt William A. Perry

STAGE CREW

Cpl Timothy W. Combs
LCpl Kris R. Hess
LCpl Gregory B. Sadler
LCpl William L. King
LCpl Derrick C. Nichols
LCpl Stephen M. McLellan

C R E D I T S

PRODUCER:

Major Timothy W. Foley, USMC,
Assistant Director, U.S. Marine
Band

RECORDING ENGINEER:

MGySgt Donald Barringer,
USMC, Member, U.S. Marine Band

CD BOOKLET NOTES:

MGySgt Frank Byrne, USMC,
Member, U.S. Marine Band

EDOUARD LALO SIGNATURE:

Courtesy of the Moldenhauer
Archives in the Library of Congress.

Overture to *Il finto Stanislao*
by Giuseppe Verdi, Transcribed by Walter Kalisch, used by permission of Musica Mundana, Deurne, The Netherlands.

Overture to *Le Roi d'Ys* by Edouard Lalo, transcribed by Lucien Cailliet, ©1969 by Leblanc Publications, Inc. Used by permission of Southern Music Company, San Antonio, Texas.

Overture to *The Flying Dutchman* by Richard Wagner, transcribed by Mark Hindsley, used by permission of Mark Hindsley

Recorded September 9-12, 1991, in DAR Constitution Hall, Washington, DC

For more information about the United States Marine Band, please write to:

Division of Public Affairs (PAB)
Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps
Washington, DC 20380

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