



Leonard Bernstein conducted the Marine Chamber Orchestra at the White House under the watchful eye of then-Director Major John R. Bourgeois.

Suite from the ballet *Pineapple Poll*

Sir Charles Mackerras based on the music of Sir Arthur Sullivan, transcribed by W. J. Duthoit

It is a conundrum worthy of a Gilbert and Sullivan operetta plot: How could Sir Arthur Sullivan be totally unaware of his most successful ballet? To resolve this paradox, we must first become

acquainted with renowned conductor Sir Charles Mackerras, Although he was born in Schenectady, New York in 1925, his parents were Australian, and they moved the family to Sydney when Charles was still quite young. Mackerras studied music extensively in Sydney and attended that city's Conservatorium of Music where he received instruction in oboe, piano, and composition. One of Mackerras's first professional engagements was playing oboe in the pit orchestra of a local music theater company that specialized in the operettas of Gilbert and Sullivan. During his tenure the company also staged a performance of the ballet Gâité Parisienne, a charming arrangement of music from Jacques Offenbach's operettas created by Manuel Rosenthal. Although Mackerras was confident that a similar approach could work with the music of Gilbert and Sullivan, his idea would have to wait until the copyright protection of Gilbert and Sullivan's music expired in 1951



In the meantime, Mackerras left Australia to make a name for himself in Europe. He studied conducting with Vaclav Tálich at the Prague Conservatory in 1946, and made his debut with the British opera company Sadler's Wells in 1948. As 1951 approached, Mackerras revived his idea to cre-

ate a ballet based upon the music of Arthur Sullivan. He joined forces with choreographer John Cranko, and together the two men concocted a new ballet entitled *Pineapple Poll*. In addition to mining music from the well-known operettas like *Pirates of Penzance, The Mikado*, and *H.M.S. Pinafore*, Mackerras also salvaged melodies from lesser-known productions such as *Princess Ida* and *Ruddigore*. Whenever possible, he used music that not only matched the tempo and character of a particular dance sequence, but had appropriate lyrics as well, even though all of the music for the ballet was, of course, instrumental. *Pineapple Poll* was tremendously successful, enjoying productions around the world, and is in the repertoire of British ballet companies to this day. Due to the enormous popularity of the ballet, Mackerras fashioned a suite of music for orchestra that was later transcribed into two suites for band by W. J. Duthoit.

The plot of Pineapple Poll was appropriately inspired by one of William Gilbert's "Bab Ballads." a series of light-hearted poems he wrote for the British magazine Fun. In addition to achieving popularity on their own, many of these ballads were recycled into the plots and songs of the Gilbert and Sullivan operettas. Not surprisingly, a ship is at the center of the plot of *Pineapple* Poll—the H.M.S. Hot Cross Buns. The "Poll" of the ballet's title is a flower girl who works in Portsmouth and who is desperately, but unrequitedly, loved by a potboy named Jasper. Poll has no interest in Jasper because she, along with every other girl in town, is smitten with the dapper Captain Belaye of the H.M.S. Hot Cross Buns. Captain Belaye ignores the attention of the local women, however, because he only has eyes for the demure Blanche and is determined to win her hand. Undaunted by the Captain's devotion to Blanche, the ladies disguise themselves as sailors and sneak aboard the ship in order to be closer to him. The crew is now significantly smaller and slighter in stature, but our lovesick and distracted Captain does not notice, even when they fail in the simplest of tasks and Pineapple Poll faints after a cannon is fired. In fact, not until Captain Belaye's new bride Blanche comes aboard do the "sailors" divulge their true identities by fainting in horror at the evidence of the betrothal. When Jasper the potboy is promoted to captain, however, Poll immediately forgets about Captain Belaye and swears her undying love and allegiance to her new captain. In true Gilbert and Sullivan style, everyone lives happily ever after.

SYMPHONIC DANCES

La valse

Maurice Ravel transcribed by Master Sergeant Donald Patterson

French composer Maurice Ravel once credited author Edgar Allan Poe as his most influential teacher in composition. While one might conclude that the influence of Poe, the inventor of the gothic horror genre, is most apparent in the melancholy and macabre nature of much of Ravel's

music, that is only part of the story. Both Ravel and his colleague Claude Debussy were devoted followers of Poe's "Philosophy of Composition," a doctrine espousing his rather idiosyncratic theory of fiction writing. Although his manifesto went largely unnoticed in his native America, Poe's theories were still held in high regard by many in the European arts community for several decades after his death. Debussy was obsessed with Poe, and left behind several compositions that bear a distinct relationship to the author, including his greatest unfinished effort, *The Fall of the House of Usher*.

There is no clearer example of Poe's influence on Ravel than his beautiful but disturbing tribute to the Viennese waltz tradition, *La valse*. When Ravel first conceived the idea for a

waltz-inspired work in 1907, he envisioned a straightforward homage to "The Waltz King," Johann Strauss Jr., entitled "Vien." However, after Ravel served in the French Army in World War I, his personal experiences permanently altered his feelings about Austria and Germany. When he resumed work on his tribute to the waltz, he transformed it into a social commentary on the encrusted and obsolete traditions of Austro-Germanic aristocracy.

La valse depicts a lavish masquerade in a nineteenth century imperial Viennese palace. At first the scene is obscured by clouds of swirling mist through which we occasionally catch a glimpse of waltzing couples. As the music progresses, these supernatural mists gradually dissipate, revealing a huge ballroom crowded with dancers. The lights in the chandeliers become brighter and brighter until the entire scene is bathed in brilliant, almost blinding light. Waltz follows upon waltz, at first orderly and genteel, but with increasingly ominous and sinister undertones. The dancers begin to waltz faster and faster in what the composer describes as a "fantastic and fatal whirling." This sense of confusion becomes more overwhelming as the various waltz melodies begin to collide



with one another, creating a chaotic and terrifying atmosphere that leads to one of the most hair-raising climaxes in all of music.

Although Ravel never specifically cites Poe's short story "The Masque of the Red Death," the similarities between the two plots are too strong to be coincidental. Set in the Middle Ages, Poe's tale features a castle ball attended by local nobility who believe they are safe from the plague of "Red Death" rampaging through Europe. With total lack of compassion for the suffering beyond the castle walls, the patrons of this costume

ball dance and revel to excess, only to discover eventually that a mysterious robed stranger in attendance is none other than the personification of Red Death. They are shocked and horrified to learn that he has choreographed this inescapable danse macabre in order to take their lives and claim their souls. In the words of Poe, "Darkness and Decay and the Red Death held illimitable dominion over all," a chilling statement that also serves as an apt description of Ravel's breathtaking final scene.

SYMPHONIC DANCES

Symphonic Dances from West Side Story Leonard Bernstein

Neither an opera nor a musical, audiences were at first somewhat unsure what to make of Leonard Bernstein's groundbreaking *West Side Story* when it opened on Broadway in 1957. Pushing the boundaries of musical theater was not a new idea for Bernstein, who had been blurring the lines between its various forms from his earliest work for the stage, the ballet *Fancy Free* (1944). Some of Bernstein's experiments were more successful than others. His musical *On the Town* (1944) was a

popular hit that eventually was made into a successful movie, while more serious works like *Trouble in Tahiti* (1952) and *Candide* (1956) languished, opening to decidedly mixed reviews and lukewarm popular response. In *West Side Story*, however, Bernstein perfected his formula, astutely balancing elements of the Broadway musical, opera, ballet, and popular musical idioms. Despite its unusual identity, *West Side Story* enjoyed popular and critical success, initially running for 732 performances on Broadway and receiving a Tony Award nomination. It is ironic that this innovative musical, a work that forever changed the course of musical theater and is defined by its focus on twentieth-century urban issues, lost the 1957 Tony Award to Meredith Willson's *The Music Man*, a charming but nostalgic work that longingly looks back upon the America of our past.

In composing the score for West Side Story, one of Bernstein's biggest orchestration challenges was to



translate his large-scale symphonic concepts into a format that would work for the small pit orchestra of the Winter Garden Theater, the site of the première. His first step in solving this



dilemma was to enlist the aid of Sid Ramin and Irwin Kostal, two musicians with considerable stage, radio, and television experience. But the problem was bigger than just the limited number of instruments available in the pit, for Bernstein was required by the local union to use a number of the regular pit orchestra members of the Winter Garden Theater, many of whom were not especially talented or motivated. Bernstein derisively labeled these house musicians "Shuberts." a reference to the owners of the theater. He thought so little of them that he asked his orchestrators, "How would you guys feel if we got rid of the viola Shuberts?" Kostal warned Bernstein that the players would have to be paid even if they didn't play, to which the composer replied: "Okay, let's do without them, because I couldn't stand listening to my show every night and hearing what those guys would do to the viola parts." Other instrumental sections of "Shuberts" were accommodated by adding freelance musicians to play

the difficult parts, while the house players "played the potatoes;" much simpler lines to which they could do little harm.

When Bernstein asked Kostal and Ramin to help him create a symphonic suite from West Side Story's ballet music in 1961, they were understandably excited. According to Sid Ramin:

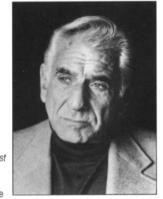
SYMPHONIC DANCES

We were in ecstasy! Every orchestral colour was ours for the asking; strings could be subdivided ad infinitum, percussion could be spread out among many players, winds and brass were expanded; and our only concern was whether the classically oriented symphonic player could handle the "jazzier" elements of the score. Cool, for example: Lenny assured us that symphonic orchestras could play the Cool Fugue stylistically, and indeed they have! In retrospect, I now realize that Lenny himself, because he had

a foot in both camps, was a classically trained musician who knew just how far we could go

with popular styles.

Bernstein felt strongly that music and dance were integral elements of West Side Story's narrative: "So much was conveyed in the music, including enormous reliance upon dance to tell the plot-not just songs stuck into a book." This conviction led him to construct a ballet suite that is more than just a potpourri of popular tunes from the show. Although the sequence of dances does not strictly adhere to the plot line, the episodes were carefully chosen and ordered by Bernstein to reflect the general contour of the story. He had no doubt that the suite should begin with the distinctive tritone that is heard throughout the music of West Side Story, followed immediately by the swaggering Prologue that sets the stage for his modern, urban version of Romeo and Juliet. Some of the subsequent dances were shifted from the original plot sequence to facilitate pacing,



such as the placement of "Somewhere" between the "Prologue" and "Mambo," and the use of the "Meeting Scene" music as transitional material into "Cool." The idea to end the suite with "I Have a Love." the same music that ends the show, came from longtime friend and collaborator Jack

Gottlieb, a decision that prompted Bernstein to compose a new flute cadenza to transition into this hauntingly beautiful coda.

Although the music was originally conceived for the Broadway stage, Symphonic Dances from West Side Story has become Leonard Bernstein's most successful concert work. Concert band musicians have long wished for a transcription of the suite, but until now the Bernstein estate had not sanctioned one. Paul Lavender's marvelous new setting was published in 2007, just in time to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of this icon of American musical theater.

Danse Funambulesque Jules Strens



Belgian composer Jules Strens was born in 1893 in the capital city of Brussels, the same city in which he died in 1971. He studied solfeggio, violin, and conducting at the Royal Conservatory of Brussels, where he also received informal instruction in orchestration from Paul Gilson. In 1926 he joined a group of progressive composers who had studied with Gilson and were known as the "Synthétistes." Although he started his career as a violinist, he also ventured into conducting, and eventually made his living as an organist. He composed prolifically throughout these various stages of his life, writing music that earned him accolades and several major national awards. His music reveals the influence of the French Impressionists and German Romantics, and Strens was particularly enamored of the music of Richard Strauss.

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Composed in 1925, Strens' Danse Funambulesque (Dance of the Tightrope Walker) was originally written for chamber orchestra. Strens transcribed his work for symphonic band in 1929 and dedicated it to renowned Belgian bandleader Arthur Prevost, then Director of the Band of the Belgian Guides. Inspired by the death-defying feats of a high-wire artist, the music begins quietly and reflectively, with florid solos in the flute and oboe that establish a suitably exotic atmosphere. This reverie gives way to a series of driving, rhythmic episodes that convey the ever-increasing tension associated with this thrilling type of entertainment. Throughout these sequences Strens experiments with a variety of polyrhythms that are characteristic of his mature compositional style. The rapid passage work of the woodwinds, often unpredictable interjections of the brass, and insistent pounding of the percussion drive this work to its thrilling conclusion.

Dances from Estancia

Alberto Ginastera transcribed by Master Sergeant Donald Patterson

Alberto Ginastera is without a doubt the most accomplished composer in the history of his native Argentina. He graduated from Argentina's Williams Conservatory in 1935, and completed his professional training at the National Conservatory of Music. In 1937, while Ginastera was still a student at the Conservatory, conductor Juan José Castro premièred an orchestral suite of music from the young composer's ballet *Panambi*. The performance generated substantial attention for Ginastera, and just three years later the complete ballet was staged at the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires. Lincoln Kirstein, director of the American Ballet Caravan, attended a performance of *Panambi* while visiting



Argentina. He was so impressed with the brilliant and colorful music that he immediately commissioned Ginastera to write a new ballet for his company and *Estancia* was completed just a year later. Unfortunately, Kirstein's American Ballet Caravan was disbanded before the première, leaving *Estancia* in limbo. Ginastera reworked four of the episodes into an orchestral suite that was introduced in 1943, but the complete ballet was not premièred until 1952, when it was presented by the Teatro Colón. In spite of this considerable delay, the work was a tremendous success and firmly cemented Ginastera's international reputation.

The plot of *Estancia*, the Argentine word for ranch, features the story of a young boy from the city who is struggling to adapt to life in the country. His love for a local girl is unrequited, because she considers him too weak and unskilled to be able to compete with the local gauchos (cowboys). The boy eventually wins her affections by immersing himself in ranch life until he is able to beat the gauchos at their own games. The suite from the ballet is cast in four scenes which paint a vivid portrait of the passion and brutality of life on a ranch: 1. "Los Trabajadores agrícolas" (The Agricultural Workers), 2. "Danza del trigo" (Dance of the Wheat Fields), 3. "Los Peones de hacienda" (The Cattlemen) and 4. "Danza final" (Final Dance). This last scene culminates in a malambo—a frenetic Argentine dance in which gauchos compete to demonstrate their prowess and masculinity.

SYMPHONIC DANCES

Colonel Michael J. Colburn is the 27th Director of "The President's Own" United States Marine Band. During his twenty-year career, Col Colburn has served "The President's Own" as principal euphonium, Assistant Director, and since July 17, 2004, the Director who is leading the Marine Band in its third century.

As Director of "The President's Own,"

Col Colburn is music advisor to the White House, regularly conducts the Marine Band at the Executive Mansion, and directs the band at Presidential Inaugurations. He also serves as music director of Washington's Gridiron Club, a position traditionally held by the

Director of the Marine Band, and in 2006 was elected to the American Bandmasters Association.

Col Colburn joined "The President's Own" in 1987 as a euphonium player, performing at the White House, in the Washington, D.C., metro-

politan area, and throughout the country during the band's annual concert tour. He quickly distinguished himself as a featured soloist, and in 1990 was appointed principal euphonium. Col Colburn also was active as a conductor for "The President's Own" chamber music series and served as a tour coordinator for the Marine Band's annual concert tour. In 1996, he was appointed Assistant Director and commissioned

a first lieutenant. He accepted the position of Senior Assistant Director and Executive Officer in 2001, and in 2002 was promoted to the rank of major. Col Colburn was promoted to lieutenant colonel the day before he assumed leadership of "The President's Own" on

July 17, 2004. He was promoted to his present rank on July 3, 2007, by President George W. Bush in an Oval Office ceremony.

While Senior Assistant Director, Col Colburn worked to strengthen and expand the reputation of "The President's Own." He was



especially involved in the refinement of the Marine Band's audition process and the development of the chamber music series. He also arranged for the band's participation in numerous high-profile events. In July 2003, in celebration of the Marine Band's 205th anniversary, he brought to the podium renowned conductor and Academy-Award winning film composer John Williams, who led the Marine Band in a gala performance at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. As Director, Col Colburn has continued to attract prominent guest conductors for the band, including Leonard Slatkin in 2006 and José Serebrier in 2007.

Col Colburn is deeply committed to seeking new works for "The President's Own." While Assistant Director, he facilitated the commissioning of David Rakowski's *Ten of a Kind*, a work which was honored in 2002 as a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in music. In 2006, Mr. Rakowksi was awarded the Barlow Endowment Prize, a distinction that will result in a new work to be premièred by "The President's Own" in 2008. Future Marine Band commissions include

a work from the Pulitzer Prize winning composer Melinda Wagner. Col Colburn also has worked to expand the Marine Band's educational outreach efforts by increasing master classes at schools throughout the nation during the band's annual concert tour, and by initiating Music in the High Schools, a program that sends musicians from "The President's Own" to perform in Washington, D.C., area high schools.

Col Colburn graduated from Bellows Free Academy in St. Albans, Vt., in 1982. Following high school he attended the Crane School of Music at the State University of New York in Potsdam for two years. He continued his education at Arizona State University in Tempe, where he studied euphonium with Daniel Perantoni and earned a bachelor's degree in music performance in 1986. In 1991, Col Colburn earned a master's degree in conducting from George Mason University in Fairfax, Va., where he studied with Anthony Maiello. In addition to his duties with "The President's Own," Col Colburn is an active clinician and quest conductor.

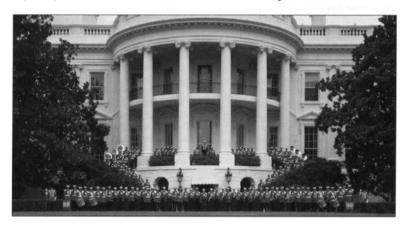
SYMPHONIC DANCES

For more than two centuries, the **United States**Marine Band has been part of the events that have shaped our nation. As "The President's Own," its omnipresent role has made it an important thread in the fabric of American life.

Established by an Act of Congress in 1798, the Marine Band is America's oldest professional musical organization. Its primary mission is unique—to provide music for the President of

the United States and the Commandant of the United States Marine Corps.

President John Adams invited the Marine Band to make its White House debut on New Year's Day, 1801, in the then-unfinished Executive Mansion. In March of that year, the band performed for the inaugural of Thomas Jefferson, and has performed for every Presidential Inaugural since that time. In



Jefferson, the band found its most visionary advocate and friend. An accomplished musician himself, Jefferson recognized the unique relationship between the band and the Chief Executive by giving the Marine Band the title "The President's Own."

Whether performing for South Lawn arrival ceremonies. State Dinners, or receptions, Marine Band musicians appear at the White House more than 300 times each year. These performances range from a solo harpist or chamber orchestra to a dance band or full concert band, making versatility an important requirement for band members. Additionally, the band participates in more than 500 public and official performances annually, including concerts and ceremonies throughout the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area. Each fall, the band travels through a region of the United States during its concert tour, a century-old tradition initiated by John Philip Sousa, the band's legendary 17th Director.

As Director from 1880-92, Sousa brought "The

President's Own" to unprecedented levels of excellence and shaped the band into a world-farmous musical organization. During his tenure, the band was one of the first musical ensembles to make sound recordings. Sousa also began to write the marches that earned him the title "The March King."

"The President's Own" continues to maintain Sousa's standard of excellence. Musicians are selected at auditions much like those of major symphony orchestras, and they enlist in the U.S. Marine Corps for duty with the Marine Band only. Most of today's members are graduates of the nation's finest music schools, and nearly sixty percent hold advanced degrees in music.

In its third century, the Marine Band continues a tradition of excellence that earned it the title "The President's Own." Whether in White House performances, public concerts, or national tours, the music of the Marine Band is the music of America.

SYMPHONIC DANCES

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The Marine Jazz Combo performs while President Gerald Ford dances with Queen Elizabeth II during a state dinner in her honor on July 7, 1976.



President Bill Clinton and First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton dance to the music of the Marine Chamber Orchestra during a White House dinner on July 25, 1995.

SYMPHONIC DANCES



President George H.W. Bush and First Lady Barbara Bush dance to the music of the Marine Jazz Orchestra at the White House in 1991.

PHOTOGRAPHY CREDITS

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Page 1: Charles Mackerras: © Clive Barda/ArenaPAL

Page 3: Maurice Ravel: Courtesy of Eddie Whalen at Boosey & Hawkes

Page 4: Choreographer Vaslav Nijinsky and composer Maurice Ravel at the piano playing a score from Daphnis and Chloe. © Bettmann/CORBIS

Page 5: Conductor of the New York Philharmonic Leonard Bernstein during a recording session at Columbia Records studios. © Marvin Koner/CORBIS

Page 6: Leonard Bernstein could not resist joining the Edgemont High School Band of Scarsdale, NY when they played "Maria" from *West Side Story* at the party held at Piers 1-2 following the world première of the United Artists film *Hair*. Bernstein played the clarinet for almost the entire song. © Bettmann/CORBIS

Page 7: Courtesy of Eddie Whalen at Boosey & Hawkes

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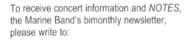
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"THE PRESIDENT'S OWN" UNITED STATES MARINE BAND COLONEL MICHAEL J. COLBURN, DIRECTOR

SUITE FROM THE BALLET PINEAPPLE POLL - SIR CHARLI BASED ON THE MUSIC OF SIR ARTHUR SULLIVAN, TRANSCRIBED BY W. OPENING NUMBER	
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