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# notes



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# MARINE BAND PERFORMS AT ABA IN KENTUCKY

BY MASTER SERGEANT AMANDA SIMMONS

The American Bandmasters Association (ABA), founded in 1929, recognizes outstanding achievement on the part of concert band conductors and composers. The current membership (invitational) comprises approximately 300 band conductors and composers in the United States and Canada and 80 associate members.

At 8 p.m., Friday, March 10, “The President’s Own” United States Marine Band will perform at the University of Kentucky’s Singletary Center for the Performing Arts in Lexington as part of ABA’s 83rd annual convention. The concert is free and open to the public, but tickets are recommended. [Ticket information is available here.](#)

The Marine Band has retained a connection with ABA since its inception. In 1929, former Marine Band Director John Philip Sousa, America’s foremost bandmaster, joined the movement created by Edwin Franko Goldman to maintain a high standard of artistic excellence for the concert band. Sousa served as the honorary life president, and many Marine Band Directors since have been extended the invitation of membership to the association.

“The American Bandmasters Association represents a history of tradition and service to our profession,” explains Dr. Timothy Rhea, director of bands at Texas A&M University and current ABA President. “As we look to our founder, Edwin Franko Goldman, we continue to refine our mission of promoting the concert band and its repertoire. In addition to recognizing exceptional musicians through invitational membership into the association, we are able to collectively pool the resources associated with these master conductors and composers through projects that will benefit all in our profession.”

During this special event, several members of the association will have the opportunity to conduct the Marine

Band. Rhea will open the program by conducting Dmitri Shostakovich’s Festive Overture, transcribed by Marine Band production chief/staff arranger Master Gunnery Sgt. Donald Patterson. Guest conductors for the concert are selected among the membership of the ABA, with emphasis often given both to newly elected members and past presidents of the association.

“This year we have both represented, and I wanted to be sure to try to include conductors who had not previously had a significant opportunity to lead the Marine Band during their careers,” noted Marine Band Director Lt. Col. Jason K. Fetting.

Dr. Terry Austin, Director of Bands at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, will conduct Peter Meechan’s Song of Hope, featuring guest soloist Ryan Anthony, principal trumpet of the Dallas Symphony. Meechan, a popular composer in the wind and brass worlds, wrote the piece specifically for his friend after Anthony’s diagnosis of multiple myeloma. Anthony was diagnosed in 2012 after noticing chronic pains in his ribs while playing the trumpet. Following a successful stem cell transplant he started The Ryan Anthony Foundation, a non-profit organization using music to promote cancer research. His cancer is in remission.

“As a patient of incurable cancer I find the idea of ‘hope’ essential in life and no better vehicle than music to both share and feel such an emotion,” explained Anthony. “I find this song can reach any individual regardless of their situation

*The first convention of the American Bandmasters Association in Middletown, Ohio, March 13-16, 1930.*





as we all need hope. The music is both peaceful yet strong, simple but still full of color. Let the music lead your thoughts and emotions, providing hope and inspiration.”

Along with sharing the podium with seven guest conductors, including Dr. Paula Crider, director of bands emerita at the University of Texas, Austin; Capt. Mathew Clark, director of the Royal Canadian Air Force Band; and Marine Band Assistant Director Capt. Ryan J. Nowlin, Fettig will lead the ensemble in three significant works for band. This includes the 2016 winner of the Sousa/ABA/Ostwald Award.

Since 1956, the Sousa/ABA/Ostwald Award has stimulated the creation of many important new compositions for concert band. The 2016 winner, Paul Dooley’s *Masks and Machines*, was commissioned in honor of Gary Green’s retirement from the Frost School of Music at the University of Miami, and according to the composer “contains three contrasting character pieces featuring renaissance brass music, Baroque *fortspinnung* in virtuosic mallet percussion, lush oboe, clarinet and bassoon solos, and machine-like flute rips.”

“I am looking forward to all three pieces I will conduct, as each has a special place in the program,” notes Fettig. “*Masks and Machines* is a wonderful addition to the original band repertoire. We will also play a movement of the new Symphony No. 2 of James Stephenson, which was composed for ‘The President’s Own’ and premièred just this past December at The Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic. Lastly, we will have a musical tribute to the great composer Karel Husa, who passed away in December. He was a true gentleman and a wonderful artist and collaborator.”

Another Sousa/ABA/Ostwald Award winner, John Mackey’s *The Frozen Cathedral*, will make an appearance on the program. The guest conductor, Dr. John Locke, director of bands at the University of North Carolina, Greensboro,

collaborated with Mackey on this piece, which utilizes unique instrumentation and aural colors to portray the character of Alaska’s majestic icy peak of Denali. Due to the extensive percussion requirements on this piece, three percussion students from the University of Kentucky will have the opportunity to perform with “The President’s Own.” The piece has special meaning to the conductor; it was dedicated to Locke’s late son, J.P., who had a fascination with Denali State Park.

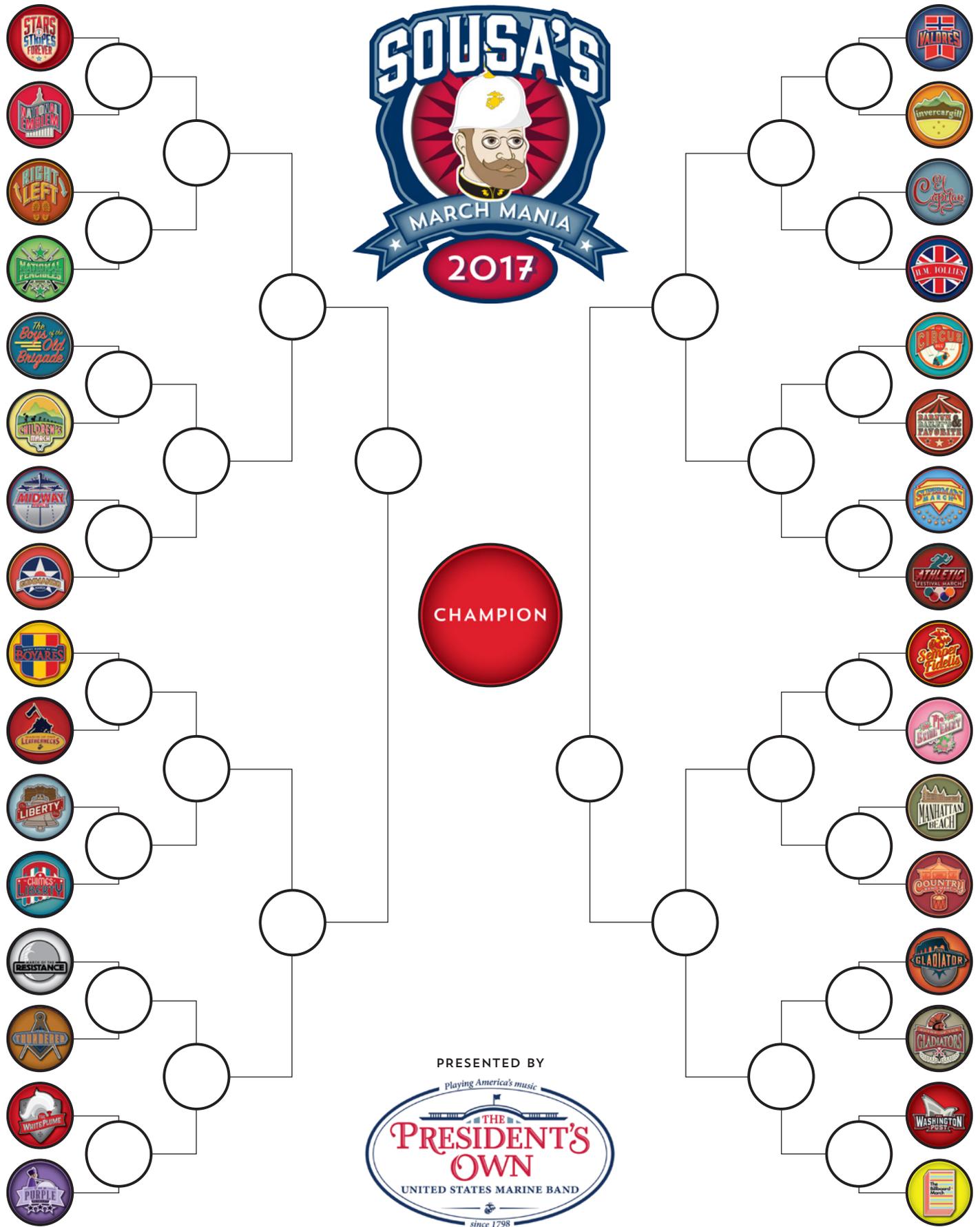
While the Marine Band enjoys close relationships with many current and former ABA presidents, none has been quite as intimate as with Col. John R. Bourgeois, USMC (ret.). Bourgeois served as the Marine Band’s 25th Director from 1979–96. In his retirement, Bourgeois has become a prolific arranger and guest conductor. During this program he will conduct his own transcription première of Jacques Offenbach’s rarely heard Overture to *Voyage to the Moon*.

Keeping with ABA tradition, the final piece on the program will be Sousa’s “The Stars and Stripes Forever,” which is always conducted by the incoming president of ABA. That honor will go to Gary Smith, associate director of band emeritus of the University of Illinois.

“Since its founding, the American Bandmasters Association has had a special influence on the development of bands and band music as well as recognizing the work of many leaders of the profession,” Fettig explained. “Toward the end of his life, John Philip Sousa was at the heart of this effort in the ABA’s early days and the Marine Band has always enjoyed a close relationship with the association. We are delighted to have the opportunity to continue to both honor that history and play a leading role in celebrating the unique contribution that bands continue to make to American life, art, and culture.” 🎆

*The Marine Band performing at the American Bandmasters Association 77th Annual Convention in March 2011 at Norfolk State University in Virginia.*





# FEATURED PROGRAMS

All concerts are free. Schedule is subject to change. For information, call (202) 433-4011 or visit [www.marineband.marines.mil](http://www.marineband.marines.mil).

## MARINE JAZZ ORCHESTRA

**2 PM | Sunday, March 5**

**Schlesinger Concert Hall, NOVA,  
Alexandria, VA**

*Capt. Ryan J. Nowlin, conducting*

Leonard Bernstein

Three Dance Variations from *Fancy Free*

Chick Corea/arr. Crotty

*Spain (Re-visited)*

Duke Ellington/orch. Peress

*Black, Brown, and Beige*

arranged by Sammy Nestico

*A Swingphonic Collection*

## MARINE BAND

AMERICAN BANDMASTERS  
ASSOCIATION CONCERT

**8 PM | Friday, March 10**

**Singletery Center for the Arts,  
University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY**

**\*Free tickets recommended\***

Calixa Lavallée

Canadian National Anthem, "O Canada"

John Stafford Smith

National Anthem, "The Star-Spangled Banner"

Dmitri Shostakovich/trans. D. Patterson\*

Festive Overture, Opus 96

*ABA President Dr. Tim Rhea, Director of Bands,  
Texas A&M University, conducting*

Paul Dooley

*Masks and Machines*

*Lt. Col. Jason K. Fettig, conducting*

Peter Meechan

Song of Hope

*Ryan Anthony, trumpet soloist*

*ABA Past President Dr. Terry Austin, Director of  
Bands, VCU, conducting*

Robert Buckley

*Undercurrents*

*Capt. Matthew Clark, Director, Royal Canadian  
Air Force Band, conducting*

John Mackey

*The Frozen Cathedral*

*ABA Past President Dr. John Locke,  
Director of Bands, UNCG, conducting*

Jacques Offenbach/trans. Bourgeois\*

Overture to *Voyage to the Moon*

*Col. John R. Bourgeois, USMC (ret.), conducting*

Mark D. Camphouse

*Illuminations (on "America, the Beautiful")*

*Capt. Ryan J. Nowlin, conducting*

Ralph Vaughan Williams/trans. D. Patterson\*

*Songs of Travel*

*Master Sgt. Kevin Bennear, baritone*

*Capt. Ryan J. Nowlin, conducting*

Arturo Márquez/trans. Nickel

Danzón No. 2

*ABA Past President Dr. Paula Crider, Director of  
Bands Emerita, University of Texas, conducting*

Karel Husa

Persistent Bells from *Les Couleurs fauves*

James Stephenson

Shouts and Murmurs from Symphony No. 2, *Voices*

arranged by Thomas Knox\*

A Salute to the Armed Forces of the United States  
of America

*Lt. Col. Jason K. Fettig, conducting*

John Philip Sousa\*

March, "The Stars and Stripes Forever"

*ABA President-Elect Gary Smith, Associate  
Director of Bands Emeritus, University of Illinois*

## CHAMBER MUSIC SERIES

**2 PM | Sunday, March 12**

**Sousa Band Hall, Marine Barracks  
Annex, Washington, DC**

*Staff Sgt. James McClarty, coordinator*

Staff Sgt. Parker Gains\*

Overture for Euphonium and Tubas

Benjamin Frankel

String Quartet No. 1, Opus 14

Camille Saint-Saëns

Caprice on Danish and Russian Airs, Opus 79

James Pugh

*And Flights of Angels ...*

Eric Ewazen

Trio for Trumpet, Violin, and Piano

Chick Corea

Part 1 (Overture) from *Lyric Suite for Sextet*

## MARINE BAND

AN AMERICAN PARABLE

**2 PM | Sunday, March 19**

**Schlesinger Concert Hall, NOVA,  
Alexandria, VA**

*Lt. Col. Jason K. Fettig, conducting*

John Philip Sousa\*

March, "The Liberty Bell"

Samuel Barber/trans. Duker

Overture to *The School for Scandal*

Jonathan Leshnoff

Clarinet Concerto, *Nekudim*

*Ricardo Morales, guest soloist*

Jacob Bancks

Occidental Symphony

*world première*

## MARINE CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

NATURALLY INSPIRED

**2 PM | Sunday, March 26**

**Schlesinger Concert Hall, NOVA,  
Alexandria, VA**

*Maj. Michelle A. Rakers, conducting*

Aaron Copland

Suite from *Appalachian Spring*

Alan Hovhaness

*Fantasy on Japanese Woodprints, Opus 211*

*Staff Sgt. Gerald Novak, xylophone soloist*

Jean Sibelius

Symphony No. 5 in E-flat, Opus 82

\*Member, U.S. Marine Band



## MARINE JAZZ ORCHESTRA CONCERT

by Master Sgt. Kristin duBois

The Marine Jazz Orchestra will return to the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall at 2 p.m., Sunday, March 5 for a performance of music that has been shaped by arrangers, choreographers, conductors, commissioners, and even painters. These selections continue to morph and evolve in the hands and minds of newer artists, making what's old new again. Conductor and Assistant Director Capt. Ryan J. Nowlin explained, "Trumpeter Clark Terry said of his longtime bandmaster Duke Ellington, 'He wants life and music to be in a state of becoming ... he doesn't even like to write definitive endings to a piece.' This program features the Marine Jazz Orchestra's take on four works which have long been in a 'state of becoming:' Leonard Bernstein's Three Dance Variations from *Fancy Free*; Chick Corea's *Spain (Revisited)*; Ellington's *Black, Brown, and Beige*; and Sammy Nestico's arrangement *A Swingphonic Collection*."

Now considered by many to be a jazz standard, Corea's *Spain* first gained popularity on the 1973 album "Light as a Feather." The original version of the tune begins with a quote from the slow movement of Joaquin Rodrigo's *Concierto de Aranjuez* for guitar soloist with orchestra. Since then, *Spain* has been re-imagined in a flamenco version, in a bluegrass style, and as a piano duo. In 2001 Corea won the Grammy Award for "Best Arrangement, Instrumental or A Capella" for his *Spain* for Sextet and Orchestra which juxtaposes the symphonic sound of the London Philharmonic Orchestra with a jazz combo of flute/tenor sax, soprano sax, bass, drums, trombone, and Corea himself on piano. Corea

re-arranged *Spain* frequently to keep it not only fresh for the audience, but for his band, as well. "The constant challenge is not so much the creative process, but the challenge of presenting an idea to the public," he said in an interview with *The Atlantic*. "It's a constant challenge to get your arrangement and musical expression across to a new audience, especially when you're playing live every night, like we are."

The Marine Jazz Orchestra will put its own spin on the orchestral version with a jazz combo featuring saxophone, trumpet, double bass, vibraphone, drums, and piano soloist Gunnery Sgt. AnnaMaria Mottola. The new arrangement was written by Mike Crotty, former long-time composer and arranger for the Airmen of Note, the premier jazz ensemble of the U.S. Air Force, and former member of the jazz faculty at Arizona State University, where he taught Mottola, then a young jazz student. "This is definitely one of Chick's most recognizable tunes," Mottola said. "What I like is that it's Latin jazz fusion on a jazz orchestra program, with solo sections, interplay, and improvising. It pushes the envelope of what people might expect."

Corea was in good company when *Spain* won the Grammy. His fellow nominee was former Airmen of Note and Marine Band arranger Sammy Nestico and his arrangement of "Good 'Swing' Wenceslas" with the Count Basie Orchestra. Despite his nearly 600 works for school groups and big bands, 70 television shows, and eight Grammy nominations, Nestico is perhaps most famous for his work with the Count Basie Orchestra. It was these Count Basie arrangements that Wayne Marshall of the Dresden Philharmonic originally requested when he asked Nestico to collaborate for a joint project with the Dresden Philharmonic and the Southwest German Radio Big Band in 2012. Nestico countered with an alternate subject matter that he thought would have more variety, an arrangement of the great jazz standards of American history he called *A Swingphonic Collection*: "April in Paris" (Duke Ellington), "Take the 'A' Train" and "Chelsea Bridge" (Billy Strayhorn), "Cherokee" (Ray Noble), "Stardust" (Hoagy Carmichael), "A Night in Tunisia" (Dizzy Gillespie), and "How High the Moon" (Morgan Lewis). The Collection is sure leave the audience with a "swing" in their step.

*The concert is free, tickets are not required. The Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center is located at 4915 East Campus Drive at Northern Virginia Community College's Alexandria campus.* 🍷



## MARINE BAND CONCERT: AN AMERICAN PARABLE

by Gunnery Sgt. Brian Rust

The American story is rich with tales of politics and patriotism, religion and art, and the birth of a culture unlike any other on Earth. The Marine Band will perform a concert with those themes called “An American Parable” at 2 p.m., Sunday, March 19, at Northern Virginia Community College’s Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center in Alexandria, Va. Conducted by Director Lt. Col. Jason K. Fettig, the concert will feature a guest solo performance by Philadelphia Orchestra principal clarinet Ricardo Morales, as well as the world première of a new work by composer Jacob Bancks, written specifically for the Marine Band. The performance is free and no tickets are required. Free parking is available in the adjacent garage.

The concert will begin with two selections that both give a nod to America’s first capital city, Philadelphia: John Philip Sousa’s march, “The Liberty Bell,” followed by Samuel Barber’s Overture to *The School for Scandal*, written while Barber was finishing his studies at the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia. As for “The Liberty Bell,” Sousa was composing music for an operetta, and when an agreement on money could not be reached, he pulled the partially finished manuscript to publish elsewhere. It was one of the Sousa Band’s managers, George Hinton, who recommended Sousa title the march “The Liberty Bell” after Hinton saw a huge backdrop painting of the famous bell. Coincidentally, the next day Sousa received a letter from his wife mentioning their son had marched in his first parade in Philadelphia honoring the return of the Liberty Bell. Thus, the name stuck and the march was re-christened.

Following Barber’s Overture, the Marine Band will welcome Morales to the stage to perform Jonathan Leshnoff’s Clarinet Concerto, *Nekudim*, in a new transcription by the composer. Leshnoff originally composed the work for Morales and The Philadelphia Orchestra, and the work harkens to a connection the composer discovered between the Hebrew alphabet and the clarinet. Leshnoff explained that the clarinet is connected by breath as is the Hebrew alphabet, whose written letters are just consonants. “In order to give the letter any type of direction, it needs a vowel, which are notated by lines and dots, called “nikkudim” in Hebrew,” Leshnoff said. “The letter itself is like a dead body, it just exists on its own but doesn’t do anything. It requires the breath to make that letter alive.” Leshnoff subtitled his concerto *Nekudim* – the lines and dots in the Hebrew alphabet – that represent the vowels and breath to bring both words and music alive.

On performing the piece Morales said, “What I hope that the audience will hear is the essence of what it is to have fun playing the clarinet.” Morales and The Philadelphia Orchestra premiered the piece in April 2016. The Marine Band will première the new transcription for wind ensemble.

The concert’s final selection is Jacob Bancks’ *Occidental Symphony*, written for “The President’s Own” and inspired by Vachel Lindsay’s 1919 poem “Bryan, Bryan, Bryan, Bryan” about William Jennings Bryan’s remarkable 1896 presidential campaign. Nicknamed “The Great Commoner,” Bryan was an American orator and politician from Nebraska who ran three times as the Democratic Party’s nominee for President of the United States of America. Although Bryan gave 500 speeches in 27 states during his first campaign and had a strong populist following, he ended up losing the presidency to William McKinley who won the electoral college but had a very narrow marginal win with the popular vote.

Prior to the performance, a string quartet will offer pre-concert music in the lobby beginning at 1:15 p.m. Immediately following the concert, Lt. Col. Fettig, Ricardo Morales, Jonathan Leshnoff, and Jacob Bancks will be available in the lobby to chat with patrons about the program and performance. 🍷

## FRENCH HORN PLAYER WINS MARINE BAND CONCERTO COMPETITION

by Master Sgt. Kristin duBois

In its ten years of hosting a Concerto Competition for High School Musicians with the Marine Corps Heritage



Foundation, a French horn player has not claimed the top prize. Until now. French horn player Shawn Zheng of Murfreesboro, Tenn., was selected as the winner of the 2017 competition and received the coveted \$2,500 scholarship.



Left to Right: 2017 Concerto Competition Winner Shawn Zheng; 2017 Concerto Competition runner-up Forrest Johnston.

He will return on April 9 to perform the first movement of Richard Strauss’ Horn Concerto No. 1, Opus 11, with the Marine Band in concert at the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall at the Alexandria campus of Northern Virginia Community College. Trumpet player Forrest Johnston of Great Falls, Va., was the runner up and received a \$500 scholarship.

Since picking up the French horn only four years ago, Zheng has managed to make quite a name for himself. He is currently a junior at the Interlochen Arts Academy in Michigan, where he studies with Corbin Wagner, former assistant principal horn of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. Prior to attending Interlochen, he studied with Leslie Norton, principal horn of the Nashville Symphony, as a Myra Jackson Senior Scholar at the Blair School of Music at Vanderbilt University in Nashville. He served as principal horn of the Nashville Youth Orchestra Program’s Curb Youth Symphony and performed in the Boston University Tanglewood Institute’s Young Artists Orchestra. He was named a National YoungArts Foundation Winner in 2015 and 2017, finalist in the Nashville Symphony’s Curb Concerto Competition, winner of the Southeast Horn Workshop High School Solo Competition, and won the Nashville Symphony League’s Thor Johnson Scholarship. He has performed under the batons of Ken-David Masur, Giancarlo Guerrero, Vinay Parameswaran, Paul Haas, Larry Loh, and Ankush Kumar Bahl.

After hearing about the Marine Band’s concerto competition, Zheng selected the Strauss Horn Concerto to record and submit with his application and promptly forgot about the competition until he received a call from Marine Band

Assistant Director Capt. Ryan Nowlin saying he was a finalist. “I was practicing for my lesson with the principal horn of the LA Phil the next day and I had totally forgotten results would be announced before the end of the year, so I was a bit surprised.” He was also booked solid in January and had to make the most of his time to prepare. “January was extremely busy for me, with a week back home in Tennessee, a week in Miami for YoungArts Week, and a week in New York for Interlochen’s New York Philharmonic Residency performing chamber music, so I had less focused time to prepare than I would’ve liked. However, that really helped me focus with the little time I had. I did several mock performances and sang a lot in the practice room.”

Once Zheng arrived in Washington, D.C., for the concerto competition final recital he felt ready, especially since he saw some familiar faces: finalists clarinet player Anders Peterson and flute player Jarret May are classmates from Interlochen, and he met tuba player Josh Williams at Tanglewood last summer. “I went in just giving it my best shot, and knew I wouldn’t be too unhappy if I didn’t win. Even though I didn’t necessarily appear so on the exterior, winning was a really shocking and wonderful moment.” 🎻

## WHITE HOUSE HIGHLIGHTS



Recent appearances by “The President’s Own” supporting the White House include:

- Brunch Reception  
*Solo piano*
- Governors’ Dinner  
*Violin & guitar duo; flute & harp duo; orchestra*

## MARINE BAND CONTACT INFORMATION

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