



Colonel Jason K. Fettig, Director

CHAMBER MUSIC SERIES
Sunday, January 26, 2020 at 2:00 P.M.
John Philip Sousa Band Hall
Marine Barracks Annex
Washington, DC

Michael Tilson Thomas (b. 1944)

Street Song (1988)

GySgt Robert Singer and GySgt Amy McCabe, trumpets
SSgt Cecilia Buettgen, horn
GySgt Timothy Dugan, trombone
MSgt Christopher Tiedeman, tuba

Krzysztof Penderecki (b. 1933)

Quartet for Clarinet and Strings (1993)

Notturmo: Adagio
Scherzo: Vivacissimo
Serenade: Tempo di valse
Abschied: Larghetto

SSgt Zachary Gouvain, clarinet
SSgt Sara Matayoshi, violin
GySgt Tam Tran, viola
SSgt Charlaire Prescott, cello

INTERMISSION

Bohuslav Martinů (1890–1959)

Duo No. 1, Three Madrigals, H. 313 (1950)

Poco allegro; Poco vivo
Poco andante
Allegro; Moderato; Allegro

GySgt Erika Sato, violin
GySgt Sarah Hart, viola

Arnold Schoenberg (1874–1951)

Chamber Symphony No. 1 in E, Opus 9

GySgt Heather Zenobia, flute
SSgt Trevor Mowry, oboe
GySgt Joseph DeLuccio, English horn
SSgt Lewis Gilmore, E-flat clarinet
SSgt Kristin Bowers, clarinet
SSgt Andrew Dees, bass clarinet
MSgt Bernard Kolle, bassoon
MGySgt Christopher McFarlane, contrabassoon
SSgt Timothy Huizenga and SSgt Cecilia Buettgen, horn
SSgt Foster Wang and SSgt Sara Matayoshi, violin
GySgt Tam Tran, viola
SSgt Clayton Vaughn, cello
MSgt Eric Sabo, double bass
GySgt Robert Singer, conducting

The U.S. Marine Band will perform Sunday, February 2 at 2:00 P.M. in the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center at Northern Virginia Community College, Alexandria Campus. The program will include works by Sousa, Grainger, and Holst.

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PROGRAM NOTES

Street Song (1988)

Michael Tilson Thomas (b. 1944)

Michael Tilson Thomas is music director of the San Francisco Symphony, founder and artistic director of the New World Symphony in Miami, and conductor laureate of the London Symphony Orchestra. In addition to his work as a conductor, he is also a pianist and composer. Most recently, Tilson Thomas was selected as a Kennedy Center honoree in 2019 for a lifetime of artistic achievements.

Born into a musical family (his grandparents were the famous Yiddish theater stars Boris and Bessie Thomashefsky, who performed frequently in Manhattan), Tilson Thomas and other family members often composed songs for different occasions or for emotions they were feeling. *Street Song* is a collection of such songs he composed in the early 1970s. In an effort to expand the brass quintet repertoire, trumpeter and Empire Brass founder Rolf Smedvig later approached Tilson Thomas and asked that he arrange the piece for brass quintet.

Completed in 1988, *Street Song* is a composition in three continuous parts, which the composer describes as “an interweaving of three songs.” The first song contrasts loud, fast, and “jagged” interruptions with softer, slower, and smoother sonorities; the music sounds like it is “starting and stopping.” The second song has a folk-like main melody, and the third is a jazzy dance. Finally, all three songs are brought together, and the piece ends quietly. Tilson Thomas dedicated the original composition to his father Ted, whom he described as “the central musical influence on [his] life.”

Quartet for Clarinet and Strings (1993)

Krzysztof Penderecki (b. 1933)

Composer and conductor Krzysztof Penderecki was born in southern Poland. His father was an amateur violinist, so naturally Penderecki took a liking to the violin. He became an accomplished violinist, studying for two years in intermediate school before shifting his focus to composition. Early in his career, he wrote highly experimental music, seeking to push the envelope of the medium. However, in his later works such as this quartet, he strayed away from that avant-garde style and began using more traditional approaches and structures.

The quartet represents this return to tradition quite literally, as Penderecki stated that it had a direct connection to Franz Schubert’s String Quartet in C, D. 956. The piece has four movements that are crystal clear in sonority, yet at times contain the avant-garde melodies of the composer’s earlier period. The fourth movement in particular is as long as the other three combined, and it features many of the ideas of the previous movements. The whimsical and thoughtful nature of the entire work draws in the listener and perhaps evokes self-reflection and thought as well. The piece is best thought of as one long work split into four movements, with the final bringing all the ideas together in a final “farewell,” as the composer titled it.

Duo No. 1, *Three Madrigals*, H. 313 (1950)

Bohuslav Martinů (1890–1959)

Czech composer Bohuslav Martinů was an extremely prolific writer who melded many diverse influences into a distinct voice of his own. Martinů had a rather colorful life: he lived in a bell tower until age twelve and was expelled from the Prague Conservatory for “incorrigible negligence.” He later became a violinist in the Czech Philharmonic until he moved to Paris in 1923 to study composition with Albert Roussel. He married a dressmaker in 1931, and in 1940, the couple left for New York via Portugal, just ahead of the German invasion of Paris in June of that year.

Martinů’s Duo No. 1, *Three Madrigals*, is a good representation of his styles and sonorities. The composer himself said of his musical personality: “I have been influenced by many things, but most of all by the national music of Czechoslovakia, by the muse of Debussy, and by the English Madrigals.... I recognized something of Bohemian folk music in these madrigals.” There is a richness attained by the work’s many diverse elements, including the spirit of dance and an instrumental dialogue influenced by Czech folk songs and even jazz. There are also references to older forms, such as the titular Renaissance madrigals, and the bell tower never seems to be completely out of hearing range.

Chamber Symphony No. 1 in E, Op. 9

Arnold Schoenberg (1874–1951)

Born in Vienna, Arnold Schoenberg was virtually self-taught as a composer aside from his lessons with future brother-in-law Alexander Zemlinsky, a protégé of Johannes Brahms. Raised in the great Viennese tradition of Johannes Brahms and Franz Schubert, Schoenberg gained practical experience playing, conducting, and arranging the works of other composers; however, he was not content with mere thoughtless imitation of past styles. His early music, intensely late-Romantic in style, united Brahmsian and Wagnerian traits that had previously been considered mutually exclusive. This union was especially provocative in his 1899 seminal composition *Verklärte Nacht*. Seven years later, however, he had developed impatience with conventions of musical form and language when he composed his Chamber Symphony No. 1. It was the first of two chamber symphonies, both of which Schoenberg began work on in 1906. This first chamber symphony was a riotous invention with seductive melody compressed into a single, high-pressure movement, with features of the classical symphony in its form. It often presents ideas simultaneously with great concentration and a fiercely polyphonic texture that were quite new at the time. Schoenberg rejected the huge late-Romantic orchestra for a lean but colorful ensemble of fifteen solo players, comprised of five string and ten wind instrumentalists. He even appears to pay homage to Richard Strauss in this work, as several of its rhythmic and melodic motives are reminiscent of the tone poems *Don Juan* and *Tod und Verklärung*. In outlining the symphony, the following structure emerges: introduction, exposition and preliminary development, transition, scherzo, main development, transition, slow movement, transition, and finale (recapitulation with coda).

The Chamber Symphony No. 1 is a work of impressive weight, and Schoenberg himself regarded it as the climax of his first stylistic period (considered his tonal period), which was followed by his non-tonal years and, later, his twelve-tone period of composition. In 1935, he arranged the piece for symphony orchestra (Opus 9b), giving its structure some fresh touches through the addition of subsidiary and accompanying parts.