



Colonel Jason K. Fettig, Director

UNITED STATES MARINE BAND
Sunday, February 2, 2020 at 2:00 P.M.
Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center
Northern Virginia Community College
Alexandria Campus
Major Ryan J. Nowlin, conducting

Traditions

John Philip Sousa* (1854–1932)
edited by The United States Marine Band

March, “Nobles of the Mystic Shrine”

Antonín Dvořák (1841–1904)
transcribed by Herbert L. Clarke

Carnival Overture, Opus 92

Arthur Pryor (1870–1942)

“Blue Bells of Scotland”

SSgt Russell Sharp, trombone soloist

Percy Grainger (1882–1961)
edited by Frederick Fennell

Lincolnshire Posy

“Lisbon” (Sailor’s Song)

“Horkstow Grange” (The Miser and his Man: A local Tragedy)

“Rufford Park Poachers” (Poaching Song)

“The Brisk Young Sailor” (who returned to wed his True Love)

“Lord Melbourne” (War Song)

“The Lost Lady Found” (Dance Song)

INTERMISSION

Gustav Holst (1874–1934)
edited by Frederick Fennell

Suite No. 1 in E-flat, Opus 28, No. 1

Chaconne

Intermezzo

March

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–91)
transcribed by James A. Basta*

Aria, “Non più andrai” from *The Marriage of Figaro*

MGySgt Kevin Bennear, baritone

Alexander Glazunov (1865–1936)
transcribed by Jack T. Kline*

Finale from Symphony No. 5, Opus 55

*Member, U.S. Marine Band

The 2020 Chamber Music Series will continue Sunday, February 9 at 2:00 P.M. in John Philip Sousa Band Hall at the Marine Barracks Annex in Washington, DC. The program will include the works of Rossini, Perkins, and Mellits.

The performance will be streamed live on the Marine Band’s website.

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PROGRAM NOTES

March, “Nobles of the Mystic Shrine”

John Philip Sousa* (1854–1932)

edited by The United States Marine Band

John Philip Sousa, like many prominent musicians throughout history, was a member of a Masonic Lodge. He became a member of the Ancient Arabic Order of Nobles of the Mystic Shrine in Washington, D.C., in April 1922, and was promptly named the first honorary director of the Almas Temple Shrine Band. His nephew, A. R. Varela, who sponsored him, asked him to compose this march. The new march saluted Shriners in general but was dedicated specifically to the Almas Temple and the Imperial Council.

The Shriner’s national convention was held in Washington in June 1923, and Sousa was invited to lead a band of 6,200 Shriners in Griffith Stadium. This was the largest band he ever conducted, and this new association with the Shriners led to several Shrine bands accompanying the Sousa Band in performances of the new march as Sousa toured the United States. “Nobles of the Mystic Shrine” is unique in that it is one of the few Sousa marches that begins in a minor key, giving it an exotic sound, and it is also one of the few that includes a published part for harp. The “Jingling Johnny” or Turkish crescent, which is a marching instrument consisting of a pole hung with jingling bells, is heard through the use of percussive instruments such as tambourines and the triangle. These are essential to the texture and refer to the intriguing oriental sounds heard in shrine marching music, thus making “Nobles of the Mystic Shrine” one of the more unusual but wonderful Sousa marches.

Carnival Overture, Opus 92

Antonín Dvořák (1841–1904)

transcribed by Herbert L. Clarke

Celebrated Czech composer Antonín Dvořák was born near Prague, in what was then the Austrian Empire. After showing great musical talent at a young age, he was permitted to study piano and violin. He later went to Prague to study music and soon began to compose symphonies, operas, and chamber music.

Dvořák composed a set of three concert overtures in 1891, shortly before traveling to the United States to become the director of the National Conservatory of Music of America in New York. The second of these three overtures was originally titled “Life” but later changed to Carnival Overture. It contains brilliant writing, with a series of driving and whirling melodies that may suggest either a carnival scene or the energy of a busy life. Dvořák conducted the world première on April 28, 1892, just before departing for the United States, and conducted the U.S. première at Carnegie Hall on October 21, 1892. The transcription for band by Herbert L. Clarke, renowned cornet soloist with the Sousa Band, retains the energy and excitement of the original work while translating Dvořák’s rich orchestral colors into the voice of the symphonic band.

“Blue Bells of Scotland”

Arthur Pryor (1870–1942)

Arthur Pryor was born in Missouri and began his musical training early; his father, Samuel Pryor, started teaching Arthur piano and cornet when his son was just six years old. Pryor studied many other instruments at home, and at age eleven, he was billed as the “boy wonder from Missouri” when he soloed on valve trombone with the Pryor Band, led by his father. Pryor joined The Sousa Band in 1893 on slide trombone and performed an incredible 10,000 solos during his twelve years as a member of John Philip Sousa’s ensemble.

Pryor was widely regarded as one of the greatest trombone virtuosos, due to his impeccable technique and exquisite sound. He composed some 300 works, including enduring solos such as the “Blue Bells of Scotland.” Intended to showcase his impressive talents on a technically-limited instrument, many of Pryor’s solo compositions were written during a time when there were very few substantial solo pieces for the trombone.

Staff Sergeant Russell Sharp, trombone

Trombonist Staff Sergeant Russell Sharp joined “The President’s Own” United States Marine Band in January 2017. Staff Sgt. Sharp began his musical instruction on trombone at age eleven and graduated in 2001 from Mustang High School in Oklahoma. He earned a bachelor’s degree in trombone performance from the University of Central Oklahoma in Edmond in 2006, where he studied with Dr. Kent Kidwell, retired principal trombone with the Oklahoma City Philharmonic. In 2007, he earned a master’s degree in trombone performance from Oklahoma City University’s Wanda L. Bass School of Music. He has also studied with Lee Rogers, principal trombone with the Washington National Opera in Washington, D.C. Prior to joining the band, Staff Sgt. Sharp was the principal trombone with the U.S. Naval Academy Band in Annapolis, Maryland, from 2007 to 2016. He was also a substitute with the Kennedy Center Opera Orchestra in Washington, D.C.; the Harrisburg Symphony Orchestra in Pennsylvania; the Oklahoma City Philharmonic; and the Annapolis Symphony in Maryland.

Lincolnshire Posy

Percy Grainger (1882–1961)

edited by Frederick Fennell

Although Percy Aldridge Grainger was born in Australia, he spent the majority of his professional life in England and America. His mother Rose was an accomplished pianist, and thus Grainger’s earliest musical studies were kept within the family. He showed tremendous promise at the keyboard and began a professional career as a concert pianist in England in 1901. During this time, Grainger also composed feverishly and began to take particular interest in the native folk songs of his new homeland. In 1905, he set about in Brigg, Lincolnshire, on the first of what would become countless trips to the English countryside to collect and document the tunes often sung by the native residents. First on paper, and then with the newly developed wax cylinder, Grainger eventually documented more than 700 English and Danish folk songs. He delighted in the nuances and “imperfections” rendered by each singer and arranged dozens of these tunes for various ensembles and otherwise included them in his original compositions.

After the outbreak of the First World War, Grainger moved to New York in 1914 and called America his home for the remainder of his life. In 1917, Grainger decided to join the U.S. Army in support of the war effort. He served with the Coast Artillery Band until 1919, playing both oboe and saxophone (which he had taught himself to play, among many other instruments). This was Grainger's first true experience with a concert band, and he was immediately taken with the unique sound and capabilities of the ensemble. This encounter proved to be the beginning of Grainger's long and fruitful relationship with the band, resulting in dozens of significant works for the medium. When he died in White Plains, New York, in 1961, he left behind a collection of works that became the cornerstone of the concert band repertoire.

Lincolnshire Posy was Grainger's seminal work for wind band. In a colorful and remarkably extensive 1939 program note included with the score, the composer describes the inspiration for this collection of folk song settings:

"Lincolnshire Posy," as a whole work, was conceived and scored by me direct for wind band early in 1937. Five, out of the six, movements of which it is made up, existed in no other finished form, though most of these movements (as is the case with almost all my compositions and settings, for whatever medium) were indebted, more or less, to unfinished sketches for a variety of mediums covering many years (in this case the sketches date from 1905–1937). These indebtednesses are stated in the scores. The version for two pianos was begun a half-year later after the completion of the work for wind band.

This bunch of "musical wildflowers" (hence the title "Lincolnshire Posy") is based on folksongs collected in Lincolnshire, England (one noted by Miss Lucy E. Broadwood; the other five noted by me, mainly in the years 1905–1906, and with the help of the phonograph), and the work is dedicated to the old folksingers who sang so sweetly to me. Indeed, each number is intended to be a kind of musical portrait of the singer who sang its underlying melody—a musical portrait of the singer's personality no less than of his habits of song—his regular or irregular wonts of rhythm, his preference for gaunt or ornately arabesqued delivery, his contrasts of legato and staccato, his tendency towards breadth or delicacy of tone.

For these folksingers were kings and queens of song! No concert singer I have ever heard approached these rural warblers in variety of tone-quality, range of dynamics, rhythmic resourcefulness and individuality of style. For while our concert singers (dull dogs that they are—with their monotonous mooing and bellowing between *mf* and *f*, and with never a *pp* to their name!) can show nothing better (and often nothing as good) as slavish obedience to the tyrannical behests of composers, our folksingers were lords in their own domain—were at once performers and creators. For they bent all songs to suit their personal artistic taste and personal vocal resources: singers with wide vocal ranges spreading their intervals over two octaves, singers with small vocal range telescoping their tunes by transposing awkward high notes an octave down....

...It is obvious that all music lovers (except a few "cranks") loathe genuine folksong and shun it like the plague. No genuine folksong ever becomes popular—in any civilized land. Yet these same music-lovers entertain a maudlin affection for the word "folksong" (coined by my dear friend Mrs. Edmund Woodhouse to translate German "volkslied") and the ideas it conjures up. So they are delighted when they chance upon half-breed tunes like "Country Gardens" and "Shepherd's Hey" (on the borderline between folksong and unfolkish "popular song") that they can sentimentalise over (as being folksongs), yet can listen to without suffering the intense boredom aroused in them by genuine folksongs. Had rural England not hated its folksong this form of music would not have been in process of dying out and would not have needed to be "rescued from oblivion" by townified highbrows such as myself and my fellow-collectors. As a general rule the younger kin of the old folksingers not only hated

folksong in the usual way, described above, but, furthermore, fiercely despised the folksinging habits of their old uncles and grandfathers as revealing social backwardness and illiteracy in their families. And it is true! The measure of a countryside's richness in living folksong is the measure of its illiteracy; which explains why the United States is, to-day, the richest of all English-speaking lands in living folksong.

There are, however, some exceptions to this prevailing connection between folksong and illiteracy. Mr. Joseph Taylor, singer of "Rufford Park Poachers"—who knew more folksongs than any of my other folksingers, and sang his songs with "purer" folksong traditions—was neither illiterate nor socially backward. And it must also be admitted that he was a member of the choir of his village (Saxby-All-Saints, Lincolnshire) for over 45 years—a thing unusual in a folksinger. Furthermore his relatives—keen musicians themselves—were extremely proud of his self-earned success underlay the jaunty contentment and skittishness of his renderings. His art shared the restless energy of his life. Some of his versions of tunes were fairly commonplace (not "Lord Melbourne," however!), yet he never failed to invest them with a unique quaintness—by means of swift touches of swagger, heaps of added "nonsense syllables," queer hollow vowel-sounds (doubtless due to his lack of teeth) and a jovial, jogging stick-to-it-iveness in performance. He had an amazing memory for the texts of songs. "Lord Melbourne" (actually about the Duke of Marlborough) is a genuine war-song—a rare thing in English folksong.

Mrs. Thompson (the singer of "The Brisk Young Sailor"), though living in Barrow-on-Humber, North Lincolnshire, came originally from Liverpool.

The first number in my set, "Dublin Bay," was collected under characteristic circumstances. In 1905, when I first met its singer—Mr. Deane, of Hibbaldstowe—he was in the workhouse at Brigg, N.E. Lincolnshire. I started to note down his "Dublin Bay," but the workhouse matron asked me to stop, as Mr. Deane's heart was very weak and the singing of the old song—which he had not sung for forty years—brought back poignant memories to him and made him burst into tears. I reluctantly desisted. But a year or so later, when I had acquired a phonograph, I returned to get Mr. Deane's tune "alive or dead." I thought he might as well die singing it as die without singing it.

I found him in the hospital ward of the workhouse, with a great gash in his head—he having fallen down stairs. He was very proud of his wound, and insisted that he was far too weak to sing. "All right, Mr. Deane," I said to him, "you needn't sing yourself; but I would like you to hear some records made by other singers in these parts." He had not heard half a record through before he said, impulsively: "I'll sing for you young mahn." So the phonograph was propped up on his bed, and in between the second and third verse he spoke these words into the record: "It's pleasein' muh." Which shows how very much folksinging is part of the folksinger's natural life.

The last number of my set ("The Lost Lady Found") is a real dance-song—come down to us from the days when voices, rather than instruments, held village dancers together. Miss Lucy E. Broadwood, who collected the tune, writes of its origin as follows, in her "English Traditional Songs and Carols" (Boosey & Co.):

Mrs. Hill, an old family nurse, and a native of Stamford (Lincolnshire), learned her delightful song when a child, from an old cook who danced as she sang it beating time on the stone kitchen floor with her iron pattens. The cook was thus unconsciously carrying out the original intention of the "ballad," which is the English equivalent of the Italian "baletta," (from ballare, "to dance"), signifying a song to dance measure, accompanied by dancing.

Suite No. 1 in E-flat, Opus 28, No. 1

Gustav Holst (1874–1934)
edited by Frederick Fennell

Gustav Holst was one of England's most prominent twentieth-century composers. Shortly after beginning advanced piano studies at the Royal College of Music in London, Holst developed neuritis so severe that he was no longer able to play. In an effort to stay involved as a performer and also to provide an income, he learned to play trombone and performed with several orchestras. Holst composed hundreds of works in all musical genres, the most famous of which was his orchestral suite *The Planets* (1922). Although his compositional style was rooted in England's folk song heritage and utilized traditional contrapuntal techniques, his harmonies and concepts of musical form were wholly original among his contemporaries.

Prior to the monumental success of *The Planets*, Holst composed many other notable works and several important pieces for winds and percussion. For a work that is such an important staple of the concert band repertoire, there is surprisingly little information about the origins of Holst's First Suite in E-flat. In the notebook in which he kept a record of his compositions from 1895 until his death, Holst entered the "1st Suite for Military Band Op. 28A" on the page for 1909. Not until 1920 do we find any record of a performance, nor is there any mention of the ensemble for which the work was composed. Although its beginnings may have been somewhat inauspicious, the work is a masterpiece of wind writing, sounding as fresh and original today as the day it was written.

The three-movement work begins with the Chaconne in which a melody that serves as the basis for all three movements is introduced by the low brass. The variations build slowly to a majestic finale before giving way to the sprightly Intermezzo. The central movement transforms the Chaconne melody into a light scherzo that highlights Holst's skillful writing for woodwinds. The movement ends quietly with a wink before the final movement enters with a flourish. The March cleverly weaves together a new tune with a reinvented version of the main melody and culminates with an appropriately grand and powerful coda.

Aria, "Non più andrai" from *The Marriage of Figaro*

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–91)
transcribed by James A. Basta*

The music of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart represented the pinnacle of Viennese Classicism, a synthesis of Italian opera with the Austrian and German instrumental tradition. Mozart extended his genius touch to every musical medium of his time, producing more than 600 works in the genres of symphony, opera, chamber music, concerto, and sonata, making him perhaps the most universal composer in the history of Western music.

Mozart's 1786 comic opera *The Marriage of Figaro* recounts the antics of a single "day of madness" in the lives of Count and Countess Almaviva and their respective servants Figaro and Susanna. Figaro's aria "Non più andrai" closes the first act. The teenage page Cherubino has been a victim of gossip: the Count has overheard that he desires the Countess. In a jealous fit, the Count decides to rid the castle of Cherubino, ordering him into the army. Figaro teasingly prepares the youngster for what he can expect in the military: "You won't go anymore, amorous butterfly, fluttering around inside night and day, disturbing the sleep of beauties. A lot of honor, very little pay. And in place of the dance, a march through the mud...."

Master Gunnery Sergeant Kevin Bennear, baritone

Baritone vocalist and concert moderator Master Gunnery 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 Gunnery 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.

Finale from Symphony No. 5, Opus 55

Alexander Glazunov (1865–1936)

transcribed by Jack T. Kline*

As a composer of the late Russian Romantic period, Alexander Glazunov created a style that bridged the polemic divide between Russian nationalist composers who embraced only Russian folk influences and those who welcomed the cosmopolitan influence of the West. A precocious youth, Glazunov began composing at age eleven and quickly earned a place as a student of the famed Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov, a member of the nationalist group of composers known as “The Five.” Rimsky-Korsakov marveled at his student’s quick development, commenting that he progressed “not from day to day but from hour to hour.” From the mid-1880s, Glazunov traveled between Russia and Europe, where he met such influences as Franz Liszt and received international acclaim for his works. Glazunov was honored with a post at the St. Petersburg Conservatory by 1899 and later served as its director from 1905 until 1928.

Glazunov’s compositions include eight symphonies, three ballets, numerous chamber works, and concertos for violin, piano, and saxophone. His *Symphony No. 5* was completed in 1895 and was composed in a traditional four-movement structure. In the *Finale*, rhythmic themes infuse the rondo form with a sense of epic heroism, providing an energetic and powerful conclusion to the work.