



Lieutenant Colonel Jason K. Fettig, Director

MARINE CHAMBER ORCHESTRA
Sunday, February 8, 2015 at 2:00 P.M.
Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center
Northern Virginia Community College
Alexandria Campus
Major Michelle A. Rakers, conducting

Sibelius and Nielsen: 150 Years

Jean Sibelius (1865–1957)

Suite No. 2 from *The Tempest*, Opus 109 (1927)

Chorus of the Winds
Intermezzo
Dance of the Nymphs
Prospero
Song 1
Song 2
Miranda
The Naiads
Dance Episode

Carl Nielsen (1865–1931)

Clarinet Concerto, Opus 57 (1928)

SSgt Patrick Morgan, clarinet soloist

INTERMISSION

Jean Sibelius (1865–1957)

Suite from *Pelléas et Mélisande*, Opus 46 (1905)

At the Castle Gate
Mélisande
A Spring in the Park
The Three Blind Sisters
Pastorale
Mélisande at the Spinning Wheel
Entr'acte
The Death of Mélisande

The 2015 Chamber Music Series will continue Sunday, February 15 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 Milhaud, Weill, and Hindemith. The performance will also be streamed live on the Marine Band's website.

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PROGRAM NOTES

Suite No. 2 from *The Tempest*, Opus 109 (1927)

Jean Sibelius (1865–1957)

By 1902, Finnish composer Jean Sibelius was riding the wave of acclaim for his Second Symphony and had achieved unparalleled success and recognition in the international musical community. In his native country he was viewed in a manner akin to a rock star, his name gracing the labels of cigars and postcards. Despite his triumphs, Sibelius was experiencing personal difficulties during this time and finding it increasingly challenging to summon fresh musical inspiration. Various health problems, frequent heavy drinking, and financial turmoil forced him to take stock of his lifestyle and the effect it was having on his work. As he would later recall to his biographer Karl Ekman, “It was necessary for me to get away from Helsinki. My art demanded another environment. In Helsinki, all melody died within me. Besides, I was too sociable to be able to refuse invitations that interfered with my composition. I found it very difficult to say no. I had to get away.”

Sibelius looked to the countryside in an effort to escape the temptations of the city and found permanent refuge twenty miles north in a lakeside forest named Järvenpää (Lake’s End). In September 1904 the composer and his wife Aino moved into their new log cabin where he lived more than fifty years. Sibelius immediately found his creative energy revitalized amidst the soothing natural surroundings and within a few months wrote to a friend, “Have begun my Third Symphony.” After beginning the work with great enthusiasm, he put it aside to attend to other projects, including the welcomed change of writing music for the stage.

The incidental music for *The Tempest* (1925) was Sibelius’s final venture into writing for the theater, and many believed it was his best work in the genre. His motivation came from his Danish publisher, Wilhelm Hansen, who was coordinating a performance of the Shakespeare play at Det Kongelige Theater in Copenhagen. The organizers had hoped Sibelius would provide the music. The whole of the original incidental music consists of thirty-six pieces in total, lasting for more than an hour, and was written for vocal soloists, mixed choir, orchestra, and harmonium. Sibelius then prepared an overture and two orchestral suites from the existing material. The work on today’s program is the second suite for smaller orchestra and consists of nine brief movements.

Clarinet Concerto, Opus 57 (1928)

Carl Nielsen (1865–1931)

Carl Nielsen is unquestionably the most highly regarded Danish composer of the twentieth century. He was born to a family of modest means, the seventh of twelve children. After showing an interest in music and the inclination to compose, he was accepted into the Royal Conservatory of Copenhagen with violin as his primary instrument. Although his international acclaim would take some time to establish, he is most known for his six symphonies, three concerti, and the wind quintet that inspired both his Flute and Clarinet Concerti. Nielsen also composed two operas, *Saul and David* (1901) and *Masquerade* (1906), with the overture to the latter continuing to receive regular performances in Europe and across North America. Additionally, he left a lasting mark on Denmark with his efforts to renew the national song tradition. His most lasting contributions to this genre was his *Folkenhøjsskolens melodibog* of 1922.

Nielsen’s Clarinet Concerto emerged from his work on the lauded Wind Quintet, Opus 43 (1922). He had become acquainted with the Copenhagen Wind Quintet, a group for which he decided to compose a work that would “present the characteristics of the various instruments.” Through that effort he grew familiar with the individual performers and decided to compose a concerto for each. Of this

undertaking, Nielsen was only able to finish two of the five concerti promised, the Flute Concerto (1926) and the Clarinet Concerto. The latter is a through-composed work that requires exceptionally virtuosic playing by the soloist. It was written for Aage Oxenvad who has been described as having a “somewhat choleric temperament,” a person “warm at heart” but “always obstinate.” Nielsen often utilizes a conversational style, pitting instruments in dialogue with one another, and he does so in this concerto by posing a conflict between the clarinet and the snare drum, much akin to his acclaimed Fifth Symphony. Perhaps considering Oxenvad’s personality, a key component of the Clarinet Concerto is Nielsen’s approach to conflict and the lack of resolution.

Staff Sergeant Patrick Morgan, clarinet soloist

Clarinetist Staff Sergeant Patrick Morgan Jr. of Maryville, Tennessee, joined “The President’s Own” United States Marine Band in January 2008 and was appointed assistant principal in December 2012. Staff Sgt. Morgan began his musical training on piano at age eight and clarinet at age ten. After graduating from Maryville High School in 2003, he attended Indiana University’s Jacobs School of Music in Bloomington, where he earned a bachelor’s degree in music in 2007. His instructors include Roann Romines of Maryville and Howard Klug of the Jacobs School of Music. Prior to joining “The President’s Own,” he was a graduate assistant at the Jacobs School of Music and performed with the school’s orchestra and wind ensemble.

Suite from *Pelléas et Mélisande*, Opus 46 (1905)

Jean Sibelius (1865–1957)

Maurice Maeterlinck’s play *Pelléas et Mélisande* seemed to appeal to many composers: within its first fifteen years it had been set to music not only by Sibelius but also Claude Debussy, Gabriel Fauré, and Arnold Schoenberg. The music for the Finnish production (in the Swedish language) of *Pelléas et Mélisande* transpired as Sibelius was taking a much needed break from working on his Third Symphony. He led the original production which ran successfully for fifteen days. Sibelius then created a concert suite consisting of eight movements, the order of which somewhat follows Mélisande’s arrival to her tragic death instead of the actual sequence of the play.