



CHAMBER MUSIC SERIES  
Sunday, February 15, 2015 at 2:00 P.M.  
John Philip Sousa Band Hall  
Marine Barracks Annex  
Washington, DC

Lieutenant Colonel Jason K. Fettig, Director

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### Music Between the Wars

Darius Milhaud (1892–1974)

Chamber Symphony No. 5, Opus 75 (1922)

Rude  
Lent  
Violent

*GySgt Elisabeth Plunk, flute*  
*SSgt Courtney Morton, flute and piccolo*  
*SSgt Trevor Mowry, oboe*  
*SSgt Tessa Vinson, oboe and English horn*  
*MGySgt Jeffrey Strouf, clarinet*  
*MSgt Jihoon Chang, bass clarinet*  
*MSgt Christopher McFarlane and GySgt Bernard Kolle, bassoon*  
*MSgt Mark Questad and GySgt Jennifer Paul, horn*  
*MSgt David Haglund, conducting*

Earnest John Moeran (1894–1950)

String Quartet No. 1 in A minor (1921)

Allegro  
Andante con moto  
Rondo: Allegro vivace

*SSgt Sheng-Tsung Wang and SSgt Christopher Franke, violin*  
*SSgt Sarah Hart, viola*  
*SSgt Charlaine Prescott, cello*

Bohuslav Martinů (1890–1959)

Quartet, H. 139 (1924)

Allegro moderato  
Poco andante  
Allegretto

*SSgt Shannon Kiewitt, clarinet*  
*SSgt Brigette Knox, horn*  
*SSgt Charlaine Prescott, cello*  
*SSgt Gerald Novak, side drum*

INTERMISSION

Kurt Weill (1900–50)  
arranged by Karl Kramer

Suite from *The Threepenny Opera*

Overture  
The Moritat of Mack the Knife  
The Instead-of Song  
Cannon Song

*MGySgt Matthew Harding and MSgt Michael Mergen, trumpet*  
*GySgt Hilary Harding, horn*  
*MSgt Chris Clark, trombone*  
*GySgt Christopher Tiedeman, tuba*

George Hamilton Green (1893–1970)

“Log Cabin Blues”  
“Jovial Jasper”  
“Chromatic Foxtrot”

*GySgt Jonathan Bisesi, xylophone*  
*GySgt AnnaMaria Mottola, piano*

Paul Hindemith (1895–1963)

Sonata for Trumpet and Piano (1939)

Mit kraft  
Massig bewegt; lebhaft  
Trauermusik

*MSgt David Haglund, trumpet*  
*GySgt AnnaMaria Mottola, piano*

## ***PROGRAM NOTES***

The twenty-one years between the two World Wars were an incredibly eventful period, not only in terms of history, but also for the music and art that was produced. World War I left 16 million dead, was the first “modern” war, and until 1939 was referred to as The Great War. Composers struggled to comprehend the devastation; some thought conventional “rules” no longer applied and others retreated to familiar, safe surroundings. While European economies struggled to recover from four years of war, America prospered during the “Roaring 20s” and its jazz and popular music, through developments in radio and recording, influenced the world. The Great Depression made new demands on artists and continuing economic and political upheaval drew many of the same nations to the brink of an even larger scale World War. Though drawn from a narrow period in time, the music on today’s program represents many of the wide variety of styles produced during this significant and productive time in our cultural history.

### **Chamber Symphony No. 5, Opus 75 (1922)**

Darius Milhaud (1892–1974)

French composer Darius Milhaud was born and raised in Aix-en-Provence. He began his musical studies as a violinist, turning to composition while at the Paris Conservatory. During his early years in Paris, Milhaud became associated with a group of composers calling themselves “Les Six” – known for their rejection of the stylistic norms of both Richard Wagner and the impressionists, Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel. His compositional style broadened further in the 1920s with trips to Brazil and America, where he was influenced by jazz and popular music of the time. With the outbreak of World War II, Milhaud, like many other composers of Jewish descent, made his way to the United States. He took a position at Mills College in California and continued to be a prolific composer and teacher. His long list of students included Burt Bacharach, Dave Brubeck, Philip Glass, and Peter Schickele.

The Chamber Symphony No. 5 is one of six smaller scale works composed between 1917 and 1923. They are unique in their reduced instrumentation and compact scale – none longer than ten minutes. While the first two chamber symphonies (written during the final years of World War I) were subtitled “Spring” and “Pastorale,” perhaps signaling an escape from the horrors of war, the Fifth’s density and harmonic language evoke a very different landscape. The outer movements “Rude” and “Violent” have seemingly playful themes yet always masked in sinister dissonance. The middle movement “Lent” is a bit of a respite, but not without constant underlying tension.

### **String Quartet No. 1 in A minor (1921)**

Ernest John Moeran (1894–1950)

Exhibiting a talent for composing at an early age, Ernest Moeran attended London’s Royal College of Music in 1913 to study with Sir Charles Villiers Stanford, teacher of Ralph Vaughan Williams, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, and Gustav Holst, among others. While some of his peers adopted the romantic, Brahmsian string quartet style, Moeran chose to explore a new musical path, inspired by French impressionist composer Maurice Ravel. The transparency of texture, along with the use of modal and folk melodies, evokes a pastoral quality that would later shape Moeran’s signature style.

Within only a year of his enrollment at the College, the Great War commenced and interrupted not only Moeran’s studies, but also the pastoral tranquility that he cherished. He joined the British Army in 1914 and served as a motorcycle dispatch rider with the Norfolk Regiment, 6th Battalion. In May 1917, now as a second lieutenant with the West Yorkshire Regiment, Moeran’s head was injured by shrapnel during the Second Battle of Bullecourt. After a full recovery and a promotion in rank, Moeran

was released from service and returned to the Royal College of Music to train with composer John Ireland, father of English impressionism.

Completed just a few years after the conclusion of the war, Moeran's String Quartet in A minor showcases the composer's fondness for the English countryside and its folk-music tradition. The opening modal melody, accompanied by a rustic murmur in the violins, is passed from the cello to the viola. Despite the horrors he must have witnessed during World War I, Moeran still managed to capture the beauty and peacefulness of pre-war life, as evident in the E major slow movement. The work concludes with an exciting Rondo, full of fast notes, pizzicati, and the use of the saltando, or "bouncing," bow stroke. With the tempo increasing from Allegro vivace to Presto, the quartet ends dramatically and effectively in A major.

### **Quartet, H. 139 (1924)**

Bohuslav Martinů (1890–1959)

Czech composer and violinist Bohuslav Martinů was largely self-taught, having been expelled from the Conservatory in Prague for spending too much time away from the classroom. He traveled to Paris in 1923 and was influenced by the music of Igor Stravinsky, Claude Debussy, and "Les Six," the avant-garde group of composers experimenting with new ideas such as elements of American jazz. These influences led Martinů in a new and almost shocking stylistic direction. Finding himself especially drawn to the music of Stravinsky, Martinů wrote a number of articles for Czech newspapers, journals, and concert programs during his early Paris years that were dedicated to Stravinsky's music. Coupled with his interest in jazz music, Martinů became confident in his new experimental approach to rhythm. He had uncovered a way to convey his emotions by composing music that communicated and evoked the uncertainty of the times.

Martinů's new rhythmic character can be seen in the Quartet for clarinet, horn, violoncello, and side drum which was written during his time in Paris. It evokes the strong rhythms, accents, and meter changes found in the music of Stravinsky. The unique and unusual instrumentation of the Quartet conjures up the vibrant and well-constructed creation of Stravinsky's *Soldier's Tale*. Martinů builds upon another Stravinskian trademark of using short, ostinato-like motives. In the Quartet, there is a dry, playful quality to many of the passages as Martinů builds upon rhythms and turns them into an assortment of mixed ostinati. The outer movements of the Quartet have rhythmic vitality and are instantly memorable from their opening bars, while the middle movement is melodic and pensive in style.

Martinů made his way to America during World War II after the invasion of France. There he continued to compose, writing six symphonies. He also taught at the Mannes School of Music in New York City. He never returned to Czechoslovakia, but his music later in life made use of folk-like elements taken from that country.

### **Suite from *The Threepenny Opera***

Kurt Weill (1900–50)

Kurt Weill fled Nazi Germany in 1933 and was living in New York by 1935. In 1928, Weill had composed what would become his greatest commercial success, *The Threepenny Opera*. The idea for the theater piece came from the famous author Bertolt Brecht, who had become fascinated with John Gay's Baroque parody of George Frideric Handel called *The Beggar's Opera*, written in 1728. Brecht updated the concept and began collaborating with the young and talented Weill. The piece was in a state of revision literally up to the opening curtain and many predicted that this hybrid opera/theater work filled

with jazz music and popular dance styles would be an utter flop. On the contrary, the sharp-witted urban subject matter and infectious tunes enthralled audiences.

Despite some critics labeling the opera as “degenerate,” citing Weill’s use of commonplace musical styles and an unconventional orchestra, its popularity continued to increase. Within a year of its debut, Otto Klemperer, then conductor of the Berlin State Opera, commissioned Weill to arrange a suite of the most popular music from the opera. Many of the movements pay homage to Gay’s original play by cleverly mimicking aspects of Handel’s Baroque musical style. The Suite also features one of Weill’s most recognizable melodies. It is the theme song of one of the main characters, a gang leader named Macheath. Most people call him by his ominous nickname, “Mack the Knife.”

### **“Log Cabin Blues”**

### **“Jovial Jasper”**

### **“Chromatic Foxtrot”**

George Hamilton Green (1893–1970)

American jazz of the 1920s and 1930s achieved a “Golden Age” of popularity and development. This time period showcased everything from vaudeville acts to jazz groups in tucked away towns to high profile jazz orchestras playing in the big cities. It was a genre marked by performers who wanted to not only show their talent, but to add their ideas of how American music should look, sound, and feel. Jazz’s growing popularity helped celebrate the “Roaring Twenties,” but was equally important in helping a beleaguered populace forget the trials of the Great Depression.

George Hamilton Green was one of these early jazz musicians and remains one of the most important performers and composers for the xylophone. Growing up in Omaha, Nebraska, he was part of a musical family. His grandfather was a violinist, violin maker, baritone soloist, and conductor, while his father was a successful arranger, cornet soloist, and conductor. It was in his father’s local band that the twelve-year-old Green began his solo xylophone career. He quickly built his repertoire, and even as a boy could perform a collection of 300 overtures, rhapsodies, and works for both violin and piano. He moved to Chicago and then New York City to begin his recording career. From 1917 to 1940, he recorded with virtually every recording company, most importantly being the big three; Victor, Columbia, and Edison. His recordings highlighted the xylophone in a wide variety of novelty ensembles as they performed his original works in addition to the popular tunes, waltzes, and salon dances of that era. It was these original works that laid the foundation of what percussionists still use as their mallet pedagogy. The three works performed today are original pieces by Green for xylophone and piano. In the style of his music, the performers will improvise on these tunes, a skill that the composer perfected nearly one hundred years ago.

### **Sonata for Trumpet and Piano (1939)**

Paul Hindemith (1895–1963)

Paul Hindemith is one of a sizable group of composers who left Germany ahead of World War II because of Nazi Party pressure to identify “degenerate” music (and in Hindemith’s case, his wife’s Jewish heritage). He was living in Switzerland at the time of the composition of the Trumpet Sonata and would soon immigrate to the United States, where he would teach at Yale University. In writing this sonata and sonatas for almost every instrument, (Hindemith could play every orchestral instrument except the harp) he contributed greatly to the repertoire and was aware of the legacy he would leave. He was particularly proud of the Trumpet Sonata, referring to it as “maybe the best thing I have succeeded in doing in recent times.” In 1939, Germany annexed Austria, occupied Czechoslovakia, and invaded Poland; the threat of war loomed large over the resulting composition.

The Sonata is cast in a familiar three movement format, but is hardly typical in mood or style. The first movement – *Mit kraft* (With strength) begins with a fiercely declamatory statement from the trumpet while the piano rumbles heavily underneath. Calmer interludes and piano outbursts provide contrast, but the theme returns twice more to assert itself. The second movement – *Massig bewegt* (Moderately moving) features an almost dance-like version of a military march, at times whimsical and nostalgic. The third movement – *Trauermusik* (Funeral music) is a complete departure from a typical final movement rondo. A solemn dirge, punctuated by some final statements of strength from the trumpet leads to a final chorale; a resetting of Bach's "Alle Menschen müssen sterben" ("All Men Must Die or All Men are Mortal").