



Colonel Jason K. Fettig, Director

UNITED STATES MARINE BAND  
Sunday, April 10, 2022 at 2:00 P.M.  
Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center  
Northern Virginia Community College  
Alexandria Campus  
Colonel Jason K. Fettig, conducting

Kimberly Archer (b. 1973)

Fanfare Politeia (2021)

Felix Mendelssohn (1809–47)  
transcribed by Thomas Knox\*

Konzertstück No. 1 in F minor, Opus 113

Allegro con fuoco  
Andante  
Presto

*GySgt Joseph LeBlanc, clarinet soloist*  
*SSgt Parker Gaims, basset horn soloist*

Karel Husa (1921–2016)

*Music for Prague 1968*

Introduction and Fanfare  
Aria  
Interlude  
Toccata and Chorale

## INTERMISSION

James Stephenson (b. 1969)

*Wooden Dimes: Ballet for Wind Ensemble* (2021)

Michael Gilbertson (b. 1987)

*Usonian Dwellings* (2019)

Taliesin West  
Fallingwater

\*Member, U.S. Marine Band

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# ***PROGRAM NOTES***

## **Fanfare Politeia (2021)**

Kimberly Archer (b. 1973)

Kimberly Archer currently serves as professor of composition at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, where she teaches composition, music theory, orchestration, analysis, and counterpoint. She has also served on the faculties of Bowling Green State University in Ohio, Western Carolina University in North Carolina, and Southeast High School in Florida. Archer holds a bachelor's degree in music education from Florida State University, a master's degree in composition from Syracuse University, and a doctorate in composition from the University of Texas at Austin. Her teachers include David Maslanka, David Gillingham, Andrew Waggoner, Donald Grantham, and Charlie Carter.

As a specialist in music for winds and percussion, Archer has had her music performed both nationally and internationally, including at the Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic in Chicago, the World Association of Symphonic Bands and Ensembles International Convention, regional conventions of the College Band Directors National Association, and state conventions of the Nebraska State Band Association, Oklahoma Music Educators Association, and the National Band Association – Wisconsin. Her music has been commissioned and performed by bands of all levels throughout the United States, as well as by ensembles in Spain, Japan, and the Netherlands. Archer is also a contributor to *Composers on Composing for Band*, Volume 4. Her Symphony No. 3 has been recorded on the Albany Records label, and her Concerto for Piano and Wind Ensemble, Symphony No. 2, and *for those taken too soon...* (Symphony No. 1) has been recorded on the Mark Custom Recording label.

In 2021, Archer was commissioned by “The President’s Own” United States Marine Band to contribute a work for the fifty-ninth Presidential Inauguration. Her work was premiered by the band live on international television during the pre-ceremony performance, as part of a small collection of new fanfares written for the occasion. The composer cited the following inspiration for her musical contribution to the ceremony:

Fanfare Politeia is an homage to the origins of our democracy, and to the ancient sources that Madison, Hamilton, Jefferson, and Adams drew from in their conceiving and writing our Constitution. “Politeia” is a Greek word derived from “polis” (city). Aristotle used the term to represent concepts such as citizens’ rights and constitutional government, while Plato’s examination of justice—a book which we now call *The Republic*, in English—was actually titled *Politeia* in the original Greek. Fanfare Politeia celebrates our traditions of a free and fair election, and of a peaceful transfer of power.

## **Konzertstück No. 1 in F minor, Opus 113**

Felix Mendelssohn (1809–47)

transcribed by Thomas Knox\*

It may be surprising to learn that a work with the commonplace title Konzertstück No. 1 was originally entitled *Battle of Prague* and *Grand Duet for Steamed Dumplings and Sweet-Cheese Strudel*. It was “composed and humbly dedicated to Baermann Senior and Baermann Junior by their very devoted Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy.” Early in his career, Mendelssohn became friends with Heinrich Baermann, one of the great clarinetists of their time and the musician for whom Carl Maria

von Weber wrote many of his clarinet works. Like Weber, Mendelssohn became enamored with Baermann's expressive playing, but upon visiting Baermann and his son, clarinetist and basset hornist Carl Baermann, Mendelssohn enjoyed another of the Baermanns' talents: cooking—in particular, the cooking of sweet dumplings and cheese strudel.

Mendelssohn invited the Baermanns to his home in Berlin to visit and, of course, to cook their special dishes. They agreed on the condition that Mendelssohn would “cook up” a piece for them. Carl Baermann described the event:

When I showed up at the appointed time, he [Mendelssohn] put a chef's hat on my head, drew an apron around my waist, and stuck a cooking spoon into the waistband. He did the same himself, except that instead of a spoon, he stuck a pen behind his ear. Then, to the great delight of the kitchen staff, he led me into the kitchen.... He returned to his room where, as he said, he was going to stir and knead the tones, add salt and pepper, sweeten them, and make a spicy sauce before cooking everything over a good hot fire....

As the clock struck five, my heart skipped a beat, and I hoped that the dumplings had risen properly. To my great relief, they had risen beautifully, and the cheese strudel was bubbling away melodiously in the pan. I then brought my offerings in covered dishes to the table at the time agreed upon, and Mendelssohn also had his duet in a covered dish. We rehearsed the duet that very evening in his music salon, and after we made a few minor technical and instrumental changes in the piece, father and I were still more delighted with the charming piece than Mendelssohn was with the dumplings and strudel—although he kept saying that my dumpling composition was more brilliant than his.

This led one week later to the composition of *Konzertstück No. 2 in D minor*, Opus 114, also written for the Baermanns. Both are light, highly melodic works that have become important staples of the clarinet repertoire.

### **Gunnery Sergeant Joseph LeBlanc, clarinet soloist**

Clarinetist Gunnery Sergeant Joseph LeBlanc of Honolulu, Hawaii, joined “The President's Own” United States Marine Band in September 2005. Gunnery Sgt. LeBlanc began his musical instruction at age ten on saxophone and switched to clarinet at age nineteen. After graduating in 1999 from Moanalua High School in Honolulu, he attended the University of Michigan (U-M) in Ann Arbor, where he earned a bachelor's degree in music in 2003. He also pursued graduate studies at University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. He studied with Donald Sinta and Fred Ormand of U-M, Cincinnati Symphony principal clarinet Richard Hawley, and Allen Won of New York. In 2012, Gunnery Sgt. LeBlanc performed Carlo della Giacoma's *Fantasy on Themes from Mascagni's Cavalleria rusticana* with the Marine Band. Prior to joining “The President's Own,” he performed with the Columbus Symphony Orchestra in Ohio and the Honolulu and Detroit Symphony Orchestras.

### **Staff Sergeant Parker Gaims, basset horn soloist**

Clarinetist and basset horn player Staff Sergeant Parker Gaims of Los Angeles joined “The President's Own” United States Marine Band in September 2013. Staff Sgt. Gaims began his musical training at age nine and graduated from Sherman Oaks Center for Enriched Studies in Los Angeles in 2007. He attended DePaul University in Chicago, where he earned a bachelor's degree in clarinet performance in 2011. He earned a master's degree in clarinet performance in 2013 from Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. He studied with Julie DeRoche of DePaul, Larry Combs of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and Steven Cohen of Northwestern. Staff Sgt. Gaims' notable

performances include Amilcare Ponchielli's *Il Convegno* at the International Clarinet Association's 2019 ClarinetFest, Wayne Oquin's *Tower Ascending* with the DePaul University Wind Symphony, and Johannes Brahms' Clarinet Quintet in B minor at the Kennedy Center Millennium Stage in 2014. Prior to joining the band, he was a graduate assistant at Northwestern and a bass clarinet teaching assistant at the Brevard Music Center in North Carolina, and he performed with the Chicago Chamber Musicians.

### ***Music for Prague 1968***

Karel Husa (1921–2016)

Karel Husa was born in Prague, Czechoslovakia. Following the Nazi occupation during World War II, Husa left his native country for Paris in 1946, where he continued his composition studies with several notable teachers, including Nadia Boulanger and Darius Milhaud. Husa subsequently immigrated to the United States and became a U.S. citizen in 1959. He joined the composition faculty at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, in 1954, teaching there until his retirement in 1992. During his career, he received commissions from numerous major orchestras, such as the New York Philharmonic, Baltimore Symphony, and Chicago Symphony Orchestra. He won countless awards for his work, including the Grawemeyer Award for Music Composition and the Pulitzer Prize in Music, which he received in 1969 for his String Quartet No. 3.

Husa's music explored the creative possibilities of virtually every type of musical ensemble. In addition to his extensive catalog for orchestra, he contributed many important original works to the wind band repertoire, anchored by his monumental masterpiece, *Music for Prague 1968*. The composer offered the following about his landmark work:

*Music for Prague 1968* was commissioned by the Ithaca College Concert Band. It was premiered by the commissioning ensemble in Washington, D.C., on 31 January 1969, Dr. Kenneth Snapp, conductor, at a concert for the Music Educators National Conference.

Three main ideas bind the composition together. The first and most important is an old Hussite war song from the fifteenth century, "Ye Warriors of God and His Law," a symbol of resistance and hope for hundreds of years, whenever fate lay heavy on the Czech nation. It has been utilized by many Czech composers, including [Bedřich] Smetana in *My Country*. The beginning of this religious song is announced very softly in the first movement by the timpani and concludes in a strong unison (Chorale). The song is never used in its entirety.

The second idea is the sound of bells throughout; Prague, named also The City of "Hundreds of Towers," has used its magnificently sounding church bells as calls of distress as well as of victory.

The last idea is a motif of three chords first appearing very softly under the piccolo solo at the beginning of the piece, in flutes, clarinets, and horns. Later it reappears at extremely soft dynamic levels, for example, in the middle of the Aria.

Different techniques of composing as well as orchestrating have been used in *Music for Prague 1968* and some new sounds explored, such as the percussion section in the Interlude, the ending of the work, etc. Much symbolism also appears: in addition to the distress calls in the first movement (Fanfares), the unbroken hope of the Hussite song, sound of bells, or the tragedy (Aria), there is also the bird call at the beginning (piccolo solo), symbol of liberty which the City of Prague has seen only for a few moments during its thousand years of existence.

Husa's moving tribute to his native city has become a staple in the standard repertoire of the wind ensemble and has enjoyed more than 7,000 performances worldwide since its première. It is a stunning tour de force for winds and percussion in which the composer skillfully coaxes an impressive palette of colors from the ensemble. Reflecting on the passionate and often violent struggle that lies at

the very heart of the work, Husa eloquently stated that “it is not as beautiful a music as one always would like to hear. But we cannot always paint flowers, we cannot always speak in poetry about beautiful clouds, there are sometimes we would like to express the fight for freedom.”

### ***Wooden Dimes: Ballet for Wind Ensemble (2021)***

James Stephenson (b. 1969)

James Stephenson came late to his full-time composition career, after performing seventeen seasons as a trumpeter in the Naples Philharmonic in Florida. As such, the composer is largely self-taught, making his voice truly individual and his life’s work all the more remarkable. His catalog now boasts concertos and sonatas for nearly every instrument, earning him the moniker “The Concerto King” from Chicago Symphony clarinetist John Yeh. The vast majority of those compositions came through commissions by major symphony principal players, in Chicago, Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Minnesota, Washington, D.C., St. Louis, Oregon, Milwaukee, and Dallas, among others.

Stephenson’s major break came from the Minnesota Commissioning Club, which led to two violin concertos receiving premières in 2012—by Jennifer Frautschi with the Minnesota Orchestra under Osmo Vänskä, and by Alex Kerr with the Rhode Island Philharmonic under Larry Rachleff. Other international soloists for whom Stephenson has composed include saxophonist Branford Marsalis and trumpeter Rex Richardson. Stephenson has since been commissioned by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra under Riccardo Muti, the St. Louis Symphony, and the San Francisco Ballet, as well as multiple times by “The President’s Own” United States Marine Band, one of which produced his Second Symphony, which was premièred by the Marine Band in 2016 at the prestigious Midwest Clinic and subsequently recorded. Stephenson’s *Compose Yourself!*, a landmark work for young audiences has now been performed more than 300 times since its creation in 2002, engaging children in New Zealand, Canada, and across the United States. He served as a composer-in-residence at the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music in Santa Cruz, California, in 2017.

Stephenson is also a highly sought-after arranger and conductor. His arrangements have been performed, recorded, and broadcast by virtually every major orchestra in the country, including the Boston Pops Orchestra, Cincinnati Pops Orchestra, the New York Pops, and more. On the podium, Stephenson has led orchestras in Bozeman, Montana; Charleston, South Carolina; Fort Meyers, Florida; Modesto, California; and Wyoming, in addition to numerous concert bands. With the Lake Forest Symphony, near his Illinois home, he not only has conducted but also has served for six years as composer-in-residence. His conducting debut with the Chattanooga Symphony in Tennessee came at their 2016 holiday concert.

*Wooden Dimes* is Stephenson’s first ballet, composed for the San Francisco Ballet. Once the original score was completed, Colonel Jason K. Fettig and “The President’s Own” United States Marine Band commissioned the composer to create a concert suite for wind ensemble that would capture the most essential musical moments from the ballet, while still preserving the arc of the story. The original ballet was choreographed by Danielle Rowe, based on a period tale of a stage performer and her beloved from the early part of the twentieth century:

#### *Wooden Dimes: The Story of Betty Fine and Robert Alder*

“Don’t take any wooden dimes”—a saying used a lot in the 1920s, meaning: “Don’t be naïve, or don’t be fooled.”

Betty and Robert have a love that they think they know and they think will last forever, but situations, circumstance, and their evolution as people inevitably change their relationship and therefore their love, and it ends up being nothing like they predicted.

## ***Usonian Dwellings* (2019)**

Michael Gilbertson (b. 1987)

The works of Michael Gilbertson have been described as “elegant” and “particularly beautiful” by the *New York Times*, “vivid, tightly woven” and “delectably subtle” by the *Baltimore Sun*, “genuinely moving” by the *Washington Post*, and “a compelling fusion of new and ancient” by the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. Gilbertson holds degrees from the Juilliard School in New York and Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut. He is currently the composer-in-residence with the San Francisco Chamber Orchestra and is a professor at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. His music has earned five Morton Gould Awards from the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers, a Charles Ives Scholarship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and a Broadcast Music Incorporated Student Composer Award. In March 2016, he was *Musical America* magazine’s featured New Artist of the Month.

Additionally, Gilbertson was one of three finalists for the 2018 Pulitzer Prize in Music for his String Quartet. His works have been programmed by several major ensembles, including the Minnesota Orchestra, Pittsburgh Symphony, Washington National Opera, San Francisco Chamber Orchestra, Grand Rapids Symphony, and “The President’s Own” United States Marine Band, as well as professional choirs including Musica Sacra, The Crossing, and The Esoterics. Gilbertson’s chamber works have been performed by the Verona Quartet, Akropolis Quintet, Sybarite5, SOLI Chamber Ensemble, the Copland House Ensemble, and the Aspen Contemporary Ensemble.

*Usonian Dwellings* was composed on a commission from “The President’s Own” United States Marine Band and was premièred on May 15, 2019, in Kanazawa, Japan, and subsequently performed in the cities of Hamamatsu and Iwakuni during the band’s historic first tour of the country. It is among Gilbertson’s first major works for wind ensemble, and the composer offered the following regarding the inspiration for his piece:

The movements of *Usonian Dwellings* are inspired by the work of American architect Frank Lloyd Wright. Wright used the term “usonian” to describe not only the aesthetic but also the values behind some of his later homes. His designs draw inspiration from the landscapes that surround them—evoking an America that is both forward thinking and conscious of the natural world. Each movement of *Usonian Dwellings* is inspired by one of his iconic designs. Taliesin West reflects the stark, desert landscape that surrounds his home and studio in Scottsdale, Arizona. Fallingwater, perhaps Wright’s most famous residential design in Mill Run, Pennsylvania, appears to hover majestically over the rushing falls on which it was built.

Although Wright was one of the quintessential American architects of the twentieth century, his aesthetic was deeply influenced by Japanese art and culture. Wright was never formally trained as an architect; however, he had a keen artistic eye, and during his formative years, he was introduced to traditional Japanese wood prints from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. He was mesmerized by these images, most notably their specific lines, textures, and treatment of space. Wright’s artistic focus on overlapping shapes and blurring of the boundaries between inside and outside spaces was clearly influenced by these prints. “The print,” he once said, “is more autobiographical than may be imagined. If Japanese prints were to be deducted from my education, I don’t know what direction the whole might have taken.” Once the connection is made between these images and Wright’s designs, the influence emerges throughout and represents an incredibly beautiful melding of Eastern and Western ideas in his iconic buildings. Although this Japanese influence was not consciously incorporated into Gilbertson’s musical homage to the architect, it made the world première of this substantial new American work in Japan an even more powerful representation of the meaningful threads of artistic connection between cultures.