



Lieutenant Colonel Ryan Nowlin, Director

UNITED STATES MARINE BAND
Sunday, May 4, 2025 at 2:00 P.M.
Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center
Northern Virginia Community College
Alexandria Campus
Lieutenant Colonel Ryan Nowlin, conducting

May the Fourth Be with You: Marine Band at the Movies

Richard A. Whiting (1891–1938)
arranged by John Williams
transcribed by Jay Bocook

“Hooray for Hollywood”

Joe Hisaishi (b. 1950)
and Yumi Kimura (b. 1956)
arranged by Kazuhiro Morita

Spirited Away

Ennio Morricone (1928–2020)
arranged by Robert Longfield

“Gabriel’s Oboe” from *The Mission*
GySgt Tessa Gross, soloist

John Williams (b. 1932)
transcribed by Paul Lavender

Suite from *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*

March of the Resistance
Rey’s Theme
Scherzo for X-Wings
The Jedi Steps and Finale

INTERMISSION

arranged by GySgt Scott Ninmer*

Singing with the Stars: Academy Award-Winning Songs

“When You Wish Upon a Star”
“The Way You Look Tonight”
“Chim Chim Cher-ee”
“Windmills of Your Mind”
“Days of Wine and Roses”

MGySgt Kevin Bennear, baritone

John Williams (b. 1932)
transcribed by Stephen Bulla*,
Donald Hunsberger*, and LtCol Ryan Nowlin*

Star Wars Suite

Imperial March
The Cantina Band
Leia’s Theme
Battle in the Forest
Yoda’s Theme
Throne Room and Finale

MGySgt Kevin Bennear, concert moderator

*Member, U.S. Marine Band

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PROGRAM NOTES

“Hooray for Hollywood”

Richard A. Whiting (1891–1938)

arranged by John Williams

transcribed by Jay Bocook

Composer and conductor John Williams shared the following regarding his arrangement of “Hooray for Hollywood” for the 1988 recording by the Boston Pops Orchestra under his baton, entitled “Salute to Hollywood”:

“Hooray for Hollywood” was written in the 1930s when the world was heavy-laden with the weight of the Great Depression and written when Hollywood was indeed the land where dreams are made. As the song says, if you were lucky enough to go there, you might even meet Donald Duck or Mickey Mouse... or even become a movie star yourself.

This delightful piece was written by composer Richard Whiting for the 1937 film *Hollywood Hotel*, named for an actual hotel... on Hollywood Boulevard... in the township of Hollywood! And coincidentally, speaking of locations, Mr. Whiting lived in a house that is on the same street and directly opposite from the one I have occupied for many years.

Doing this orchestration was purely a lark for me and allowed me to salute some early orchestrator-heroes of mine such as Adolph Deutsch, Nathan Van Cleave, and Conrad Salinger, all of whom were masters of the early Hollywood style. The lyrics for this song are by the immortal Johnny Mercer, with whom I had the great privilege of collaborating on several songs over the years.

What a delightful legacy these great men have given us... and what a joy to remember and salute them!

This arrangement also includes quotes from Irving Berlin’s “There’s No Business Like Show Business” and Howard Dietz and Arthur Schwartz’s “That’s Entertainment.”

Spirited Away

Joe Hisaishi (b. 1950) and Yumi Kimura (b. 1956)

arranged by Kazuhiro Morita

Born in Nagano, Joe Hisaishi is Japan’s most celebrated film composer, with a body of work that encompasses over 100 Japanese and foreign films. He also performs as a pianist and conductor, having released nearly forty solo albums and frequently touring internationally. Hisaishi studied at the Kunitachi College of Music. Early in his career he showed an interest in minimalist music, and his compositions reflect this style, with repeated ostinato figures, linear melodies, and triadic harmonies.

Japanese singer, composer, and lyre performer Yumi Kimura wrote the title song “Always with Me,” which served as the closing theme to the popular anime film *Spirited Away*. *Spirited Away*, released in 2001, became the first hand-drawn, Japanese anime and non-English-language animated film to win the Academy Award for Best Animated Feature at the seventy-fifth Academy Awards. Its plot revolves around ten-year-old Chihiro, who inadvertently leaves

the human world for a world of spirits. There, under her new name, Sen, she must work to find save her parents and find her way back out.

“Gabriel’s Oboe” from *The Mission*

Ennio Morricone (1928–2020)
arranged by Robert Longfield

Italian-born composer Ennio Morricone has written some of Hollywood’s most monumental scores, including *The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly*; *Once Upon a Time in the West*; and *Once Upon a Time in America*. He is the recipient of multiple awards, including an Oscar and Golden Globe for best original score. He began his musical career as a jazz band trumpeter in the 1940s and soon shifted to writing music for film, radio, and television.

Morricone composed the score to the 1986 film *The Mission*, directed by Roland Joffé, which tells the story of a Spanish Jesuit priest who ventures into the South American jungle to build a mission. The short piece “Gabriel’s Oboe” serves as the film’s main musical theme, returning symbolically throughout the plot narrative. It helps define the film’s atmosphere and reveals the protagonist’s compassion for his work in the jungle. This lyrical melody became exceedingly popular following the film’s release and has been arranged for many other instruments to play.

Gunnery Sergeant Tessa Gross, oboe

Oboe and English horn player Gunnery Sergeant Tessa Gross of Santa Monica, CA, joined “The President’s Own” United States Marine Band in October 2008. Gunnery Sgt. Gross began her musical training at age eight. Upon graduating from Santa Monica High School in 2001, she attended the University of California, Santa Barbara, where she studied with Stuart Horne of the Los Angeles Opera. In 2005, she earned a bachelor’s degree in music from the Manhattan School of Music in New York. She continued her education at the Manhattan School of Music and earned a master’s degree in orchestral performance in 2007. Her instructors include David Weiss of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and Robert Botti and Joseph Robinson of the New York Philharmonic. Prior to joining “The President’s Own,” she performed with the New York City Opera, The Aeros Quintet, and the Philharmonic Orchestra of the Americas. She also held a residency at the 92nd Street Y’s Music Unlocked Project and served as the associate oboe teacher for the Manhattan School of Music.

Suite from *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*

John Williams (b. 1932)
transcribed by Paul Lavender

John Williams began his musical training on piano at age eight. By the time he was in his early twenties, he was already part of the Hollywood studio music world, working as a pianist and composer/arranger of music for television. Throughout the 1960s, Williams’ career continued to advance while he broke into the world of movie music, composing for ever more popular movies and directors. The 1970s brought his collaboration with Steven Spielberg on movies such as *Jaws* and *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*. Williams signed on to score a new

“space western” written and directed by George Lucas in 1977. At that time, no one could have predicted the global popularity of this film and its successive chapters, nor could Williams have imagined the impact that his music for the movies would have both in the world of film and well beyond. Williams scored dozens of themes for the first seven films in the series, many of which have achieved worldwide recognition on a scale equal to some of the most popular classical music in history.

The Force Awakens was released in 2015, and the story takes place some thirty years after the conclusion of *The Return of the Jedi*. As old and new characters come together in the film, Williams’ score artfully weaves together familiar music from the original films with brand new themes and brilliantly highlights pivotal actions and relationships. After the familiar music for the opening credits is sounded, the suite continues with the “March of the Resistance,” followed by the main theme of the mysterious new lead character, Rey. “Scherzo for X-Wings” accompanies a furious battle scene featuring the iconic aerial fighters of both the Resistance and the First Order. The closing movement of the suite begins with the music of the Jedi and moves into a final montage of all the main themes in Williams’ symphonic tapestry.

Singing with the Stars: Academy Award–Winning Songs

arranged by SSgt Scott Nimmer*

Since the turn of the twentieth century and the advent of the motion picture, the film industry has been a cornerstone of American culture and society. First silent films, and later “talkies,” brought audiences from every social status together to experience a form of entertainment that both transported them away from their everyday lives and spoke to their shared human experiences. As the medium exploded in popularity, it began to develop into a true art form. The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences was founded in 1927, which led to the creation of the Academy Awards. The award categories for Best Original Score and Best Original Song were added in the mid-1930s and, as the awards were intended to do, gave credibility to and spurred innovation in the field of soundtrack composition.

First in this arrangement is “When You Wish Upon a Star” by Leigh Harline and Ned Washington from *Pinocchio*, the 1940 animated film. It was the first Disney song to receive an Academy Award for Best Original Song, and its instantly recognizable strains have since come to represent the Disney Company. The 1936 musical comedy *Swing Time*, which starred the iconic duo Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, featured the classic song “The Way You Look Tonight,” written by songwriter Jerome Kern with lyrics by Dorothy Fields. Astaire’s character sings the ballad to Rogers’ character as he finds himself falling in love with her. Astaire’s recording topped the charts and won the Academy Award for Best Original Song in the same year. “Chim Chim Cher-ee” was a memorable Sherman Brothers song from the 1964 musical motion picture *Mary Poppins*, in which an ever-upbeat young nanny played by Julie Andrews literally swoops down to fix the troubles of a London family. The song is a duet between Mary Poppins and the chimney sweep, played by Dick Van Dyke. Not only did the song win the Academy Award for Best Original Song and a Grammy that year, but the songwriters also received the Oscar for Best Original Music Score for the entire movie soundtrack.

“The Windmills of Your Mind” was written by the French composer Michael Legrand and was introduced to American audiences in the 1968 movie *The Thomas Crown Affair*. The song won the Best Original Song Academy Award in that year but has since been popularized

among modern audiences by the Sting cover that was used in the 1999 remake of the film. “Days of Wine and Roses,” a popular song for the 1962 movie of the same name, was written by Henry Mancini with lyrics by Johnny Mercer. The film was nominated for five Oscars, but it only took home the award for Best Original Song for this tune, which went on to become a jazz standard. The final song in the medley, “Moon River,” was another hit by the Mancini-Mercer team and was sung by Audrey Hepburn in the 1961 iconic romantic comedy *Breakfast at Tiffany’s*. The song, which launched Mercer’s career, won both an Academy Award and a Grammy that year. It has since been recorded hundreds of times, by such luminaries as Barry Manilow, Judy Garland, Louis Armstrong, and Frank Sinatra.

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.

Star Wars Suite

John Williams (b. 1932)

Star Wars Suite includes six selections from the movie *Star Wars*, beginning with Darth Vader’s epic “Imperial March.” Next comes the swinging “Cantina Band,” tune, whose scene features a diverse array of alien patrons—some performing quite virtuosically on musical instruments—and is the backdrop for the meeting of Luke Skywalker, Obi-Wan Kenobi, and Han Solo. Next is the romantic and lyrical “Princess Leia’s Theme,” which is followed by the music depicting the battle between the Storm Troopers and Ewoks called “Battle in the Forest.” “Yoda’s Theme,” with its light and subtle aesthetic, precedes the dramatic and unforgettable “Throne Room and Finale.” This closing movement includes what is arguably the most recognizable theme in the history of film music. With this score, John Williams not only earned renown for himself as a composer, but he also invigorated the world of movie music, bringing back the importance of the symphonic film score.