



Lieutenant Colonel Ryan Nowlin, Director

UNITED STATES MARINE BAND
Wednesday, June 11, 2025 at 7:00 P.M.
U.S. Capitol, West Terrace
Thursday, June 12, 2025 at 7:00 P.M.
U.S. Capitol, West Terrace
Captain Darren Y. Lin, conducting

Karl L. King (1891–1971)

March, “The Melody Shop”

Dmitri Kabalevsky (1904–87)
transcribed by Donald Hunsberger*

Overture to *Colas Breugnon*

Emmanuel Chabrier (1841–94)
transcribed by Lawrence Odom

Danse Slave from *Le roi malgré lui*

Darius Milhaud (1892–1974)
transcribed by Stephen Bulla*

Scaramouche

Vif
Modéré
Brazileira

GySgt Parker Gaims, clarinet soloist

William Grant Still (1895–1978)

To You, America!

George Frideric Handel (1685–1759)
transcribed by Edgar L. Barrow

“Arm, Arm, Ye Brave” from *Judas Maccabaeus*

MGySgt Kevin Bennear, baritone

Percy Grainger (1882–1961)

Children’s March, “Over the Hills and Far Away”

MGySgt Kevin Bennear, concert moderator

*Member, U.S. Marine Band

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Program Notes

March, “The Melody Shop”

Karl L. King (1891–1971)

Karl L. King began his career playing the baritone in a circus band before becoming bandmaster for Barnum and Bailey’s The Greatest Show on Earth. In addition to directing, he composed innovative music to match the exciting emotions and rhythms of circus acts, including his best-known march, “Barnum and Bailey’s Favorite.” He left the traveling circus lifestyle to settle in Fort Dodge, Iowa, where he spent the remaining fifty-one years of his life directing the Fort Dodge Municipal Band, an organization which eventually became known as the Karl L. King Municipal Band of Fort Dodge, to reflect his influence. During his time in Iowa, King continued to contribute to bands around the country by helping found the American Bandmasters Association and by composing music for educational programs, both graded music for developing school band programs and fight songs for American universities.

During the 1910s King wrote mostly circus marches, many known as “screamers” because of their virtuosic tempos. Faster than a normal military march, “The Melody Shop” is one of his most famous marches from this early period in his career, written in 1910. It is rousing and spirited throughout and features fast-moving, embellished lines alongside more lyrical melodies. Toward the end of the march, the score features a virtuosic solo passage for the euphonium, which drives the march to its exuberant finish.

Overture to *Colas Breugnon*

Dmitri Kabalevsky (1904–87)

transcribed by Donald Hunsberger*

Russian-born composer and teacher Dmitri Kabalevsky is perhaps best known for his work in the field of children’s music. In addition to the many pieces he wrote for young performers, both choral and instrumental, Kabalevsky also developed a system of musical education for children. He was lauded by the people of his homeland for the traditional and accessible nature of his compositional style as well as his strong sense of civic duty, expressed through his work in education.

Kabalevsky’s opera *Colas Breugnon* is based on the French writer Romain Rolland’s rather racy novel about life in Burgundy, France, during the sixteenth century. While the opera itself was ultimately successful, the overture has more permanently established itself in the symphonic repertoire. Its fast-paced, light-hearted spirit, coupled with its French nationalistic flair and traditional roots, has made the Overture to *Colas Breugnon* an audience favorite.

Danse Slave from *Le roi malgré lui*

Emmanuel Chabrier (1841–94)

transcribed by Lawrence Odom

Emmanuel Chabrier, a French Romantic composer and pianist, was known for his innovative exploration of harmony and his ability to infuse his compositions with vibrant colors, often drawing inspiration from French folk music. A pioneering figure in orchestral music, Chabrier's works are characterized by rich textures and animated rhythms. His comic opera *Le roi malgré lui* (*The King in Spite of Himself*), composed in 1887, is one of his most celebrated works, showcasing his distinctive style. In particular, the Danse Slave, which appears at the beginning of the third act, stands out as an energetic piece brimming with rhythmic vitality.

Originally written for orchestra, Danse Slave was later transcribed for band by Chief Master Sergeant Lawrence Odom, who began his Air Force music career in 1958 on piano. After studying harp, Odom served as the band's harpist until his retirement in 1978, later performing as the principal harpist with the Kennedy Center Opera Orchestra in Washington, D.C. Over his career he contributed over two hundred arrangements and transcriptions to the United States Air Force Band's library. In his band transcription of Danse Slave, Odom captures the piece's original excitement while giving it a fresh texture. The work begins with a bold fanfare from the French horns and woodwinds, establishing a lively, almost playful atmosphere. The dance theme, rooted in eastern European folk traditions, quickly spreads throughout the band, gaining momentum as it moves from section to section, enveloping the ensemble in its energy. Chabrier's clever arrangement allows each section of the band to shine, with rhythmic drive and vibrant colors propelling the piece forward. Filled with exhilarating patterns, syncopations, and brilliant instrumentation, *Danse Slave* provides the band an opportunity to showcase its full range of expressive potential. The piece serves as a thrilling musical moment in the opera and a testament to Chabrier's skill in using orchestral color. It also highlights Odom's talent in adapting that energy into the band instrumentation.

Scaramouche

Darius Milhaud (1892–1974)

transcribed by Stephen Bulla

Darius Milhaud was a French composer and a prominent member of *Les Six*, a group of composers who sought to break away from the romanticism of the nineteenth century and embrace a more modern, often more eclectic, approach to music. Milhaud's style was influenced by his exposure to a wide range of musical traditions, particularly during his time in Brazil, where he served as a cultural attaché in the 1920s. This experience deeply impacted his compositions, incorporating elements of Brazilian music, such as rhythmic complexity and jazz, into his works. Milhaud was also known for his use of polytonality, where multiple keys are used simultaneously, creating a distinct, colorful harmonic palette. His compositions span various genres, including orchestral works, chamber music, operas, and ballets, and he is celebrated for his inventiveness and technical skill.

One of Milhaud's most beloved compositions is *Scaramouche*, a three-movement suite composed in 1937. Originally written as piano background music for the theater productions *Le Médecin volant* and *Bolivar*, it was later adapted for various instrumentations, with the clarinet version becoming especially popular. The suite showcases Milhaud's characteristic blend of

French elegance with Brazilian and jazz influences. It opens with Vif, a lively, dance-like movement full of energetic rhythms, setting a joyous tone. The second movement, Modéré, contrasts with a more relaxed, introspective mood, allowing for lyrical melodies and soaring clarinet lines. The final movement, Brazileria, returns to rhythmic vitality, with Brazilian influences shown in complex, flowing rhythms and irregular patterns that keep the music engaging. Through *Scaramouche*, Milhaud offers a dynamic exploration of dance, rhythm, and emotion, capturing a wide range of moods while maintaining an energetic and vibrant spirit throughout.

To You, America!

William Grant Still (1895–1978)

William Grant Still Jr. was a pioneering composer, conductor, and arranger, often called the “dean of African American composers.” Born in Woodville, Mississippi, and raised in Little Rock, Arkansas, Still became a key figure in American classical music. His work blends classical, jazz, blues, and African American musical traditions, creating a distinct and expressive sound. Still made history in 1931 when his Symphony No. 1, *Afro-American* was performed by the Rochester Philharmonic, making him the first African American composer to have a symphony played by a major orchestra. He also broke new ground with his opera *Troubled Island*, which became the first opera by a black composer to be performed by a major opera company. Over his career, Still composed more than 150 works, including symphonies, operas, ballets, and chamber music. His contributions to American music helped elevate the African American voice in the classical world.

William Grant Still’s *To You, America!* is a vibrant band work that explores themes of American identity, cultural diversity, and the beauty of the nation. Composed during a time of national reflection, the piece captures Still’s artistic vision and his role as a pioneering figure in American classical music. Known for blending classical traditions with African American cultural influences, Still uses this work to celebrate the American experience, highlighting the country’s dynamic character and its diverse, harmonious identity. The piece opens with a repetitive theme played by the woodwinds, which is then passed on to the brass section, where it is transformed into a bold fanfare. This exchange between the woodwinds and brass creates a musical dialogue, with the woodwinds making a statement and the brass responding, either by continuing the theme or by interrupting with a fanfare. This back-and-forth between the sections suggests a conversation, capturing the interplay between different voices and perspectives, much like the diverse cultures and ideas that shape the fabric of the United States. *To You, America!* reflects both the unity and individuality of the nation, showcasing Still’s deep connection to his country’s ideals.

“Arm, Arm, Ye Brave” from *Judas Maccabaeus*

George Frideric Handel (1685–1759)

transcribed by Edgar L. Barrow

George Frideric Handel’s *Judas Maccabaeus* is an oratorio that was dedicated to Prince William Augustus, known as the Duke of Cumberland. It proved to become one of Handel’s most popular oratorios, second only to *The Messiah*. The themes of liberty, courage in the face of

oppression, and peace have resonated with audiences since the première of *Judas Maccabaeus* in 1747. Its libretto is based on the deuterocanonical Books of the Maccabees, which took place between 170 and 160 BC, when the Seleucid Empire ruled Judea and was actively trying to end the Jewish faith. The three acts of *Judas Maccabaeus* depict the changing morale of the Jewish people as they begin in desperation and end in jubilation and peace. “Arm, Arm, Ye Brave” is sung at the beginning of the oratorio by Simon, brother of the titular character, to rouse the people after the passing of their leader.

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.

Children’s March, “Over the Hills and Far Away”

Percy Grainger (1882–1961)
edited by R. Mark Rogers

Although Percy Aldridge Grainger was born in Australia, he spent most of his professional life in England and the United States. After attending conservatory in Germany, Grainger relocated to London and began his career as a concert pianist. During this time, he also composed feverishly and began to take particular interest in the native folk songs of his new home. He made the first of many trips to the English countryside in 1905 to collect and document tunes sung by locals. Grainger eventually recorded more than 700 English and Danish folk songs and arranged dozens of them for performance by various ensembles. He delighted in the nuances and imperfections rendered by each singer and preserved the tunes in their natural state, with irregular meters and the unique interpretations of the original singers.

After the outbreak of World War I, Grainger moved to New York and called the United States his home for the remainder of his life. Despite burgeoning success as a concert pianist, he joined the U.S. Army in 1917 to support the war effort. His service as an oboist and saxophonist with the Coast Artillery Band introduced Grainger to the unique sound of the wind band, beginning a long and fruitful interest in this ensemble, which resulted in dozens of works that have become cornerstones of the wind band repertoire.

The same year Grainger attained his U.S. citizenship, 1918, he composed his first original work for band: *Children’s March, “Over the Hills and Far Away.”* Though the piece, like many of his other works from this period, sounds as if it could contain the folk tunes Grainger had diligently collected in England, this particular work was built upon original material. *Children’s*

March is believed to be the first original work for concert band with an integrated piano part, complete with the unusual instruction at the end of the piece to hit a string inside the instrument with a marimba mallet. The cheerful romp is dedicated to “my playmate beyond the hills” (whom the composer never identified by name) and was premièred on June 6, 1919, by the Goldman Band, with the composer conducting.