



Lieutenant Colonel Ryan Nowlin, Director

UNITED STATES MARINE BAND
Wednesday, June 3, 2026 at 7:00 P.M.
Yards Park
Thursday, June 4, 2026 at 7:00 P.M.
Sylvan Theater
Captain Darren Y. Lin, conducting

John Philip Sousa* (1854–1932)
edited by The United States Marine Band

March, “Ben Bolt”

Kevin Charoensri (b. 2003)

An American Songkran (2023)

Florence Price (1887–1953)
arranged by Cheldon R. Williams

Adoration

Malcolm Arnold (1921–2006)
transcribed by John P. Paynter

Four Scottish Dances

George Kleinsinger (1914–82)
arranged by George F. Roach
lyrics by Paul Tripp

Tubby the Tuba

GySgt Benjamin St. Pierre, soloist
SSgt Hannah Davis, narrator

Arturo Márquez (b. 1950)
transcribed by Oliver Nickel

Danzón No. 2

SSgt Hannah Davis, concert moderator

*Member, U.S. Marine Band

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PROGRAM NOTES

March, “Ben Bolt”

John Philip Sousa* (1854–1932)
edited by The United States Marine Band

Composed in 1888, “Ben Bolt” comes from the early part of John Philip Sousa’s career, before he became widely known for the fully original marches that earned him the title “The March King.” Instead of creating entirely new themes, Sousa drew on melodies his audiences would have immediately recognized, including the popular song “Ben Bolt” (“Sweet Alice, Ben Bolt”). In doing so, he created something closer to a musical collage than a traditional march—blending familiar tunes into a form that still follows the steady, forward motion audiences expected from band music of the time. This approach reflects a period when borrowing and arranging well-known material was a practical way to connect with listeners.

As the march unfolds, the music shifts between more lyrical, song-like sections and brighter, more rhythmic passages, giving each strain its own character. Even though the themes themselves were not all original, Sousa’s sense of pacing and structure is already clear, particularly in the way he balances contrast and repetition to keep the music engaging. While “Ben Bolt” is not performed as often today, it offers a glimpse of Sousa experimenting and refining his style—showing how he combined popular appeal with craftsmanship on his way to becoming one of the most influential figures in American band music.

An American Songkran (2023)

Kevin Charoensri (b. 2003)

An American Songkran is a concert band work by Kevin Charoensri inspired by Songkran, the traditional Thai New Year celebration. Songkran is usually observed in mid-April and is associated with water as a symbol of cleansing and renewal, along with public celebration and gathering. Charoensri reflects the atmosphere of Songkran using rhythm and texture to create a sense of continuous motion. As the piece develops, it gradually brings in more elements of American musical culture, including jazz-influenced rhythms. The work moves through contrasting sections of energy and openness while maintaining forward momentum. Instead of coming to a definitive close, the music continues in a way that suggests the celebration carries on, like a festival that is still actively unfolding. Charoensri shares:

Songkran refers to the jubilant celebration of Thai New Year, making the rough translation of the piece, “An American Celebration.” On Songkran Day, happiness would fill the streets, from friendly water fights during the day, and stunning floating flower lanterns at night. It was one of the fondest memories of my childhood. My first experiences falling in love with music were Thai temples and Thai street music. And when I came to the United States, I equally fell in love with R&B, jazz, and pop music. This is my celebration of the two cultures joining.

Adoration

Florence Price (1887–1953)
arranged by Cheldon R. Williams

Florence Price was a pioneering composer and the first Black woman to have a symphony performed by a major American orchestra. Price's compositions, which include symphonies, chamber music, choral pieces, and piano solos, fuse classical music with African American folk and spiritual traditions. After her death, Price's work fell into relative obscurity but has experienced a resurgence in recent years, highlighting her profound impact on American classical music. This resurgence is in part a result of the 2009 discovery of many of Price's musical manuscripts in her old summer home on the outskirts of St. Anne, Illinois.

Born in Little Rock, Arkansas, Price was a child prodigy pianist who graduated from the New England Conservatory with dual degrees in piano teaching and organ performance at age nineteen. Her formal training included composition studies with George Whitfield Chadwick, with whom she began incorporating African American folk music into her original style. Price started a family and a teaching career in the South, but after a few years moved her young family to Chicago, where she faced less racial discrimination and had more professional opportunities. In 1932, Price was awarded First Prize from the Wanamaker Foundation for her Symphony in E minor. This led to its première by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

Price's signature style of blending the traditional music of the African American church, spirituals, and blues-style harmonies infused with a European Romantic style permeated her voluminous catalog, which includes this meditative piece originally written for organ.

Four Scottish Dances

Malcolm Arnold (1921–2006)
transcribed by John P. Paynter

Sir Malcolm Arnold was considered one of the most inventive composers of his day. With an endless supply of melodies and tunes, he knew the exact capabilities of each instrument. Arnold was particularly fond of brass instruments, perhaps because he was a trumpet player. *Four Scottish Dances* was written in 1957 for the BBC Light Music Festival, and three of its four dances were based on pre-existing melodies.

The first dance is in the style of a strathspey, a slow Scottish dance set in common time (4/4). There are wonderful passages for the brass, and the distinctive "Scotch Snap" rhythm can be heard. The second movement is a lively reel. The woodwind writing is particularly effective, including a bassoon solo at half speed that suggests a drunken reveler making his way down the road. The Allegretto melody of the third dance was written in the style of a Hebridean song from Scotland. It is one of Arnold's finest tunes and, as his publisher Novello & Co. wrote in its descriptive notes, is meant to evoke visions of the "sea and mountains on a calm summer's day in the Hebrides." The last dance is a "highland fling" in 2/4 time. While the movement is not quite a minute long, it is tremendously energetic, with the woodwinds rarely stopping for a breath.

Tubby the Tuba

George Kleinsinger (1914-82)

arranged by George F. Roach

lyrics by Paul Tripp

First introduced in 1945, *Tubby the Tuba* began as a narrated musical story by composer George Kleinsinger and writer Paul Tripp. It was originally aimed at younger audiences, but it has become a widely loved piece because of the 1975 movie, starring Dick Van Dyke. The story follows Tubby, a tuba in the orchestra who has grown a bit tired of always playing the background “oom-pah” while everyone else gets the melody. He decides it is time to find one of his own. In a true fairytale setting, along the way he meets a wise old frog, who helps him discover a tune that finally feels like his own.

In this arrangement for band, the story is told through a combination of narration and music, with the ensemble taking on the different moods and characters. The opening has that deep, heavy sound expected from a tuba, and it gradually lightens as he begins his journey. The frog scene is a fun moment in performance, with plenty of opportunity for the soloist to share character and personality. By the end of the solo, Tubby is back to where he started—but this time, with a tune of his own and a band that is just a little more aware of what the low voices can do.

Gunnery Sergeant Benjamin St. Pierre, soloist

Tuba player Gunnery Sergeant Benjamin St. Pierre of Arlington, Virginia, joined “The President’s Own” United States Marine Band in October 2019. Gunnery Sgt. St. Pierre began his musical training on piano at age eight and on tuba at age eleven. After graduating in 2015 from Yorktown High School in Arlington, he earned a bachelor’s degree in music in tuba performance from Rice University in Houston in 2019. His notable instructors included Seth Cook of the Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra and David Kirk of the Houston Symphony Orchestra. Prior to joining “The President’s Own,” he taught privately in the Houston and Northern Virginia areas and made several substitute appearances with the Houston Symphony Orchestra.

Staff Sergeant Hannah Davis, narrator

Soprano vocalist and concert moderator Staff Sergeant Hannah Davis of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, joined “The President’s Own” United States Marine Band in September 2023. She is the band’s second official female vocalist. Staff Sgt. Davis began her musical instruction at age eight. After graduating from Moon Area High School in Moon Township, Pennsylvania, in 2017, she attended West Virginia University (WVU) where she studied under Hope Koehler and earned a bachelor’s degree in music in 2021. Prior to joining “The President’s Own,” she performed with the West Virginia Symphony Orchestra and WVU Opera Theatre and was a private voice instructor.

Danzón No. 2

Arturo Márquez (b. 1950)

transcribed by Oliver Nickel

Arturo Márquez is one of the leading composers of contemporary Mexican art music. The son of a mariachi musician and the grandson of a Mexican folk singer, Márquez was enveloped by Mexico's musical culture from his earliest days. He began his formal training in 1966 and later studied piano and music theory at the Conservatorio Nacional de Música and composition at the Taller de Composición Musica UNAM (Composition Workshop of the National Autonomous University of Mexico) in Mexico City. He also studied in Paris privately with Jacques Castérède, and at the California Institute of the Arts with Morton Subotnick, Stephen Mosko, Mel Powell, and James Newton. Márquez has received commissions from organizations including the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the San Antonio Symphony, and the Rockefeller Foundation, and has received grants from the Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes of Mexico, the French Government, and the Fulbright Foundation. He received the Medalla de Oro al Mérito en las Bellas Artes (Gold Medal of Fine Arts) in 2006, the highest honor given to artists by Mexico's Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes.

The distinct sounds of the Mexican dance salons, which Márquez knew so well from childhood, became an important influence on his mature work. In fact, he is best known for a series of compositions based on the danzón, a duple-meter couple's dance which originated in Cuba. *Danzón No. 2* is so well-loved it has been referred to as a second national anthem for Mexico. Márquez described his composition in the following words:

The idea of writing the *Danzón No. 2* originated in 1993 during a trip to Malinalco with the painter Andrés Fonseca and the dancer Irene Martínez, both of whom are experts in salon dances with a special passion for the danzón, which they were able to transmit to me from the beginning, and also during later trips to Veracruz and visits to the Colonia Salon in Mexico City. From these experiences onward, I started to learn the danzón's rhythms, its form, its melodic outline, and to listen to the old recordings by Acerina and his Danzonera Orchestra. I was fascinated and I started to understand that the apparent lightness of the danzón is only like a visiting card for a type of music full of sensuality and qualitative seriousness, a genre which old Mexican people continue to dance with a touch of nostalgia and a jubilant escape towards their own emotional world; we can fortunately still see this in the embrace between music and dance that occurs in the State of Veracruz and in the dance parlors of Mexico City.

The *Danzón No. 2* is a tribute to the environment that nourishes the genre. It endeavors to get as close as possible to the dance, to its nostalgic melodies, to its wild rhythms, and although it violates its intimacy, its form and its harmonic language. It is a very personal way of paying my respects and expressing my emotions towards truly popular music. *Danzón No. 2* was written on a commission by the Department of Musical Activities at Mexico's National Autonomous University and is dedicated to my daughter Lily.