



Lieutenant Colonel Ryan Nowlin, Director

UNITED STATES MARINE BAND  
Wednesday, July 15, 2026 at 7:00 P.M.  
U.S. Capitol, West Terrace  
Thursday, July 16, 2026 at 7:00 P.M.  
Sylvan Theater  
Captain Jose D. Toranzo, conducting

### Of a People

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

March, “Keeping Step with the Union”

Robert Russell Bennett (1894–1981)  
edited by Edward Higgins

*Suite of Old American Dances*

Cake Walk  
Schottische  
Wallflower Waltz  
Rag

Henri Rabaud (1873–1949)  
transcribed by Harry Gee

Solo de concours

*GySgt Lewis Gilmore, clarinet*

Brian Balmages (b. 1975)

*Eternal Flame (2023)*

arranged by Stephen Bulla\* (b. 1953)

*Pride of a People*

*MGySgt Kevin Bennear, baritone*

Edwin Franko Goldman (1878–1956)  
arranged by Mayhew L. Lake

March, “On the Mall”

George M. Cohan (1878–1942)  
arranged by William C. Jolly\*

*George M!*

*MGySgt Kevin Bennear, concert moderator*

\*Member, U.S. Marine Band

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# ***PROGRAM NOTES***

## **March, “Keeping Step with the Union”**

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

The inspiration for this march probably came from an 1855 address by the American congressman and raconteur Rufus Choate. This excerpt from the address is printed on the sheet music: “We join ourselves to no party that does not carry the flag and keep step to the music of the Union.” The composition was dedicated to Mrs. Warren G. Harding, wife of the President, and Sousa added his own patriotic verses.

*Paul E. Bierley, The Works of John Philip Sousa (Westerville, Ohio: Integrity Press, 1984), 66. Used by permission.*

## ***Suite of Old American Dances***

Robert Russell Bennett (1894–1981)  
edited by Edward Higgins

Robert Russell Bennett was an icon in the world of theater music. Bennett provided orchestrations for all or part of more than 300 Broadway musicals from 1920 to 1976. He received an Academy Award for his music in the movie version of *Oklahoma!* Bennett was also an accomplished composer of art music. As a Guggenheim Fellow, Bennett studied under Nadia Boulanger, who is widely considered one of the most influential composition teachers of the twentieth century. Beyond his musical scores, Bennett’s writing on the art of orchestration and scoring are considered landmark texts. In particular, Bennett’s *Instrumentally Speaking*, a textbook on arranging and orchestrating music for the theater, has had lasting impact on the field.

The *Suite of Old American Dances* is an original composition for wind band. The work is a collection of barn dances characteristic of Bennett’s childhood. The composer described the music as “native American dance forms...treated in a ‘riot’ of instrumentation colors.” Bennett went on to write that “there was no particular purpose in mind...except to do a modern and, I hope, entertaining version of some dance moods of my early youth. Another purpose was to do a number with no production tie-up!” As with many of his compositions, the *Suite of Old American Dances* offers compelling examples of Bennett’s distinctive harmonies, effortless counterpoint, and rhythmic vitality.

## **Solo de concours**

Henri Rabaud (1873–1949)  
transcribed by Harry Gee

Parisian Henri Rabaud was from the third generation of a successful musical family that yielded a famous flautist, cellist, and soprano. He enrolled in the Paris Conservatory where he studied composition with Jules Massenet and André Gédalge in 1893. His cantata *Daphne* won the *Prix de Rome* the following year. Though he was neither a prolific composer nor a household

name, a number of Rabaud's works, such as his opera *Mârrouf, savetier du Caire* (*Marouf, Cobbler of Cairo*), and his oratorio *Job*, were very popular in its time. Rabaud also enjoyed success on the podium, frequently conducting the *Opéra-Comique* and serving as the director of the *Paris Opéra* from 1914 to 1918. Upon leaving the *Paris Opéra*, he was appointed director of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. He only served one season in Boston and returned to France in 1919.

When Gabriel Fauré stepped down as director of the Paris Conservatory in 1922, Rabaud took his place and remained in that position until his retirement in 1941. Rabaud's Solo de concours was composed for the 1901 clarinet exit examinations, known as contests at the Paris Conservatory. Works like Rabaud's Solo de concours were known as "contest solos," and were written for every instrument taught at the conservatory. These pieces were required repertoire for students attempting to graduate. Successful students would earn a diploma from the conservatory with either the *primer prix* (first prize) or *deuxième prix* (second prize). Rabaud's solo reflects his generally conservative compositional style, while challenging the technical and lyrical skills of the performer. This arrangement for solo clarinet and band was arranged by noted American clarinetist, arranger, and pedagogue Harry Gee.

### **Gunnery Sergeant Lewis Gilmore, clarinet**

Clarinet player Gunnery Sergeant Lewis Gilmore of Eugene, Oregon, joined "The President's Own" United States Marine Band in March 2017. Gunnery Sgt. Gilmore began his musical training on piano at age five, voice at age eight, and clarinet at age eleven. After graduating in 2007 from South Eugene High School, he attended the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor where he earned a bachelor's degree in clarinet performance in 2011 and studied with Daniel Gilbert. In 2013, he earned an Artist Diploma from the Glenn Gould School at the Royal Conservatory in Toronto, where he studied with Joaquin Valdepeñas, and in 2016 he earned a master's degree in clarinet performance from Northwestern University in Chicago where he studied with Steve Cohen.

Prior to joining "The President's Own," Gunnery Sgt. Gilmore performed as a freelance clarinetist, taught privately in the Chicago area, and performed with the Illinois Symphony Orchestra in Springfield, the Champaign-Urbana Symphony Orchestra in Illinois, the Racine Symphony Orchestra in Wisconsin, and the Lansing Symphony Orchestra in Michigan.

### ***Eternal Flame* (2023)**

Brian Balmages (b. 1975)

Brian Balmages is a composer and conductor who equally spans the worlds of orchestral, band, and chamber music. His works have been performed by groups ranging from professional symphony orchestras to elementary schools in venues such as Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, Sydney Opera House, and many more. He is a recipient of the A. Austin Harding Award from the American School Band Directors Association, won the 2020 National Band Association/William D. Revelli Composition Contest with his work *Love and Light*, and was awarded the inaugural James Madison University Distinguished Alumni Award from the School of Visual and Performing Arts. In the same year, he was commissioned by his other alma mater, the University of Miami, to compose music for the inauguration of the institution's sixth

president, Julio Frenk. His music was also performed as part of the 2013 Presidential Inaugural Prayer Service. Balmages has guest conducted at The Midwest Clinic, Maryborough Music Conference in Australia, and the College Band Directors National Association Conference, among others. The composer writes the following regarding *Eternal Flame*:

When I was approached by Artistic Director David A. Turrill about writing a piece in honor of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Zanesville (Ohio) Memorial Concert Band, he told me it would be amazing if I could somehow tie the piece into the local community. The band does a summer concert series at Zane's Landing Park, a beautiful outdoor venue. I soon learned that Zane's Landing Park is also home to Zaneville's Eternal Flame, the only eternal flame memorial in the United States dedicated to Medal of Honor recipients. Almost immediately, the concept of the piece came into focus.

The opening feels much like an Olympic fanfare, immediately invoking the heroic actions that often lead to a Medal of Honor, the highest military award for valor. While the piece is not overtly patriotic, it does include subtle nods to "America" ("My Country 'Tis of Thee"), beginning with the lyrical, stately theme that occurs after the opening fanfare. As the music develops, various phrases from "America" continue to be referenced without there ever being a full setting of the theme.

The piece concludes with a restatement of the opening fanfare, this time in a completely different tempo and time signature, yet it feels remarkably similar to the opening. This is juxtaposed with a flurry of woodwind activity spilling over from the previous section, drawing everything together into a powerful conclusion.

It was an honor to be able to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ensemble and also write music that pays tribute to the powerful memorial that resides in the very same park. The two share an important aspect: both continue to be lights that burn brightly and inspire those who visit Zane's Landing Park.

### *Pride of a People*

arranged by Stephen Bulla\* (b. 1953)

Stephen Bulla joined "The President's Own" in 1980 and retired as chief arranger in 2010. He originally arranged *Pride of a People* for the Marine Band's 1987 tour, and revised it for the Marine Band's 2001 tour. This patriotic medley weaves together three songs that are an integral part of American culture.

"This is My Country" was composed by Al Jacobs in 1940, with lyrics by Don Raye. The song was popularized by Fred Waring and His Pennsylvanians and later recorded by artists such as the Tabernacle Choir at Temple Square, Tennessee Ernie Ford, and Patti LaBelle.

"You're a Grand Old Flag" first appeared in the 1906 stage musical *George Washington, Jr.*, written and produced by American theater legend George M. Cohan. The concept of the song stemmed from a chance encounter with a Civil War veteran who fought at Gettysburg. The veteran had an old and ragged flag and told Cohan that "She's a grand old rag." The first version of the song kept the veteran's words, but after complaints from the public, Cohan renamed it.

"My Country 'tis of Thee" served as one of America's de facto anthems before "The Star-Spangled Banner" was officially adopted in 1931. Samuel Francis Smith wrote the lyrics in 1831 for a melody he selected from a German hymnbook, possibly unaware that the tune was already used as the British national anthem "God Save the King." The song has been referenced throughout American history, notably recited by Martin Luther King, Jr. during the 1963 March on Washington, calling on the nation to "let freedom ring."

## **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.

### **March, “On the Mall”**

Edwin Franko Goldman (1878–1956)

arranged by Mayhew L. Lake

Edwin Franko Goldman was born into a musical family: his mother was a pianist and teacher, and his uncle, Sam Franko, was a successful conductor and arranger. Another uncle, Nathan Franko, was the concertmaster of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra in New York. Goldman began studying the cornet at age nine and attended the National Conservatory of Music in New York, then led by Antonín Dvořák. At age seventeen, Goldman followed in his uncle’s footsteps joining the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra. He served as solo cornet of that orchestra from 1899 to 1909. He was also a renowned conductor and supporter of new band music. Goldman co-founded of the American Bandmasters Association and, in 1911, formed the New York Military Band, which became the famous Goldman Band.

The Goldman Band was tremendously popular in New York and beyond. Goldman frequently composed for the band, writing more than one hundred marches, solos, and concert works. Among the most popular was his march, “On the Mall.” The march was written in 1923 for the dedication of the Naumburg Bandshell in New York’s Central Park. It features a melody in the trio that requires the band to sing and whistle. The audience was encouraged to sing and whistle along with the band, filling the mall spreading out from the bandshell with thousands of enthusiastic “soloists.” The piece remains one of Goldman’s most popular marches.

### ***George M!***

George M. Cohan (1878–1942)

arranged by William C. Jolly\*

*George M!*, arranged by Marine Band arranger William C. Jolly, compiles many well-known songs by George M. Cohan into a high-energy medley. Jolly first enlisted in the Marine Corps from 1942 to 1946. Then, when the Korean War began, he re-enlisted and served as Bandmaster of the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division Band. After the Korean War, Jolly’s musical ability came to the attention of the Director of the Marine Band, Lieutenant Colonel Albert Schoepper. Jolly

became an arranger for “The President’s Own” United States Marine Band in 1958. He served with the Marine Band until 1965. This medley is a wonderful example of the energetic arrangements that Jolly created for the Marine Band.

*George M!* is a medley comprised of songs by American songwriter, playwright, performer, theater owner, and producer George M. Cohan. A legend of the American theater, Cohan began his performing career as child, touring the country with his parents and sister as the vaudeville act called “The Four Cohans.” Over his lifetime Cohan wrote more than fifty complete musicals and published over three hundred songs. Many of Cohan’s songs are enduring favorite favorites including “(I’m a) Yankee Doodle Dandy,” “Over There,” “You’re a Grand Old Flag,” and “Give My Regards to Broadway.” In 1968, three years after the creation of Jolly’s medley, the Cohan songbook was used in a stage musical detailing Cohan’s life also titled *George M!* starring Joel Grey and Bernadette Peters.