



Colonel Jason K. Fettig, Director

UNITED STATES MARINE BAND

Wednesday, July 28, 2021 at 7:00 P.M.

National Harbor, Maryland

Thursday, July 29, 2021 at 7:30 P.M.

Streamed live from John Philip Sousa Band Hall

Major Ryan J. Nowlin, conducting

Kenneth S. Williams (1920–77)
edited by Alfred Reed

“Vilabella”

Aram Khachaturian (1903–78)
transcribed by Erik Somers

Suite from *The Valencian Widow*

Introduction
Song
Dance

Jule Styne (1905–94)
arranged by Patrick Williams

“Saturday Night (Is the Loneliest Night of the Week)”

MSgt Karl Johnson, bass trombone soloist

Zequinha de Abreu (1880–1935)
arranged by Naohiro Iwai

“Tico-Tico”

arranged by Maj Ryan Nowlin*

Sentimental Journey: A World War II Hit Parade

“Stormy Weather”
“That Old Black Magic”

GySgt Sara Sheffield, mezzo-soprano

James Barnes (b. 1949)

Finale from Symphony No. 3, Opus 89

*Member, U.S. Marine Band

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PROGRAM NOTES

“Vilabella”

Kenneth S. Williams (1920–77)

edited by Alfred Reed

Kenneth S. Williams was born in 1920 in Cleveland, where he attended Western Reserve University and received both bachelor’s and master’s degrees in music. From 1950 to 1963, he taught instrumental music in the public schools, before becoming a music theory professor at Houston Baptist University from 1964 to 1968. He later lived in Las Vegas until his death in 1977. Williams was considered by associates in Cleveland, Houston, and Las Vegas to be an exceptional jazz trumpet player and arranger as well as a talented composer. He arranged a great deal of music for jazz and marching band, but his published original works are relatively few in number. His best known band compositions include “Bold Frontier,” Salute A.S.B.D.A., and “Vilabella.”

A unique concert march, “Vilabella” was written while Williams was living in Houston and was originally titled “Houston on the Move.” When it was submitted to University of Miami Music Publications in 1970, Alfred Reed suggested a less regional title with a Spanish sound, since the work has a slight, but distinct, Spanish flavor. Williams agreed, Reed made some minor textual changes—selecting the title from the name of a street in Coral Gables, Florida—and “Vilabella” has continued to climb in the popularity polls ever since.

Suite from *The Valencian Widow*

Aram Khachaturian (1903–78)

transcribed by Erik Somers

Aram Khachaturian was an Armenian composer, conductor, and teacher. Along with Sergei Prokofiev and Dmitri Shostakovich, he was considered to be among the leading composers in the Soviet school of composition. Khachaturian was also one of the most important and well-respected contributors to twentieth-century Armenian culture: the concert hall in Yerevan, the capital of Armenia, was named for him, as well as a string quartet and a prize given by the Armenian Ministry of Culture. He said that his harmonic language was inspired by “imagining the sounds of folk instruments with their characteristic tuning and their resulting range of overtones.” His melodic writing drew on themes from Armenian folklore and traditional folk tunes, especially those from the ashugh troubadour tradition of the South Caucasus region.

This folk influence also helped shape the rhythmic diversity in his compositions. Khachaturian wrote the orchestral incidental music for the Suite from *The Valencian Widow* in 1940. The suite was later arranged for concert band by Erik Somers. *The Valencian Widow* was a late sixteenth-century play written by Spanish playwright, Lope de Vega. Lope de Vega was one of the most famous playwrights of Spain’s Golden Age and was credited with writing over 1,800 plays. *The Valencian Widow* was a “cloak and sword” play, which entailed complicated plots, full of intrigue and frustrated love, in which the upper middle-class main characters’ actions were mirrored in the lives of their servants. In Khachaturian’s incidental music for this play, the audience can hear his signature style coupled with a Spanish flair that highlights the setting of the storyline.

“Saturday Night (Is the Loneliest Night of the Week)”

Jule Styne (1905–94)

arranged by Patrick Williams

“Saturday Night (Is the Loneliest Night of the Week)” was a popular song published in 1944, with music by Jule Styne and lyrics by Sammy Cahn. Frank Sinatra recorded it, and the single soared to #2 on the charts. The lyrics describe how Saturday is the night that the singer most misses his sweetheart, because it was the night they used to go out dancing (though, Sammy Cahn always insisted that his lyrics described a freelance musician sad not to be working on a Saturday night).

After the song was recorded by Frank Sinatra, many other singers and ensembles recorded and performed it. This arrangement for bass trombone and big band showcases the bass trombone’s abilities as a jazz instrument, both through lyrical lines and jazz technique. The arranger of this feature is Patrick Williams, an Emmy Award-winning television music composer and Grammy Award-winning big band leader and arranger.

Master Sergeant Karl Johnson, bass trombone soloist

Bass trombonist Master Sergeant Karl Johnson joined “The President’s Own” United States Marine Band in May 2000. Master Sgt. Johnson began his musical training at age ten. After graduating from Federal Way High School in 1992, he earned a bachelor’s degree in music from Brigham Young University (BYU) in Provo, Utah, where he studied with Daniel Bachelder of BYU and Russell McKinney of the Utah Symphony. In 2000, he earned a master’s degree from The Juilliard School in New York, where he studied with Donald Harwood of the New York Philharmonic. Prior to joining “The President’s Own,” Master Sgt. Johnson recorded music for television and motion pictures and substituted with Natalie Cole, the Canadian Brass, the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, and the Harry James Orchestra.

“Tico-Tico”

Zequinha de Abreu (1880–1935)

arranged by Kazuhiro Morita

“Tico-Tico” is a world-famous song by Brazilian composer Zequinha de Abreu. Abreu wrote the song in 1917 in the popular Brazilian *choro* style, which is characterized by fast rhythms, syncopations, and lots of counterpoint. The song was originally scored for the *choro* ensemble, which usually consisted of several guitars, a cavaquinho (a small four-stringed guitar), and a melody instrument, often a flute. In the 1940s, the tune became a hit in the United States, and it has been recorded worldwide by a variety of artists in many different settings. Carmen Miranda popularized it internationally in the 1947 movie *Copacabana*. The full title “Tico-Tico no Fubá”, meaning “Sparrow in the Cornmeal,” was added when it was published in Brazil, to distinguish it from a different popular tune also named “Tico-Tico.” As the piece flies by, one cannot help but hear the sparrow pestering a young woman by continually finding ways to sneak bites of her cornmeal.

Sentimental Journey: A World War II Hit Parade

arranged by Maj Ryan Nowlin*

Popular song has given voice to Americans' greatest joys and deepest sorrows, their most personal longings and paralyzing fears. This has been especially true during times of war, and it was never more evident than during World War II, what some consider the golden age of American popular song. With the advent of radio and the phonograph, popular song became more readily available in the homes of the American people. These same technologies enabled members of the armed forces deployed around the world to enjoy this music as well. Almost completely devoid of mention of the horrors of war, the popular music was uplifting and encouraging, giving voice to patriotism and longings for home and loved ones far away.

Harold Arlen and Ted Koehler originally wrote "Stormy Weather" in 1933, during the Great Depression. The song's depiction of the pain of two lovers being separated touched Americans during the war years; the song was featured in a 1943 film by the same name. "That Old Black Magic" dates from 1942, before there was much good news coming from Europe or the South Pacific. The song seems to ignore the war completely, focusing instead on the power of love to transport us "down and down" or "round and round" when we fall under its spell.

Gunnery Sergeant Sara Sheffield, mezzo-soprano

Mezzo-soprano vocalist and concert moderator Gunnery Sergeant Sara Sheffield joined "The President's Own" United States Marine Band in May 2005, becoming the first featured female vocal soloist in Marine Band history. Gunnery Sgt. Sheffield began her musical instruction on piano at age nine and voice at age sixteen. After graduating from Jacksonville (Texas) High School in 1997, she attended the University of North Texas in Denton and earned a bachelor's degree in vocal performance in 2001. In 2016 she earned an executive master's degree in business administration from George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia. Prior to joining "The President's Own," Gunnery Sgt. Sheffield was a member of the U.S. Army Band's Army Chorale at Fort Myer in Arlington, Virginia.

Finale from Symphony No. 3, Opus 89

James Barnes (b. 1949)

A widely respected and accomplished musician, James Barnes has been a fixture at the University of Kansas in Lawrence for nearly forty years. In addition to teaching, his roles have included staff arranger, associate director of bands, and division director for music theory and composition. Much sought after as a composer and conductor of band music, he has been commissioned to compose works for each of the premier military bands in Washington, D.C. Barnes described his Third Symphony in the following words:

The Third Symphony was commissioned by the United States Air Force Band in Washington, D.C. The conductor of the band at the time, Col. Alan Bonner, told me that he wanted a major work for wind band. He said that he didn't care about style, length, difficulty, or anything else; I was given complete freedom to write whatever I wanted to. I began to work on it in earnest at a very difficult time in my life, right after our baby daughter, Natalie, died. This symphony is the most emotionally draining work that I have ever composed. If it were to be given a nickname, I believe that "Tragic" would be appropriate. The work progresses from the deepest darkness of despair all the way to the brightness of fulfillment and joy.

The first movement is a work of much frustration, bitterness, despair, and despondency—all my own personal feelings after losing my daughter. The scherzo (second movement) has a sarcasm and bitter sweetness about it, because it has to do with the pomposity and conceit of certain people in the world. The third movement is a fantasia about what my world would have been like if Natalie had lived. It is a farewell to her. The finale (fourth movement) represents a rebirth of spirit, a reconciliation for us all. The second theme of the last movement is based on an old Lutheran children's hymn called "I am Jesus' Little Lamb." This hymn was sung at Natalie's funeral. The last stanza of the song reads:

Who so happy as I am
Even now the Shepherd's lamb?
And when my short life is ended,
By His angel host attended,
He shall fold me to His breast,
There within His arms to rest.

Three days after I completed this symphony, on June 25, 1994, our son Billy Barnes was born. If the third movement is for Natalie, then the finale is really for Billy, and our joy in being blessed with him after the tragic death of his sister.