



UNITED STATES MARINE BAND  
Wednesday, August 19, 2026 at 7:00 P.M.  
Yards Park  
Thursday, August 20, 2026 at 7:00 P.M.  
Sylvan Theater  
Captain Darren Y. Lin, conducting

Lieutenant Colonel Ryan Nowlin, Director

Henry Fillmore (1881–1956)

March, “His Honor”

Franz von Suppé (1819–95)  
transcribed by Charles Godfrey II

Overture to *Light Cavalry*

Luigi Bassi (1833–71)  
arranged by L. P. Laurendeau  
edited by R. Mark Rogers

Concert Fantasia on Motifs from Giuseppe Verdi’s *Rigoletto*  
*SSgt Nick Thompson, clarinet soloist*

Julie Giroux (b. 1961)

Italian Rhapsody

Emmanuel Chabrier (1941–94)  
transcribed by Emil Mollenhauer

España Rhapsodie

Aaron Copland (1900–90)  
arranged by Stephen Bulla and Thomas Knox\*

*Old American Songs*

“Zion’s Walls”  
“The Dodger”  
“Simple Gifts”

*MGySgt Kevin Bennear, baritone*

Percy Grainger (1882–1961)  
edited by Larry Clark

“Molly on the Shore”

*MGySgt Kevin Bennear, concert moderator*

\*Member, U.S. Marine Band

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## ***PROGRAM NOTES***

### **March, “His Honor”**

Henry Fillmore (1881–1956)

Henry Fillmore was the most prolific composer, arranger, and editor in American band history, producing more than 250 original compositions, including 113 marches, and over 750 arrangements. To avoid flooding the market under a single name, he published under eight pseudonyms. As leader of the Fillmore Band from 1927 to 1938, he became a fixture of American musical life through weekly radio broadcasts from Cincinnati, where the band performed regularly at the zoo and in city parks. The Fillmore Band was among the last of the great professional ensembles that defined the “Golden Age” of concert bands, offering audiences a unique blend of music and entertainment. In true showman fashion, Fillmore even had a canine soloist, a dog named “Mike the Radio Hound,” who barked on cue in time with the music during concerts and broadcasts.

Written in 1933 and dedicated to Cincinnati mayor Russell Wilson, “His Honor” is a fast, spirited circus march brimming with energy and personality, and is considered one of Fillmore’s finest marches. Listeners should pay attention to how the character shifts between each strain, as Fillmore was known to vary the dynamics and instrumentation dramatically from section to section. As the legendary conductor Frederick Fennell once observed, Fillmore likely never performed the piece exactly as written, since spontaneity was central to his musical personality.

### **Overture to *Light Cavalry***

Franz von Suppé (1819–95)

transcribed by Charles Godfrey II

Born Francesco Ezechiele Ermenegildo Cavaliere Suppé-Demelli, Franz von Suppé was the preeminent composer of light opera in nineteenth century Europe, rivaled only by Jacques Offenbach. Extraordinarily prolific, he produced thirty operettas and some 180 other stage works, most of which have long since faded from the repertoire. His overtures, however, have remained popular, particularly *Morning, Noon and Night in Vienna*, *Poet and Peasant*, and *Light Cavalry*, and are often heard in film scores, cartoons, and advertisements.

*Light Cavalry* was first presented as a stage work in 1866, and its chief novelty at the time was that the role of the dashing hussar was played by a woman, Anna Grobecker, one of several singer-actresses who specialized in so-called “trouser roles.” The overture captures the spirit of the plot from the opening bars, where bugle calls set a martial tone before the music builds to a brilliant, galloping finish.

## **Concert Fantasia on Motifs from Giuseppe Verdi's *Rigoletto***

Luigi Bassi (1833–71)  
arranged by L. P. Laurendeau  
edited by R. Mark Rogers

Luigi Bassi was a clarinetist at Milan's famed La Scala opera house who, like many performers of his era, composed primarily as a vehicle for his own playing. The opera fantasy, a genre built on virtuosic elaborations of familiar operatic melodies, was the natural outlet for this kind of showmanship, and Bassi's Concert Fantasia on Motifs from Verdi's *Rigoletto* became his most celebrated work. Giuseppe Verdi's opera, which premiered in Venice in 1851, tells the tragic story of the court jester Rigoletto, his daughter Gilda, and their womanizing master the Duke of Mantua. When Rigoletto hires an assassin to kill the Duke, Gilda, still in love despite his betrayal, sacrifices herself in his place, and the opera ends with a devastated Rigoletto cradling her body.

Bassi's fantasia draws on several of the opera's most memorable moments, casting the soloist in multiple dramatic roles throughout. The piece opens with an ominous introduction before the clarinet takes up "Tutte le feste," Gilda's confession to her father, followed by material from the famous quartet "Bella figlia dell'amore." A lyrical turn brings Gilda's radiant aria "Caro nome," brimming with the innocence of first love, before the mood darkens again with the Duke's lament "Parmi veder le lagrime." The fantasy then breaks from the opera's tragic ending, closing instead with a dazzling, high-spirited finale that puts the soloist's full technical command on display.

### **Staff Sergeant Nicholas Thompson, clarinet**

Clarinet player Staff Sgt. Nicholas Thompson of Great Falls, Virginia, joined "The President's Own" United States Marine Band in October 2022. Staff Sgt. Thompson began his musical training on clarinet at age eleven. After graduating in 2012 from Langley High School, he attended George Mason University in Fairfax where he studied under Kathy Mulcahy and earned a bachelor's degree in clarinet performance in 2016. He continued his studies with Chad Burrow and Dan Gilbert at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, where he earned a master's degree in clarinet performance in 2018.

Prior to joining "The President's Own," Staff Sgt. Thompson performed as principal clarinet with the Lima and Youngstown Symphonies in Ohio, and acting principal with the Flint Symphony in Michigan. He has also subbed with ensembles in Ohio and Michigan, including the Akron, Canton, Toledo, Ann Arbor, Detroit, and Kalamazoo Symphonies. Staff Sgt. Thompson also performed with the Berkshire Festival Opera Orchestra in Massachusetts.

### ***Italian Rhapsody***

Julie Giroux (b. 1961)

Julie Giroux is a Massachusetts native who grew up in Arizona and Louisiana before making her mark in Los Angeles, where she spent the early part of her career arranging and orchestrating music for film, television, and various pop artists. Since the late 1990s she has turned her focus to original composition for wind band, earning commissions from ensembles around the world and establishing herself as one of the most celebrated living composers in the genre. *Italian Rhapsody* was commissioned by Col. Arnauld D. Gabriel (USAF, Ret.) and

premiered by the United States Army Field Band at the 2008 Midwest Clinic. The work is a colorful tour through Italian folk and operatic traditions, weaving together familiar tunes with Giroux's own original material. A solo clarinet opens with a touch of mischievous swagger before launching into the festive "Wedding Tarantella." From there, the piece moves through a range of moods: a street-band march, the tender lilt of "Musetta's Waltz" from Giacomo Puccini's *La Bohème*, and a rousing finale that draws on Giuseppe Verdi's "Anvil Chorus" from *Il Trovatore*, Gioachino Rossini's *Barber of Seville*, and Luigi Denza's beloved "Funiculi, Funiculà."

### **España Rhapsodie**

Emmanuel Chabrier (1841–94)

transcribed by Emil Mollenhauer

French composer Emmanuel Chabrier was born into a family of law professionals. He possessed a genuine talent for music and began studying piano at age six. He published his first composition just six years later. He became an accomplished pianist and was compared to Franz Liszt and Anton Rubenstein. The influence of family tradition, however, redirected him to study law beginning in 1858 and within three years he took a position at the Ministry of the Interior. He remained in civil service for the next nineteen years but continued composing and studying music. He maintained a friendship with avant-garde composers Ernest Chausson, Vincent d'Indy, and Gabriel Fauré, and had a strong desire for his own works to be considered modern. Chabrier traveled to Germany and heard Richard Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* for the first time in 1879. It was a life-changing moment for him and led him to quit his job with the Ministry of the Interior and pursue his passion for composition full-time.

Chabrier became fascinated with the people and culture of Spain and visited the country in 1882. He studied the music and dances and made detailed notes. The following year he composed his *España Rhapsodie*. Originally for piano, the work was comprised primarily of the *Malagueña*, a sultry dance, and the fiery *Jota*, a fast-paced and energetic waltz. He orchestrated the work and it was premiered by the Lamoureux Orchestra in 1883. It was an immediate success and helped advance his career. The Sousa Band first performed the work in 1928, and it was used extensively on the 1929 and 1930 concert tours.

### **Old American Songs**

Aaron Copland (1900–90)

arranged by Stephen Bulla and Thomas Knox\*

Aaron Copland grew up in Brooklyn and came to composition relatively late, not beginning formal studies until his early teens. He spent three years in Paris studying with the legendary Nadia Boulanger before returning to New York, where his music moved through several phases, from jazz-inflected works to more abstract writing, before settling into the accessible, distinctly American voice that made him famous. That populist turn produced some of his most beloved works, including the ballets *Billy the Kid*, *Rodeo*, and *Appalachian Spring*, for which he won the Pulitzer Prize in 1945. Five years later, drawing on spirituals, campaign songs, Shaker tunes, and folk ditties, he compiled the first set of *Old American Songs* for voice

and piano, premiering them at Benjamin Britten's Aldeburgh Festival in England before introducing them to American audiences the following year.

"Zion's Walls" is a rousing revival song from the early 1800s, and listeners should notice its energetic, communal character; it is music meant to be sung together in celebration. "The Dodger" is a sly nineteenth-century campaign song that pokes fun at politicians, preachers, and lovers alike; its dry wit translates perfectly into Copland's sardonic setting. "Simple Gifts," the well-known Shaker hymn of 1848, will be familiar to many from *Appalachian Spring*. Copland's setting here is nearly identical, with chords placed deliberately off the beat to give the melody a floating, unhurried quality.

### **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.

### **"Molly on the Shore"**

Percy Grainger (1882–1961)

edited by Larry Clark

Percy Grainger was an Australian-born composer and concert pianist who spent his career first in London, then permanently in the United States after World War I. Deeply passionate about folk music, he made numerous trips into the English countryside beginning in 1905, ultimately documenting over 700 folk songs. He prized the natural imperfections of each singer's rendition, preserving irregular meters and idiosyncratic phrasings rather than smoothing them into something more conventionally polished. When he joined the U.S. Army in 1917, his service as a wind player introduced him to the concert band, a medium he would spend decades writing for, producing works that have since become cornerstones of the repertoire.

Grainger began sketching "Molly on the Shore" in 1907, weaving together two Irish Cork reels from The Complete Petrie Collection of Ancient Irish Music, "Temple Hill" and the title tune. His gift for weaving multiple folk melodies together seamlessly is on full display here, and the result feels both spontaneous and inevitable. Originally a birthday gift for his mother scored for string quartet, the work was later arranged for orchestra, piano, and finally wind band in 1920, with Grainger raising the key, expanding the percussion writing, and adding new material along the way. Listeners should enjoy the infectious rhythmic drive of the reel throughout, and notice how the two folk tunes are tossed playfully between different sections of the band.

