



Colonel Jason K. Fettig, Director

UNITED STATES MARINE BAND
Wednesday, August 28, 2019 at 8:00 P.M.
U.S. Capitol, West Terrace
Thursday, August 29, 2019 at 8:00 P.M.
U.S. Capitol, West Terrace
Colonel Jason K. Fettig, conducting

Carolyn Bremer (1957–2018)

Early Light

Jacques Ibert (1890–1962)
transcribed by Howard Bowlin*

Allegro scherzando from Flute Concerto
MSgt Elisabeth Plunk, soloist

Darius Milhaud (1892–1974)

Suite française, Opus 248

Normandie
Bretagne
Île de France
Alsace-Lorraine
Provence

arranged by SSgt Scott Nimmer*

Singing with the Stars: Academy Award–Winning Songs

When You Wish Upon a Star
The Way You Look Tonight
Chim Chim Cher-ee
Windmills of Your Mind
Days of Wine and Roses
Moon River

MGySgt Kevin Bennear, baritone

Franz Liszt (1811–86)
transcribed by John B. Kindig
revised by Gus Guentzel

Finale from *Mazeppa*

MGySgt Kevin Bennear, concert moderator

*Member, U.S. Marine Band

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PROGRAM NOTES

Early Light

Carolyn Bremer (1957–2018)

Carolyn Bremer forged a path as a composer after extensive training as a double bass player. She studied at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, the California Institute of Arts in Santa Clarita, and the University of California, Santa Barbara, and later in her career served as associate director of the Bob Cole Conservatory of Music at California State University, Long Beach. She composed *Early Light* for the Oklahoma City Philharmonic, which premiered the work in 1995. Its musical material is derived primarily from “The Star-Spangled Banner.” In this bright and uplifting piece, Bremer—a passionate baseball fan since childhood—frames her excitement at hearing the national anthem before ball games. The percussive slap heard near the end echoes the crack of the bat on a long home run.

Allegro scherzando from Flute Concerto (1932–33)

Jacques Ibert (1890–1962)

transcribed by Howard Bowlin*

Jacques Ibert’s grave sits in the shadow of the Eiffel Tower in Paris’s Passy Cemetery, not far from those of Gabriel Fauré and Claude Debussy. Often overlooked in the oeuvre of twentieth-century French concert music—perhaps because he did not align himself with a particular style or school—Ibert’s music is original and substantial, and it incorporates a myriad of stylistic influences. He composed his Flute Concerto in 1932 and 1933, inside a decade of rich creativity in Parisian artistic circles. He dedicated the work to the great French flautist Marcel Moyse, who gave its première performance in 1934. One of the most popular works for the instrument today, it is comprised of three movements, the third of which will be featured on this concert. This final and longest movement, the Allegro scherzando is jazzy, with its passages of mixed meter, and asks everything of the soloist, from daring leaps to racing scales to a rhapsodic cadenza. Indeed, the movement is so technically challenging that the Conservatoire de Paris began to ask for it as an audition piece after Moyse’s performance.

Master Sgt. Elisabeth Plunk, flute soloist

Flutist Master Sergeant Elisabeth Plunk joined “The President’s Own” United States Marine Band in June 2004 and was named assistant principal in 2009 and co-principal in 2015. Master Sgt. Plunk began her musical instruction at age six. Upon graduating in 1997 from Moline High School in Illinois, she earned a bachelor’s degree in music from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music (CCM) in 2001, and in 2003 received a master’s

degree in music from Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh. Her flute instructors included Randolph Bowman of CCM and Jeanne Baxtresser and Alberto Almarza of Carnegie Mellon. Prior to joining “The President’s Own,” Master Sgt. Plunk performed with the Opera Theatre of Pittsburgh and as guest principal flute with the Orquestra Sinfônica do Estado de São Paulo (São Paulo State Symphony Orchestra) in Brazil.

Suite française, Opus 248

Darius Milhaud (1892–1974)

Folk-inspired compositions for band were well established in the works of British composers Gustav Holst and Ralph Vaughan Williams and Australian-American composer Percy Grainger at the time this suite came into being. The work was the result of a 1944 request to Darius Milhaud from Leeds Music Corporation for a school band composition. Milhaud related the story in his autobiography:

When a publisher asked me for an easy piece suitable for a school band, I composed my *Suite française*, utilizing folk tunes from Normandy, Brittany, Île-de-France, Alsace-Lorraine, and Provence in order to familiarize students with songs of the regions where the Allied armies were fighting for the liberation of my country.... After the first performance [June 13, 1945] of this suite by the famous Goldman band, [the publisher] Schirmer commissioned me to write the same type of piece for orchestra.

The suite is in five movements, each titled for the region from which the music came. Each region had significance to Milhaud, based on his memories of the struggles his country endured during the war. The first movement is titled Normandie and is a bright *loure* dance tune in 6/8 time, featuring two songs: “Germaine” and “The French Shepherdess and the King of England.” The second movement, Bretagne, is a sorrowful and reflective movement including “La chanson de métamorphoses” (“Song of Transformations”). Île-de-France is a rollicking dance movement featuring “With Care I Tend My Rosebush Gay” and “Lo, ‘tis Saint John’s Day.” The fourth movement is named after the territory of Alsace-Lorraine and reflects the misery of the last province to be liberated by the Allies during World War II. The music includes the begging song “Lo, ‘tis the Month of May.” The final movement, Provence, is named for Milhaud’s home province and celebrates the entire country. The music featured a sprightly dance called the *tambourin*, a traditional folk dance with a drum and pipe or fife.

Singing with the Stars: Academy Award–Winning Songs

arranged by SSgt Scott Ninmer*

Since the turn of the twentieth century and the advent of the motion picture, the film industry has been a cornerstone of American culture and society. First silent films, and later “talkies,” brought audiences from every social status together to experience a form of entertainment that both transported them away from their everyday lives and spoke to their shared human experiences. As the medium exploded in popularity it began to develop into a true art form, and in 1927, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences was founded, which led

to the creation of the Academy Awards. Also known as the “Oscars,” the annually presented awards were meant to celebrate and recognize the achievements being made in the cinematic industry, while galvanizing filmmakers, actors, and other industry professionals to continue raising the artistic standard of the field.

Slightly trailing the development of film technology was the evolving world of sound recording. Once the technology to record and synchronize audio with video had been developed, Hollywood moved seemingly overnight from being comprised of all silent films (though, they were hardly silent, as they were accompanied by live music) to putting out mostly talking pictures by the end of the 1920s. Accordingly, the award categories for Best Original Score and Best Original Song were added in the mid-1930s and, as the awards were intended to do, gave credibility to and spurred innovation in the area of soundtrack composition.

“When You Wish Upon a Star” was written by Leigh Harline and Ned Washington for the 1940 Walt Disney movie *Pinocchio*. The tune is sung by Jiminy Cricket and both opens and closes the film. It was the first Disney song to receive an Academy Award for Best Original Song, and its instantly recognizable strains have since come to represent the Disney Company. The 1936 musical comedy *Swing Time*, which starred the iconic duo Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, featured the classic song “The Way You Look Tonight,” written by songwriter Jerome Kern with lyrics by Dorothy Fields. Astaire’s character sings the ballad to Rogers’ character, as he finds himself falling in love with her. Astaire’s recording topped the charts and won the Academy Award for Best Original Song in the same year. “Chim Chim Cher-ee” was a memorable Sherman Brothers song from the 1964 musical motion picture *Mary Poppins*, in which an ever-upbeat young nanny played by Julie Andrews literally swoops down to fix the troubles of a London family. The song is a duet between Mary Poppins and the chimney sweep, played by Dick Van Dyke. Not only did the song win the Academy Award for Best Original Song and a Grammy that year, but the songwriters also received the Oscar for Best Original Music Score for the entire movie soundtrack.

“The Windmills of Your Mind” was a song written by the French composer Michael Legrand that was introduced to American audiences in the 1968 movie *The Thomas Crown Affair*. The song won the Best Original Song Academy Award in that year but has since been popularized among modern audiences by the Sting cover that was used in the 1999 remake of the film. “Days of Wine and Roses,” a popular song for the 1962 movie of the same name, was written by Henry Mancini with lyrics by Johnny Mercer. The film was nominated for five Oscars, but it only took home the award for Best Original Song for this tune, which went on to become a jazz standard. The final song in the medley, “Moon River,” was another hit by the Mancini-Mercer team and was sung by Audrey Hepburn in the 1961 iconic romantic comedy *Breakfast at Tiffany’s*. The song, which launched Mercer’s career, won both an Academy Award and a Grammy that year. It has since been recorded hundreds of times, by such luminaries as Barry Manilow, Judy Garland, Louis Armstrong, and Frank Sinatra.

Master Gunnery Sergeant Kevin Benneer, baritone

Baritone vocalist and concert moderator Master Gunnery Sergeant Kevin Benneer 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.

Finale from *Mazeppa*

Franz Liszt (1811–86)

transcribed by John B. Kindig

revised by Gus Guentzel

Franz Liszt is known today not only for his fame as a virtuoso pianist and for his progressive ideas about music, but also as the father of the symphonic poem. The symphonic poem is a musical genre that derives its material from outside inspiration, usually from literature, art, or some other nonmusical source. *Mazeppa* is one such example of a symphonic poem and is the sixth of twelve symphonic poems Liszt wrote during his tenure in Weimar, Germany. It was inspired by the legend of Ivan Mazeppa, a seventeenth-century Polish nobleman who became entangled in a love affair with the young wife of a count. When the count learned of the affair, he had Mazeppa tied to the back of a horse and chased the horse into the desert. Mazeppa survived, was rescued by the Cossacks, joined their ranks, and eventually became the leader of the Cossacks.

Liszt first wrote a piano piece based on Mazeppa, the fourth in his set of Transcendental Études. His orchestral version (and later, this transcription for band) brought to life the Romantic literary elements of human suffering, catastrophe, and triumph. The narrative of the story comes alive in the music; the beating of the horse's hooves, the horse's fall, Mazeppa's fear, and his rescue are all represented in the music. The Finale of the work portrays Mazeppa's rescue. It includes the famous *Mazeppa* theme and a heroic military march, which join together for a victorious and triumphant conclusion.