



Lieutenant Colonel Ryan Nowlin, Director

CHAMBER MUSIC SERIES
Saturday, October 25, 2025 at 2:00 P.M.
Ingleside at Rock Creek
Washington, DC
MGySgt Eric Sabo, coordinator

Music for the Soul

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958)

Piano Quintet in C minor

Allegro con fuoco

Andante

Fantasia (quasi variazioni)

MSgt Karen Johnson, violin

SSgt Rachel Halvorson, viola

SSgt Atticus Mellor-Goldman, cello

MGySgt Eric Sabo, double bass

SSgt Dominic Muzzi, piano

INTERMISSION

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George Gershwin (1898–1937)
lyrics by Ira Gershwin

“They Can’t Take That Away From Me”

SSgt Hannah Davis, vocals
SSgt Tyler Lindsay, trumpet
MSgt Russell Wilson, piano
MGySgt Alan Prather, guitar and vocals
MGySgt Eric Sabo, double bass
GySgt David Constantine, drum set

Oscar Peterson (1925–2007)

Hymn to Freedom

MSgt Russell Wilson, piano
MGySgt Eric Sabo, double bass
GySgt David Constantine, drum set/percussion

Olivier Bogé (b. 1981)

“Poem”

SSgt Tyler Lindsay, flugelhorn
MSgt Russell Wilson, piano
MGySgt Eric Sabo, double bass
GySgt David Constantine, drum set/percussion

Paul Simon (b. 1941)
arranged by MGySgt Eric Sabo*

“Bridge Over Troubled Water”

SSgt Tyler Lindsay, flugelhorn
MSgt Karen Johnson, violin
SSgt Rachel Halvorson, viola
SSgt Atticus Mellor-Goldman, violoncello
MGySgt Eric Sabo, double bass
SSgt Hannah Davis, vocals
MGySgt Alan Prather, guitar and vocals
MSgt Russell Wilson, piano
GySgt David Constantine, drum set/percussion

PROGRAM NOTES

Piano Quintet in C minor

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958)

Composed between 1903 and 1905, Ralph Vaughan Williams' Piano Quintet in C minor represents an important early work by a composer who would become a defining voice in English music. Scored for the same instrumentation as Franz Schubert's famous "Trout" Quintet, this piece provides a fascinating glimpse into Vaughan Williams' musical development, showcasing elements of both traditional Romanticism and emerging personal style. Though the work was performed many times following its première in 1905, the composer withdrew the work from publication in 1918, perhaps feeling it did not fully represent his mature compositional voice. It lay dormant for decades until Vaughan Williams' widow Ursula restored permission for its publication in the 1990s.

This three-movement quintet reflects a richly Romantic sensibility, with an expansive first movement, *Allegro con fuoco*. The lyrical second movement, *Andante*, contains a beautiful and expressive melody that has been noted for its resemblance to his contemporary song, "Silent Noon," hinting at the distinctive modal and folk-inspired themes that would become hallmarks of his later works. The finale, *Fantasia (quasi variazioni)*, unfolds as a set of five variations, culminating in a triumphant climax and slowly relaxing into an unassuming C major chord. Listeners might notice echoes of this finale theme in the variations of his Violin Sonata. The Quintet demonstrates Vaughan Williams' skillful writing for this unique instrumental combination.

"They Can't Take That Away From Me"

George Gershwin (1898–1937)

lyrics by Ira Gershwin

"They Can't Take That Away from Me" is an enduring American popular song from the Great American Songbook, composed by George Gershwin with lyrics by Ira Gershwin. It was introduced by Fred Astaire in the 1937 Hollywood musical film *Shall We Dance?*, where it was notably performed on a foggy ferry deck, conveying a poignant sense of love and longing without a dance sequence. This song became a classic almost immediately.

This performance pays homage to the iconic recording by Ella Fitzgerald and Louis Armstrong, renowned for their charismatic exchanges and their undeniable synergy. This song is a perfect example of Gershwin's magic recipe—combining simple melodies with lush harmonies. The lyrics capture the bittersweet sentiment of memories of a loved one that can never be lost, even in death. The charm and allure of the song are in its ability to express both the joy of shared experiences and the sadness of potential loss, a timeless theme that resonates deeply with audiences.

Hymn to Freedom

Oscar Peterson (1925–2007)

Oscar Peterson's Hymn to Freedom is perhaps his most recognizable and beloved composition, a powerful jazz piece deeply rooted in the spirit of the American Civil Rights Movement. Written spontaneously in 1962 during the recording of his album *Night Train*, a year before Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech, the piece served as Peterson's heartfelt tribute to the ongoing struggle for civil rights and racial equality.

The piece is a stark contrast to Peterson's typical bombastic approach. Its solemn opening transitions to a tumultuous middle section and peacefully back to the theme at the end. The theme sets a solemn tone, hinting at the difficulties faced in the pursuit of liberty. Hymn to Freedom became an unofficial anthem of the Civil Rights Movement, especially after Harriette Hamilton added lyrics to the tune a year later. It resonates as a timeless expression of hope, resilience, and perseverance of the human spirit.

"Poem"

Olivier Bogé (b. 1981)

French saxophonist and composer Olivier Bogé's "Poem" is a contemporary jazz composition that reflects the influence of innovative pianists like Tigran Hamasyan. Bogé, known for his unique musical voice and collaborations, navigates between modern jazz aesthetics and a deep appreciation for diverse musical traditions. "Poem" has a lyrical and evocative character, inviting listeners to engage with its musical narrative as one might with a piece of poetry.

Hamasyan, a celebrated Armenian jazz pianist and composer, is known for blending jazz with Armenian folk music and classical influences, creating complex rhythms, rich harmonies, and deeply expressive melodies. His impact on contemporary jazz is significant, and Bogé's admiration for his work seems to manifest in "Poem" through intricate rhythmic textures, poignant melodic lines, and a meditative, yet dynamic, approach to improvisation. Bogé and Hamasyan released this tune on the album *The World Begins Today* in 2013. Listen for the interplay between instruments and the creation of a contemplative atmosphere, led by the flugelhorn and supported by the trio.

"Bridge Over Troubled Water"

Paul Simon (b. 1941)

arranged by MGySgt Eric Sabo*

"Bridge Over Troubled Water," written by Paul Simon and famously performed by Simon & Garfunkel, stands as one of the most iconic and beloved songs in popular music history. Released in 1970, it quickly became an anthem of comfort and solidarity, particularly during times of hardship and uncertainty. The song's profound lyrics offer solace, promising support and companionship through life's difficulties, while its gospel-influenced arrangement contributes to its powerful emotional impact.

MGySgt Eric Sabo seeks to honor the beauty of the original recording while introducing fresh perspectives and musical liberties in his arrangement. The song has been interpreted by numerous artists across various genres, including a recent rendition by Jacob Collier, which utilizes his boundless understanding of composition, singing, and production. Listeners can anticipate a rendition that respects the song's heartfelt message and iconic melody, while showcasing the unique creative voice of the arranger and the performers.