



Lieutenant Colonel Ryan Nowlin, Director

CHAMBER MUSIC SERIES
Sunday, October 27, 2024 at 2:00 P.M.
Christ Church
Washington Parish
Washington, DC
MSgt Sheng-Tsung Wang, coordinator

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

Partita in D minor, BWV 1004

Allemanda
Corrente
Sarabanda
Giga
Ciaccona

MSgt Sheng-Tsung Wang, violin

INTERMISSION

David Maslanka (1943–2017)

Quintet for Winds No. 1 (1984)

I.
II.
III.

MGySgt Elisabeth Plunk, flute
GySgt Trevor Mowry, oboe
GySgt Lucia Disano, clarinet
SSgt Matthew Gregoire, bassoon
GySgt Rebecca Sieff, horn

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–91)

Quintet in E-flat, K. 407

Allegro
Andante
Rondo: Allegro

SSgt Shawn Zheng, horn
MSgt Sheng-Tsung Wang, violin
MGySgt Christopher Shieh and MSgt Tam Tran, viola
SSgt Clayton Vaughn, cello

www.marineband.marines.mil | (202) 433-5809 | www.facebook.com/marineband | www.twitter.com/marineband | www.instagram.com/usmarineband

PLEASE NOTE: The use of recording devices and flash photography is prohibited during the concert. In addition to works of the U.S. Government (as defined by 17 U.S.C. § 101 et seq.), this performance may also contain individuals' names and likenesses, trademarks, or other intellectual property, matter, or materials that are either covered by privacy, publicity, copyright, or other intellectual property rights licensed to the U.S. Government and owned by third parties, or are assigned to or otherwise owned by the U.S. Government. You should not assume that anything in this performance is necessarily in the Public Domain.

PROGRAM NOTES

Partita in D minor, BWV 1004

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

Johann Sebastian Bach composed his sonatas and partitas for unaccompanied violin while he was Kapellmeister at the court of Anhalt-Cöthen from 1717 to 1723. He conceived of these works as a connected set: each four-movement sonata is paired with a partita consisting of various dance-form movements. Bach was likely influenced by the earlier polyphonic solo violin works of German contemporaries such as Heinrich Biber and Johann Paul. Bach's sonatas and partitas are not only masterpieces on their own terms, but they carry much historical significance in the tradition of violin performance.

Partita in D minor opens with four dance-inspired movements: Allemanda, Corrente, Sarabanda, and Giga. The Allemanda, originating from Germany, maintains a moderate tempo in duple meter but features occasional triplets and offbeat slurred figures, softening the edges of this traditionally formal dance. The next movement, the Corrente, is lively and fast-paced. Its Italian name, meaning "running," is reflected in the music's flowing triplets, which are occasionally interrupted by dotted rhythms that create a skipping effect.

Following the Corrente is the dramatic Sarabanda, a dance form characterized by a slower tempo and triple meter. Originating from Spain and Latin America, the French and German versions of the sarabanda emphasize the second beat of the measure, as is the case here. The suite concludes with the English-inspired Giga (jig), which begins with a jaunty, rustic quality due to larger leaps but quickly evolves into a perpetual motion of sixteenth notes in compound quadruple meter.

While these movements follow the typical dance partita form, Bach adds a powerful Ciaccona, which is significantly longer than all the other movements combined. The Ciaccona, often performed as a stand-alone piece, is considered one of Bach's greatest works. Its form, similar to a passacaglia, consists of a theme and sixty-four variations based on a four-measure chord progression and repeated bass line. The Ciaccona traverses a wide range of musical moods, from tragedy, to joy, to resignation, and showcases the full range of violin techniques known in Bach's time.

Quintet for Winds No. 1 (1984)

David Maslanka (1943–2017)

American composer David Maslanka was a prolific contributor to the world of wind band music, creating over fifty works specifically for this medium, alongside a significant body of compositions for other ensembles. Some of his most celebrated works for band include *A Child's Garden of Dreams* as well as his second and fourth symphonies. Maslanka's work is deeply influenced by his interest in meditation, psychology, and the spiritual power of music. He believed that:

Music is one of the expressions of soul. A person does not have to be consciously aware of soul connection for soul force to be expressed through that person. The conscious mind and the deep unconscious are two different things, but everyone has both of them. The unconscious can push its way into consciousness unbidden.

Maslanka's Quintet for Winds No. 1, composed in 1984 for the Manhattan Wind Quintet, reflects his unique approach to composition. Although not explicitly programmatic, the quintet incorporates several musical elements inspired by Maslanka's experiences in New York City. The first movement opens with a whole-step motive in the French horn, inspired by the song of the Black-Capped Chickadee, which Maslanka describes as his "soul signature." The flute introduces a simple, contemplative melody, and after a brief lyrical opening section, the movement suddenly bursts into a vibrant and energetic display of virtuosity.

The second movement evokes a distinctive sound that Maslanka encountered daily while living in New York. The composer explains, "The A-train station at 200th Street is a holding area for subway cars not in use. Each morning as I stood on the platform I would listen to a symphony of air compressors with pitches and resultant chords going through a slow kaleidoscope of changes." To emulate this sound, the clarinetist performs this movement on just the mouthpiece and barrel of the instrument. The resulting music is both haunting and stunningly expressive, despite its mechanical inspiration.

In the third movement, Maslanka draws inspiration from the Brooklyn Bridge. He incorporates a musical cryptogram, deriving motives from the notes B, D, G, and E—letters corresponding to the musical notes found in the name "Brooklyn Bridge." This powerful and exciting finale concludes with a callback to the opening melody from the first movement.

Quintet in E-flat, K. 407 Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–91)

An examination of the relationship between Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and the musician for whom the Quintet in E-flat was composed offers greater insight into the work. Joseph Leutgeb (1732–1811) was an accomplished horn player who held positions as soloist in the court orchestras of Salzburg and Vienna. He was also a close, lifelong family friend to both Mozart and his father Leopold. Wolfgang's four horn concerti, two incomplete concerti, and other miscellaneous pieces, including the quintet, were written for Leutgeb. Their friendship was strong enough that Leutgeb was even mentioned in Wolfgang's final letter to his father.

The quintet was written for horn, a single violin, two violas, and cello instead of the two violins, viola, and cello typically favored by Franz Joseph Haydn and Mozart himself. This unique scoring accentuates the middle range of the horn and contributes to a presentation of all the instruments in particular acoustic balance. Notably, the horn at this time was a valveless "natural" instrument. It relied on the player to produce the notes of the natural overtone series (in this case, in E-flat). While a natural horn is quite at ease in its home key, chromaticism and modulation to a new key can add great difficulty. Interestingly, though Mozart used sonata forms in his quintet, he shortened the development sections to accommodate the harmonic sensibilities of the natural horn. His quintet is just as much of a challenge to today's performers as it was when it was first written. The difficulty of the horn part is a testament to Leutgeb's high caliber of performance.