



Lieutenant Colonel Jason K. Fettig, Director

MARINE BIG BAND
Sunday, December 14, 2014 at 2:00 P.M.
John Philip Sousa Band Hall
Marine Barracks Annex
Washington, DC

Irving Berlin (1888–1989)
arranged by Mike Crotty

“White Christmas”

Irving Berlin (1888–1989)

“Count Your Blessings” from *White Christmas*

Irving Berlin (1888–1989)
arranged by GySgt Alan Prather*

“Blue Skies” from *Betsy*

arranged by Gordon L. Goodwin

“Yo Tannenbaum”

Johnny Marks (1909–85)
arranged by Billy May

“Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer”

Duke Ellington (1899–1974)
arranged by Dave Berger and Alan Campbell

“Main Stem”

Frank Henry Loesser (1910–69)
arranged by Rhoades Whitehill

“What Are You Doing New Year’s Eve?”

GySgt Alan Prather, vocals

INTERMISSION

Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840–93)
arranged by Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn
edited by Jeff Lindberg

The Nutcracker Suite

Overture
Toot Toot Tootie Toot (Dance of the Reed-Pipes)
Peanut Brittle Brigade (March)
Sugar Rum Cherry (Dance of the Sugar-Plum Fairy)
Entr’acte
Volga Vouty (Russian Dance)
Chinoiserie (Chinese Dance)
Dance of the Floreadores (Waltz of the Flowers)
Arabesque Cookie (Arabian Dance)

*Member, U.S. Marine Band

The United States Marine Band will perform its annual Sousa Season Opener Sunday, January 11, 2015 at 2:00 P.M. in George Mason University’s Center for the Arts Concert Hall. The program is free and no tickets are required. The performance will also be streamed live on the U.S. Marine Band’s website.

www.marineband.marines.mil | (202) 433-4011 | www.facebook.com/marineband | www.twitter.com/marineband

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.

Notes on the Program

“White Christmas”

Irving Berlin (1888–1989)
arranged by Mike Crotty

American composer Irving Berlin has been widely considered one of the country’s best songwriters, and with more than 1,200 songs to his credit, also one of the most prolific. In addition, he composed nineteen musicals and eighteen film scores. The title song of the 1954 musical *White Christmas* was first publicly sung by Bing Crosby on Christmas Day in 1941. Crosby’s single has sold more than fifty million copies and is the most recorded Christmas song.

“Count Your Blessings” from *White Christmas*

Irving Berlin (1888–1989)

“Count Your Blessings” was written specifically for the movie *White Christmas* and nominated for an Academy award as “Best Song.” Listening to the clever lyrics in combination with the soothing melody could serve as a helpful reminder to be thankful any time of the year. The song begins:

When I’m worried and I can’t sleep
I count my blessings instead of sheep
And I fall asleep
Counting my blessings

“Blue Skies” from *Betsy*

Irving Berlin (1888–1989)
arranged by GySgt Alan Prather*

“Blue Skies” was written in 1926 and made its debut in the musical *Betsy* by Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart. The song reappeared just a year later in the 1927 film *The Jazz Singer*. “Blue Skies” has become a jazz standard and has been recorded in many different styles using various jazz arrangement techniques. MSgt Alan Prather’s arrangement features a hard bebop style with a special three-quarter time signature twist.

“Yo Tannenbaum”

arranged by Gordon L. Goodwin

The folk song “O Tannenbaum” or “O Christmas Tree” dates back to the Renaissance era and was written by the German composer Melchior Franck (1579–1639). Early lyrics for this song made reference to faithfulness and tragic love, and it wasn’t until 1824 that the lyrics began to be associated with Christmas. The arrangement being performed today is by pianist, saxophonist, and film scorer Gordon L. Goodwin, who also leads the virtuosic jazz ensemble The Big Phat Band. In this arrangement, Goodwin displays a diverse palate of styles including chorale, swing, and hard be-bop.

“Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer”

Johnny Marks (1909–85)
arranged by Billy May

Johnny Marks composed “Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer” in 1939. Later in 1964 it became the title song to the popular children’s stop-motion animation movie. Recorded by Gene Autry, this song hit No. 1 on the Billboard singles in 1949. It has since been recorded by hundreds of musical artists and in various musical styles. Some artists include the Temptations, Jackson 5, Ray Charles, Burl Ives, Dean Martin, and

Lynyrd Skynyrd, just to name a few. The arrangement performed today was crafted by American composer, arranger, and trumpet player William E “Billy” May.

“Main Stem”

Duke Ellington (1899–1974)

arranged by Dave Berger and Alan Campbell

Written in 1942 and released in 1944, Duke Ellington’s “Main Stem” hit No. 1 on Billboard’s Harlem Hit Parade in April of the release year. This “barn burning” tune was the prototypical dance or party song during the swing era. It was later re-recorded by groups and soloists such as the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra, Oliver Nelson, and Terry Gibbs.

“What Are You Doing New Year’s Eve?”

Frank Henry Loesser (1910–69)

arranged by Rhoades Whitehill

The romantic lyrics and music of Frank Loesser’s 1947 tune “What Are You Doing New Year’s Eve?” suggest the very question that the title implies. Not written for a specific musical or movie, the independent song topped out at No. 9 on Billboard’s Rhythm and Blues chart in December 1949. Today’s performance is sung by MSgt Alan Prather and was a specially arranged as a bossa nova by trombonist and arranger Rhoades Whitehill.

The Nutcracker Suite

Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840–93)

arranged by Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn

edited by Jeff Lindberg

William Thomas “Billy” Strayhorn joined the Duke Ellington Orchestra in 1939 and remained at Ellington’s side until Strayhorn’s death in 1967. The Ellington-Strayhorn collaboration was unique in the sense that their individual arranging styles complemented each other so well. It is often difficult for jazz scholars to differentiate where Ellington and Strayhorn’s stylings began or finished. This makes it difficult to know whose compositional techniques had the greater influence. It is safe to say that the power of their unique partnership heavily influenced jazz composition and orchestration, making them both pivotal icons in jazz history.

The mastery of Ellington and Strayhorn’s compositions was equally matched with the brilliant musicianship in all sections of the Ellington Orchestra. Throughout the history of Ellington’s Orchestra, arrangements were specifically tailored to the individual abilities of each member in the band. The horn sections were always filled with the highest caliber of jazz improvisation soloists. In addition, all of his musicians had their own unique individual sound and skill set. This dynamic level of musicianship gave Ellington and his talented arrangers a diverse palate of tonal colors and technical liberties from which to choose. The work, “El Gato,” titled after trumpeter “Cat” Anderson, is an excellent example of this arranger/instrumentalist unity. Here, the fabulous trumpet section received the spotlight, displaying Anderson’s unique upper register, Ray Nance’s brilliant tone, and Clarke Terry’s flamboyant bebop style.

In 1960, Ellington and Strayhorn arranged *The Nutcracker Suite*, seventy-eight years after Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky originally composed the ballet. Ellington recorded the nine movement suite in the same year for Columbia records. This edition of the Suite was assembled by Jeff Lindberg, artistic director of the Chicago Jazz Orchestra and professor of music at The College of Wooster in Ohio. He meticulously assembled the transcription from original manuscripts held in the Strayhorn Repository and the Ellington Collection of the Smithsonian Institution’s National Museum of American History. This edition features the entire big band and attempts to recreate the sounds of the masters who recorded the piece.