



UNITED STATES MARINE BAND
Sunday, January 31, 2016 at 2:00 P.M.
Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center
Northern Virginia Community College
Alexandria Campus
First Lieutenant Ryan J. Nowlin, conducting

Lieutenant Colonel Jason K. Fettig, Director

Childhood Dreams

John Williams (b. 1932)
transcribed by Paul Lavender

“The Flight to Neverland” from *Hook*
transcription world première

Percy Grainger (1882–1961)
edited by R. Mark Rogers

Children’s March, “Over the Hills and Far Away”

Tom Davoren (b. 1986)

Ascension (2013)
GySgt Amy McCabe, trumpet soloist
SSgt Hiram Diaz, euphonium soloist

George Gershwin (1898–1937)

Second Prelude
GySgt Russell Wilson, piano soloist

Donald Grantham (b. 1947)

Fantasy Variations on Gershwin’s Second Prelude

INTERMISSION

David Maslanka (b. 1943)

A Child’s Garden of Dreams

There is a desert on the moon where the dreamer sinks so deeply into the ground that she reaches hell.

A drunken woman falls into the water and comes out renewed and sober.

A horde of small animals frightens the dreamer. The animals increase to a tremendous size, and one of them devours the little girl.

A drop of water is seen as it appears when looked at through a microscope. The girl sees that the drop is full of tree branches. This portrays the origin of the world.

An ascent into heaven where pagan dances are being celebrated; and a descent into hell where angels are doing good deeds.

The Marine Chamber Orchestra will perform Sunday, February 7 at 2:00 P.M. in the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center at Northern Virginia Community College, Alexandria Campus. The program will feature works by Haydn, Nielsen, and Mozart.

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PROGRAM NOTES

“The Flight to Neverland” from *Hook*

John Williams (b. 1932)

transcribed by Paul Lavender

One of the most popular and successful American orchestral composers of the modern age, John Williams is the winner of five Academy Awards, twenty-two GRAMMYs, four Golden Globes, three Emmys, and seven BAFTA Awards from the British Academy of Film and Television Arts. Best known for his film scores and ceremonial music, he is also a noted composer of concert works and a renowned conductor. Williams recently received his fiftieth Oscar nomination with *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, making him the second-most nominated individual after Walt Disney.

The music from Steven Spielberg’s 1991 film *Hook* overflows with fairy tale magic, pirate adventures, an undeniable sense of freedom in flight, and childhood wonder. As Spielberg reunites us with the timeless characters of Peter Pan, Wendy, and Captain Hook, Williams captivates us with his expertly crafted and Oscar-nominated score. The composer cleverly crafts the entire main theme around the interval of a minor third, the first interval children are able to identify and sing. For film-goers, Williams uses these two notes like fairy dust from Tinkerbell herself, allowing us to join in the flight back to Neverland. He offers the following words on the piece:

For countless centuries mankind has dreamed of flying, which is why I think it could be argued that the greatest achievement of the twentieth century may have been the accomplishment of flight itself. Our fascination with flying and the freedom we associate with it may also be one of the principle reasons why the story of James Barrie’s play has been retold in every imaginable medium. My favorite moment has always been when Peter Pan and Tinkerbell rise above the rooftops of London and fly off to Neverland.

In writing the music for Steven Spielberg’s film version of the story, which he called *Hook*, I tried to create a clear singing melody that might combine some of the wonder of childhood with the energy and “lift” required for this famous flight.

Children’s March, “Over the Hills and Far Away”

Percy Grainger (1882–1961)

edited by R. Mark Rogers

Although Percy Grainger was born an Australian, he spent the majority of his professional life in England and America. He was an only child, and when his parents separated in 1890, he developed an inextricable bond with his mother that lasted until her death in 1922. She traveled and lived exclusively with Percy, acting as his caretaker, business manager, and closest confidant.

Rose Grainger was an accomplished pianist, and young Percy’s earliest musical studies were kept within the family. He showed tremendous promise at the keyboard, and by 1895, he had reached the requisite age of thirteen to enroll in a conservatory. Rose and Percy left Australia for Germany where he was admitted to the Hoch Conservatory in Frankfurt am Main. After his graduation, mother and son relocated to London in 1901 and Grainger began his career as a concert pianist in earnest. During this time he also composed feverishly and began to take particular interest in the native folk songs of his new home. In 1905, he set about in Brigg, Lincolnshire, on the first of what would become countless trips to the English countryside to collect and document the tunes often sung by the native residents. First on paper, and then with the newly developed wax cylinder, Grainger eventually documented more than 700 English and Danish folksongs. He delighted in the nuances and “imperfections” rendered by each singer and arranged dozens of these tunes for various ensembles. In what would become the defining feature of his work, he not only preserved the tunes, but also the irregular meters and unique interpretations of each singer who first shared the music with him.

After the outbreak of World War I, Grainger moved to New York in 1914 and called America his home for the remainder of his life. He made a triumphant American solo debut in 1915, playing a concert of his own works to a sold-out audience in Aeolian Hall. Celebrated tenor Enrico Caruso was in attendance along with several notable critics, and Grainger was hailed as a modern genius at the keyboard. The *Evening Post* reported that “...in less than half an hour he had convinced his critical audience that he belongs in the same rank as [Ignacy Jan] Paderewski and [Fritz] Kreisler, sharing their artistic abilities, and yet as unique as they are, something new and *sui generis*. The audience was stunned, bewildered, delighted.”

Despite his burgeoning success in America, in 1917 Grainger decided to join the U.S. Army in support of the war effort. He served with the Coast Artillery Band until 1919, playing both oboe and saxophone (which he had taught himself to play, among many other instruments). This was Grainger's first true experience with a concert band, and he was immediately taken with the unique sound of the ensemble. This encounter proved to be the beginning of his long and fruitful relationship with the wind band, resulting in dozens of works that have become the cornerstone of the ensemble's repertoire. In 1918, the same year he attained his U.S. citizenship, he composed his first original work for band, titled *Children's March*, "Over the Hills and Far Away."

Most of his works from this period were built upon the folk tunes Grainger had so diligently collected, and the melodies of *Children's March* seemingly spring from the same source. However, the work is built entirely upon original material and makes full use of the sonorous capabilities of the band, with special attention given to the double reeds, saxophones, and piano. In fact, *Children's March* is believed to be the first original work for concert band with an integrated piano part, complete with the unusual instruction at the very end of the piece that the player hit a string inside the instrument with a marimba mallet. The cheerful romp is dedicated to Grainger's "playmate beyond the hills" (whom the composer never identified by name) and was premièred on June 6, 1919, by the Goldman Band with the composer conducting.

***Ascension* (2013)** Tom Davoren (b. 1986)

On October 14, 2012, Felix Baumgartner ascended to 128,100 feet in a helium-filled balloon to reach the Earth's stratosphere. With outer space at his back, the bright blue hue of the spherical planet at his feet, and millions of people from around the world watching in real time—he jumped. Reaching an estimated speed of 833.9 mph, Baumgartner became the first person to break the speed of sound in a freefall. Welsh composer Tom Davoren drew upon this historic event, the "Red Bull Stratos Jump," as the inspiration for this original work featuring solo trumpet and euphonium. Of the piece, Davoren writes:

In an age where the stimulation of mass media is so prevalent, it is a rare thing for a single event to captivate the global consciousness. However, the sheer magnitude of human endeavor shown by the 'Stratos' project achieved just this.

The piece is structured in two continuous sections, representing both the ascending and descending stages of the jump by contrasting a gradually unfolding meditation against an adrenaline fueled scherzo. In line with this contrast, the progressive expansion of technical difficulty and intensity of solo instrumental writing tries to capture the physical experience of Baumgartner himself during the jump.

Originally from Wales' picturesque Gower peninsula, Davoren currently resides in the nation's capital, Cardiff. He studied tuba with Nigel Seaman at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama and holds bachelors and masters degrees in composition, having studied with Anthony Powers and Arlene Sierra at Cardiff University School of Music. In 2009–10 he was awarded a research scholarship from the Arts and Humanities Research Council and the Welsh Livery Guild Composition Award. He was also a BASCA British Composer Award nominee in 2011, a prizewinner at the EBBA European Composers Competition 2012 and the recipient of a Harvey Phillips Award for excellence in composition, presented by the International Tuba Euphonium Association, in 2014. *Ascension* was jointly commissioned by the Central Band of the Royal Air Force in Middlesex, England, and the Brass Band of Battle Creek in Michigan.

Staff Sergeant Hiram Diaz, euphonium soloist

Euphonium player Staff Sergeant Hiram Diaz joined "The President's Own" United States Marine Band in January 2012. He began his musical instruction at age twelve. He graduated in 2003 from the New World School of the Arts in Miami and continued his education at the University of Cincinnati-College Conservatory of Music (CCM) where he earned a bachelor's degree in music performance in 2007. He is currently pursuing his master's degree from the University of North Texas in Denton, where he studies with euphonium professor Brian Bowman. His instructors also included Timothy Northcut of CCM and Jay Bertolet, former principal tuba with the Florida Philharmonic Orchestra. Prior to joining "The President's Own," Staff Sgt. Diaz was a member of the U.S. Army Maneuver Center of Excellence Band (283d Army Band) in Ft. Benning, Georgia.

Gunnery Sergeant Amy McCabe, trumpet soloist

Trumpeter/cornetist Gunnery Sergeant Amy McCabe joined “The President’s Own” United States Marine Band in July 2006. She began her musical instruction on piano at age six and trumpet at age ten. After graduating in 1997 from Herscher High School in Illinois, she earned her bachelor’s degree in music and elementary education from Illinois Wesleyan University in Bloomington in 2001. She earned her master’s degree in trumpet performance in 2006 from Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. Her instructors included Charles Geyer and Barbara Butler of Northwestern University, and Steve Eggleston and Judith Saxon of Illinois Wesleyan University.

Prior to joining “The President’s Own,” Gunnery Sgt. McCabe was a featured soloist in the Tony/ Emmy award winning show *Blast!*, and a member of MusiCorps, a music education and advocacy program designed to promote music awareness, appreciation, and training in the Chicago Public Schools. She performed with the Chicago Civic Orchestra, the Spoleto Festival USA Orchestra in Charleston, South Carolina, and the Walt Disney World All-Star Collegiate Jazz Band and Christmas Brass in Orlando, Fla. She also received the Roger Voisin Trumpet Award while a fellow at the Tanglewood Music Center in Lenox, Massachusetts. She was featured as cornet soloist in William Bolcom’s First Symphony for Band on the Marine Band’s 2011 educational recording *Flourishes and Meditations on a Renaissance Theme*.

Second Prelude

George Gershwin (1898–1937)

Fantasy Variations on Gershwin’s Second Prelude

Donald Grantham (b. 1947)

Each of George Gershwin’s *Three Preludes*, his only work for solo piano, are well-known examples of early twentieth-century American classical music clearly influenced by jazz and blues. These short works were first performed by the composer in 1926 at the Roosevelt Hotel in New York City, just two years after the unprecedented success of his *Rhapsody in Blue*. The second prelude, marked *Andante con moto*, begins with a steady, almost sultry bass line in C-sharp minor that introduces a lyrical melody based on the interval of a minor third. The piece gradually works its way to an almost unexpected cake-walk in F-sharp that contrasts the opening material in every way except, of course, the jazz influence. The smooth bass line returns along with the initial melody to complete what Gershwin himself refers to as a “blues lullaby.” American composer Donald Grantham acknowledges:

The set has been popular with performers and audiences since its first appearance, and even as severe a composer as Arnold Schoenberg found it intriguing enough to orchestrate.

My attraction to the work is personal because it was the first piece by an American composer I learned as a piano student. In *Fantasy Variations*, both “big tunes” in the piece are fully exploited, but they do not appear in recognizable form until near the end. The work begins with much more obscure fragments drawn from the introduction, accompanimental figures, transitions, cadences, and so forth. These eventually give way to more familiar motives derived from the themes themselves. All of these elements are gradually assembled over the last half of the piece until the themes finally appear in more or less their original form.

In *Fantasy Variations*, Grantham very cleverly crafts twenty variations under the umbrella of three large sections. These sections mimic the overall ternary form of the original piano prelude. After decades of internalization and countless studies in composition, it is fascinating to hear how the veteran composer exposes and transforms every nook and cranny of the music that left such an imprint on him as a child.

Grantham’s composition teachers have included Halsey Stevens, Robert Linn, and he spent two summers with famed composer and pedagogue, Nadia Boulanger. He is the recipient of many prestigious awards including the Prix Lili Boulanger, the ASCAP Rudolf Nissim Prize, and First Prize in the National Opera Association’s Biennial Composition Competition. He has also received three separate grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and a Guggenheim fellowship. His works have been performed by the orchestras of Cleveland, Dallas, Atlanta, and the American Composers Orchestra, among many others. Grantham is currently professor of composition at the University of Texas at Austin.

Gunnery Sergeant Russell Wilson, piano soloist (Gershwin)

Pianist Gunnery Sergeant Russell Wilson joined “The President’s Own” United States Marine Band in September 2002. He began his musical instruction on piano at age seven with Gail McDonald. After graduating in 1999 from Surrattsville High School in Clinton, Maryland, he earned his bachelor’s degree in classical piano in 2004 and a master’s degree in jazz in 2007, both from the University of Maryland-College Park studying with Cleveland Page (piano) and Ron Elliston (jazz). Prior to joining “The President’s Own,” Gunnery Sgt. Wilson worked aboard Norwegian Cruise Lines, performing solo classical recitals and as a member of a show band.

A Child’s Garden of Dreams

David Maslanka (b. 1943)

A native of New Bedford, Massachusetts, and now residing in Missoula, Montana, David Maslanka has been a freelance composer since 1990. His music for winds has become especially well known. Among his more than 130 works are forty pieces for wind ensemble, including seven symphonies, fifteen concertos, a Mass, and many concert pieces. While maintaining a prolific compositional career, Maslanka also balances a significant educational agenda. He has served on the faculties of the State University of New York at Geneseo, Sarah Lawrence College, New York University, and Kingsborough Community College of the City University of New York.

When Northwestern University Symphonic Wind Ensemble director John Paynter and his wife Marietta approached Maslanka in 1981 to commission a large scale work for winds, they made only one request: they wanted the wind equivalent of Béla Bartók’s Concerto for Orchestra. The composer, sharing the appreciation and awe for the same work, saw this as a high challenge. Around this time, Maslanka had begun reading *Man and His Symbols* by Carl Jung. In the book, he came across the discussion of a collection of twelve extraordinary dreams of an eight-year-old girl. The composer was instantly struck by the possibility of using them musically.

This series of twelve incomprehensible dreams was handwritten by the young girl and given to her father as a Christmas gift when she was ten. The short stories were child-like, each beginning with “Once upon a time,” but each contained vivid images with tones of imminent tragedy. Reflecting on the dreams, Jung remarks that they “open up a new and rather terrifying aspect of life and death. One would expect to find such images in an aging person who looks back upon life, rather than to be given them by a child. Their atmosphere recalls the old Roman saying, ‘Life is a short dream,’ rather than the joy and exuberance of its springtime. Experience shows that the unknown approach of death casts an ‘adumbratio’ (anticipatory shadow) over the life and dreams of the victim.” The young girl died of an infectious disease a year later.

When asked how he had finally chosen which of the five dreams from the original twelve to capture in sound, Maslanka responded:

I typed all twelve dreams on a single sheet of paper, put the paper on the piano in front of me, and started finding musical ideas in bits and pieces as I read each dream. It was a process of letting them “light up” one at a time. The ones that came forward the strongest got used in the piece... This process involved meditation. With each dream, I tried to imagine a real picture, to put myself in that picture and to allow the emotions and insights of that experience to come through my own system... The music is representative of the dream, though it does not describe it in a literal sense. I tried to create a parallel musical universe by sinking as deeply as possible into my unconscious to unite the dream and the musical imagery. I believe that there is a connection in one’s unconscious where the music and the dream become one.

The resulting work’s title, *A Child’s Garden of Dreams*, is a variation on the title of a collection of poetry by Robert Louis Stevenson, “A Child’s Garden of Verses.” The titles of the five movements come directly from the dreamer.