



UNITED STATES MARINE BAND
Wednesday, August 24, 2016 at 8:00 P.M.
U.S. Capitol, West Terrace
Thursday, August 25, 2016 at 8:00 P.M.
U.S. Capitol, West Terrace
Captain Ryan J. Nowlin, conducting

Lieutenant Colonel Jason K. Fettig, Director

John Philip Sousa* (1854–1932)

March, “Semper Fidelis”

George Gershwin (1898–1937)
transcribed by R. Mark Rogers

Cuban Overture

Morton Gould (1913–96)
transcribed by Philip Lang

“American Salute”

Ronald Lo Presti (1933–85)

Elegy for a Young American

Edwin Franko Goldman (1878–1956)
arranged by Mayhew L. Lake

March, “On the Mall”

Sleep Cycle

Clarence Muse (1889–1979),
Leon René (1902–82), and Otis René (1898–1970)
arranged by SSgt Scott Nimmer*

“When It’s Sleepy Time Down South”

Irving Berlin (1888–1989)
arranged by Capt Ryan J. Nowlin*

“Count Your Blessings”

Sammy Cahn (1913–93)
and Jule Styne (1905–94)
arranged by SSgt Scott Nimmer*

“10,432 Sheep” from *The West Point Story*

GySgt Sara Sheffield, mezzo-soprano

Thomas Knox* (1937–2004)

“American Pageant”

GySgt Sara Sheffield, concert moderator

PROGRAM NOTES

March, “Semper Fidelis”

John Philip Sousa* (1854–1932)

It is unfortunate that President Chester A. Arthur, the man responsible for this march, did not live to hear it. In a conversation with Sousa, then leader of the U.S. Marine Band, he expressed his displeasure at the official use of the song “Hail to the Chief.” When Sousa stated that it was actually an old Scottish boating song, the President suggested that he compose more appropriate music. Sousa responded with two pieces, not just one. First he composed “Presidential Polonaise” (1886). Then, two years after Arthur’s death, he wrote “Semper Fidelis.”

The march takes its title from the motto of the U.S. Marine Corps: Semper Fidelis is Latin for “always faithful.” The march’s trio is an extension of an earlier Sousa composition, “With Steady Step,” one of eight brief trumpet and drum pieces he wrote for *The Trumpet and Drum* (1886). It was dedicated to those who inspired it – the officers and men of the U.S. Marine Corps. In Sousa’s own words: “I wrote ‘Semper Fidelis’ one night while in tears, after my comrades of the Marine Corps had sung their famous hymn at Quantico.” For the first performance, Sousa demonstrated his flair for theatrics:

We were marching down Pennsylvania Avenue, and had turned the corner at the Treasury Building. On the reviewing stand were President Harrison, many members of the diplomatic corps, a large part of the House and Senate, and an immense number of invited guests besides. I had so timed our playing of the march that the ‘trumpet’ theme would be heard for the first time, just as we got to the front of the reviewing stand. Suddenly, ten extra trumpets were shot in the air, and the ‘theme’ was pealed out in unison. Nothing like it had ever been heard there before – when the great throng on the stand had recovered its surprise, it rose in a body, and led by the President himself, showed its pleasure in a mighty swell of applause. It was a proud moment for us all.

“Semper Fidelis” subsequently gained recognition as the official march of the U.S. Marine Corps. Sousa regarded it as his best march, musically speaking. It became one of his most popular marches, and he once stated that it was the favorite march of Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany – before World War I, of course. It was played by the Sousa Band in many foreign countries and always received acclaim as a well-known composition. Few knew that it had been sold outright to the publisher for the unbelievably low sum of \$35.

A recording of this march, the full score and parts, and a video of the score synchronized with the audio are available in Volume 2 of “The Complete Marches of John Philip Sousa.”

<http://www.marineband.marines.mil/AudioResources/TheCompleteMarchesofJohnPhilipSousa/SemperFidelisMarch.aspx>

Cuban Overture

George Gershwin (1898–1937)

transcribed by R. Mark Rogers

By the mid-1920s George Gershwin had firmly established his place as one of the most popular composers in the United States. Yet after the wild success of his *Rhapsody in Blue*, Gershwin felt compelled to further refine his abilities. Having never formally studied composition, he embarked on a trip to Europe to seek instruction from some of the most prominent composers of the day. Settling in Paris, he called upon both Maurice Ravel and Nadia Boulanger for lessons, both of whom politely refused. Ravel is famously said to have told the young composer, “Why would you want to risk being a second-rate Ravel when you are already a first-rate Gershwin?” Disappointed but undeterred, Gershwin stayed in France for several years and it was there that he composed his appropriately named tone poem *An American in Paris*. By 1930, however, he was back in the United States.

Early in 1932, Gershwin's latest musical *Of Thee I Sing* was awarded a Pulitzer Prize. Even though the award was technically for the lyrics—written by George S. Kaufman, Morrie Ryskind, and Ira Gershwin—and not his music, George was pleased with the recognition. Shortly thereafter, in February, he took a two-week holiday to Havana, Cuba, and was captivated by the native music he heard everywhere. A few months after returning home, Gershwin set to work on another tone poem. Originally titled *Rumba*, the piece is saturated with Caribbean rhythms and the use of native Cuban percussion instruments. In fact, in the original manuscript Gershwin goes so far to call for the Latin American percussion instruments, including bongos, claves, gourd, and maracas, to be placed in front of the conductor's stand.

Rumba was premièred by the New York Philharmonic in the now-demolished Lewisohn Stadium on August 16, 1932, during an all-Gershwin concert of epic proportions. After the performance, an elated composer wrote: "It was, I really believe, the most exciting night I have ever had . . . 17,845 people paid to get in and just about 5,000 were at the closed gates trying to fight their way in unsuccessfully."

Shortly after the première, Gershwin renamed the work *Cuban Overture*. The new title provided, as the composer stated, "a more just idea of the character and intent of the music." *Cuban Overture* was Gershwin's last effort at composing a significant concert work before his untimely death in 1937 at age thirty-eight.

"American Salute"

Morton Gould (1913–96)

transcribed by Philip Lang

"Composing is my life blood. . . . That is basically me, and although I have done many things in my life—conducting, playing piano, and so on—what is fundamental is my being a composer."

—Morton Gould

Originally written for orchestra, "American Salute" has become a favorite of the concert band repertoire. Using the familiar tune "When Johnny Comes Marching Home" as the sole melodic resource, Morton Gould demonstrates his skill in thematic development, creating a brilliant fantasy on a single tune. Written in 1942 in the early days of World War II, it was composed at the request of a government radio program producer who wanted a "salute to America." The composer insisted that he had no idea that the work was destined to become a classic: "It was years before I knew it was a classic setting. What amazes me is that critics say it is a minor masterpiece, a gem. To me, it was just a setting. I was doing a million of those things." A million may be an exaggeration, but not by much. The pace of Gould's schedule in those days was astounding. By his own account he composed and scored "American Salute" in less than eight hours, starting at 6 p.m. the evening before it was due (with copyists standing by), and finishing at 2 a.m. Although the ink couldn't have been dry, the score and parts were on the stand in time for rehearsal the next morning and ready for broadcast that evening.

Elegy for a Young American

Ronald Lo Presti (1933–85)

Ronald Lo Presti, clarinetist and composer, was born in Williamstown, Massachusetts. He graduated from the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, and had a long career in music education, teaching at Texas Tech University in Lubbock, Texas, Indiana State College (now University) in Terre Haute, Indiana, and Arizona State University in Tempe, Arizona.

The 1963 assassination of President John F. Kennedy affected Lo Presti deeply, as it did the nation as a whole, and in 1964, he composed his best-known work, *Elegy for a Young American*. Starting quietly in the high winds, the piece grows in intensity, adding brass and percussion through a cathartic expression of mourning and collective grief. Large minor and diminished intervals lend an especially poignant quality to the theme as it moves through the ensemble. Following a climax in the brass and percussion, the mood softens to one of noble remembrance as high winds and low brass come to a final harmonic rest.

March, “On the Mall”
Edwin Franko Goldman (1878–1956)
arranged by Mayhew L. Lake

An American bandmaster and composer, Edwin Franko Goldman was a true pioneer in the band world. He was a co-founder of the American Bandmasters Association and in 1911 formed his own band which continued to perform under his name until 1979. He also was a renowned conductor and staunch supporter of new band music and conducted the 1947 American première of Hector Berlioz’s *Symphonie funèbre et triomphale*. Goldman also was an accomplished cornetist, serving as solo cornet in the Metropolitan Opera orchestra in New York from 1899 to 1909.

The Goldman Band enjoyed tremendous popularity in New York City and beyond. Goldman composed for the band, writing more than one-hundred original marches, solos, and concert works. Among the most popular was his march “On the Mall.” Written in 1923 for the dedication of the Naumburg Band Shell in New York City’s Central Park, it featured a special melody in the trio which required the band to sing and whistle. The audience was encouraged to sing and whistle along as well, filling the spacious mall spreading out from the band shell with thousands of enthusiastic “soloists.” It proved to be great fun for all and it remains a popular march in band repertoire.

Sleep Cycle
GySgt Sara Sheffield, mezzo-soprano

“When It’s Sleepy Time Down South”
Clarence Muse (1889–1979), Leon René (1902–82), and Otis René (1898–1970)
arranged by SSgt Scott Nimmer*

The first song in this cycle is also known as “Sleepy Time Down South” and is a 1931 jazz tune written by Clarence Muse, Leon René, and Otis René. It became the signature song of Louis Armstrong. After playing a gig at the Cotton Club in Culver City, California, Armstrong was invited to the René house for dinner. Leon and Otis played him the song and Armstrong loved it so much that he made it his opening number. It was soon widely recorded and has since become a jazz standard.

“Count Your Blessings”
Irving Berlin (1888–1989)
arranged by Capt Ryan J. Nowlin*

“Count Your Blessings (Instead of Sheep)” is a popular song written by Irving Berlin, an American composer and lyricist, widely considered one of the greatest songwriters in American history. His music forms a large part of the Great American Songbook. “Count Your Blessings” was written for the 1954 movie *White Christmas* and relates counting your blessings with falling asleep. In the book *The Irving Berlin Reader*, a letter from Berlin to a film executive exposes the meaning behind the song:

I’m enclosing a lyric of a song I finished here and which I am going to publish immediately... You have always said that I commercial my emotions and many times you were wrong, but this particular song is based on what really happened.

The story is in its verse, which I don’t think I’ll publish. As I say in the lyrics, sometime ago, after the worst kind of a sleepless night, my doctor came to see me and after a lot of self-pity, belly-aching and complaining about my insomnia, he looked at me and said “speaking of doing something about insomnia, did you ever try counting your blessings?”

“10,432 Sheep” from *The West Point Story*

Sammy Cahn (1913–93) and Jule Styne (1905–94)

arranged by SSgt Scott Nimmer*

“10,432 Sheep” is a fun, quirky little song from the 1950 movie *The West Point Story*. The song was written by Jule Styne who, with lyricist Sammy Cahn, wrote many hits during the 1940s to include “I’ve Heard That Song Before,” “I’ll Walk Alone,” and “Let It Snow! Let It Snow! Let It Snow!” On Broadway he was credited with *Gypsy*, *Funny Girl*, *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, and *Bells Are Ringing*. The sharply funny “10,432 Sheep” from *The West Point Story* tells of the saga of a young lady and her boyfriend whose kiss packs enough punch to give her insomnia.

“American Pageant”

Thomas Knox* (1937–2004)

Thomas Knox served as chief arranger of “The President’s Own” United States Marine Band for sixteen years until his retirement in 1985. Prior to his appointment to chief arranger, Knox served as a member of the band’s cornet/trumpet section beginning in 1961. Of Knox’s importance to both the Marine Band and twentieth century band music in general, Colonel Timothy Foley, former director of the Marine Band, wrote:

He was really responsible—both through his original compositions and through his arranging—for creating a lot of the sound of the Marine Band. Other people heard that and wanted to emulate it. One of the ways to do that was by going to Tom’s music and playing it as well. He had a very profound influence on band music in the latter part of the twentieth century.

“American Pageant” was composed for the first inauguration of President Richard Nixon and has been performed at every inauguration since. As the title suggests, “American Pageant” is a patriotic work and it includes the melodies of traditional American songs such as “Yankee Doodle,” “America,” “Battle Hymn of the Republic,” “America, the Beautiful,” and “Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean.”