



MARINE CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Sunday, March 5, 2017 at 2:00 P.M.

Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center

Northern Virginia Community College

Alexandria Campus

Captain Ryan J. Nowlin, conducting

Lieutenant Colonel Jason K. Fettig, Director

Jazz Orchestra

Leonard Bernstein (1918–90)

Three Dance Variations from *Fancy Free* (1944)

Galop

Waltz

Danzon

Chick Corea (b. 1941)

arranged by Mike Crotty

Spain (Re-visited) (2017)

GySgt AnnaMaria Mottola, piano soloist

GySgt Gregory Ridlington, saxophone

GySgt Brian Turnmire, trumpet

MSgt Glenn Dewey, double bass

MGySgt Christopher Rose, vibraphone

SSgt David Constantine, drum set

INTERMISSION

Duke Ellington (1899–1974)

orchestrated by Maurice Peress

Black, Brown, and Beige (1943)

Black

Brown

Beige

arranged by Sammy Nestico* (b.1924)

A Swingphonic Collection (2015)

*Member, U.S. Marine Band

The 2017 Chamber Music Series continues Sunday, March 12 at 2:00 P.M. in John Philip Sousa Band Hall at the Marine Barracks Annex in Washington, DC. The concert will include works by Saint-Saëns, Ewazen, and Corea.

The performance will also be streamed live on the Marine Band's website.

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PROGRAM NOTES

Trumpeter Clark Terry said of his longtime bandmaster Duke Ellington, “He wants life and music to be in a state of becoming...he doesn’t even like to write definitive endings to a piece.” Today’s program features the Marine Jazz Orchestra’s take on four works which have long been in a “state of becoming.” The composers listed on the program represent only part of the story for these pieces which have been shaped by arrangers, choreographers, conductors, commissioners, and even painters.

Three Dance Variations from *Fancy Free* (1944)

Leonard Bernstein (1918–90)

New York City. Wartime. Three sailors enter a bar, seeking female companionship. They meet two women, but who will pair off and who will be left alone? Each sailor dances a solo to prove himself: first a rowdy Galop, then a sinuous Waltz, and finally a Latin-flavored Danzon.

The inspiration for the ballet *Fancy Free* can be traced back to a controversial 1934 painting by Paul Cadmus called *The Fleet’s In* that depicts carousing sailors in a rather unflattering light. Public outcry caused the Assistant Secretary of the Navy to remove the work from the Corcoran Gallery, after which it was kept from public view until 1981. The painting is now on display at the Naval Historical Center in Washington, D.C., when it is not out on loan.

Dancer and choreographer Jerome Robbins got the idea to do a ballet about sailors and women after seeing Cadmus’ painting. He commissioned an up-and-coming young composer named Leonard Bernstein to write the score. Bernstein, an assistant conductor for the New York Philharmonic at the time, happened to make his major conducting debut a few months before the première of *Fancy Free*, when guest conductor Bruno Walter fell ill and he filled in with the Philharmonic without rehearsal for a CBS radio broadcast. In addition to this surprise conducting debut in November 1943 and the première of *Fancy Free* in April 1944, Bernstein conducted the première of his *Jeremiah Symphony* in January 1944 to great critical acclaim. Bernstein’s fame was established; he would go on to become music director of the New York Philharmonic and compose some of America’s most beloved music, including another collaboration with Jerome Robbins: *West Side Story*.

The plot of *Fancy Free* was expanded into the 1944 musical *On the Town* and the 1949 film of the same name, though neither used Bernstein’s music from the ballet. In 1945, Bernstein converted the ballet score into a concert suite for orchestra which includes today’s Galop, Waltz, and Danzon.

Spain (Re-visited) (2017)

Chick Corea (b. 1941)

arranged by Mike Crotty

Now considered by many to be a jazz standard, Chick Corea’s *Spain* first gained popularity on the 1973 album *Light as a Feather* with an instrumentation featuring electric piano, drums, vocals, bass, and flute. The original version of the tune begins with a quote from the slow movement of Joaquín Rodrigo’s 1939 *Concierto de Aranjuez* for guitar soloist with orchestra. Since then, *Spain* has been re-imagined in a flamenco version, in a bluegrass style, and as a piano duo. In 2001 Corea won the Grammy Award for “Best Arrangement, Instrumental or A Capella” for his *Spain for Sextet and Orchestra* which juxtaposes the symphonic sound of the London Philharmonic Orchestra with a jazz combo of flute/tenor sax, soprano sax, bass, drums, trombone, and Corea himself on piano.

Today’s presentation is the première of a new arrangement written by Mike Crotty especially for the Marine Band’s own Gunnery Sergeant AnnaMaria Mottola. Crotty served as composer and arranger for the Airmen of Note, the premier jazz ensemble of the U.S. Air Force, from 1972 to 1998. Later, while on the jazz faculty at Arizona State University from 2001 to 2008, he met Mottola, then a young jazz student.

Gunnery Sergeant AnnaMaria Mottola, piano soloist

Pianist Gunnery Sergeant AnnaMaria Mottola of Anchorage, Alaska, joined “The President’s Own” United States Marine Band in June 2003. She was appointed principal and section leader in September 2013. Mottola began her musical instruction at age four. After graduating in 2000 from Robert Service High School in Anchorage, she attended Arizona State University in Tempe where she studied jazz and classical piano with Chuck Marohnic, Mike Crotty, and Robert Hamilton. Prior to joining “The President’s Own,” she participated in several competitions, winning the Arizona State University Concerto Competition in 2000 and Alaska Music Teacher Association piano competition from 1996-1998.

She has been featured as a soloist under guest conductor Leonard Slatkin in Sergei Prokofiev’s Piano Concerto No. 3 in C, Opus 26, and was featured as a Marine Band tour soloist in 2006 performing George Gershwin’s Rhapsody in Blue and in 2009 performing George Gershwin’s Allegro from Concerto in F. In 2014 she was a featured soloist at Wolf Trap in Vienna, Virginia, performing then-Marine Band staff arranger Staff Sgt. Ryan Nowlin’s Variations on “I Got Rhythm” by George Gershwin.

Black, Brown, and Beige (1943)

Duke Ellington (1899–1974)

orchestrated by Maurice Peress

As early as 1930, Duke Ellington spoke eloquently to reporters of his plans to write a multi-movement work of program music about the black experience, starting from Africa, chronicling the cruel journey across the sea and the days of slavery, into the creativity of Harlem and the hope for a truly free future. Such a piece finally came into being during a six-week period beginning in December 1942 when Ellington wrote the 45-minute *Black, Brown, and Beige: A Tone Parallel to the History of the American Negro* to present at his Carnegie Hall debut in January 1943. He was already renowned as a jazz composer and bandleader, though his hits were all compact records, mostly around three and a half minutes in length. To write such a long, complex work in a mere six weeks was a feat, especially given Ellington’s nightly performances with his band. He was still applying the final touches to the score on the day of the première. Carnegie Hall was sold out for Ellington, with the audience including such notables as Leopold Stokowski, Benny Goodman, and Paul Whiteman.

Response to Ellington’s first large-scale work was mixed, with many reviewers criticizing its structure as “formless;” Ellington admitted nonchalantly, “Well, I guess they didn’t dig it.” He never performed *Black, Brown, and Beige* in its original state after 1943. On June 14, 1965, President and Mrs. Lyndon Johnson hosted a Festival of the Arts at the White House that featured paintings, sculptures, theater productions, and musical concerts by prominent American artists. Conductor Maurice Peress remembers directing an orchestra of “members of the United States Marine Band” for a performance with dancers from the Joffrey Ballet. Directly following their act, Ellington took the stage for the concert’s finale, performing “Take the A Train,” selections from the *Far East Suite*, and what he referred to as “our tone parallel to the history of the Negro in America, *Black, Brown, and Beige*.” Peress was especially moved by the final piece and struck up a relationship that evening with Ellington that would lead to fruitful collaboration.

The performance Peress heard at the White House in 1965 included the same excerpted sections on today’s program, all from the original *Black* movement. After that summer evening on the White House Lawn, Peress convinced Ellington to allow him to orchestrate a symphonic version of *Black, Brown, and Beige*. During the collaboration, Ellington encouraged Peress to restructure the ending of “Light” by composing new material for a bigger finish, incorporating the tune from the middle movement “Come Sunday.”

Included here are portions from a thirty-three-page narrative poem Duke Ellington wrote between the mid-1930s and the early 1940s, the narrative inspiration for his music.

“Work Song”

Out of this deep dream of freedom
Evolved the only possible escape
Freedom of expression in song.
Out of this great need for freedom
The work song was born.
Not a song of triumph. Not a song
Of burden. A song punctuated
By the grunt of a heaving pick

Or axe. A song punctuated by the swish
And thud of a sledgehammer.

“Come Sunday”

(about a small white church during the days of slavery)
When the white voices inside rang out
In triumph... the blacks outside would grunt
Subdued approval. When the white voices inside
Were raised in joyous song, the blacks outside
Hummed along, adding their own touches.
Weaving Gorgeous melodic, harmonic, rhythmic patterns.
Thus the spiritual was born.
Highly emotional Worshipping of God in song.

“Light”

Oh, well, here’s something new... Let’s sing About this. Our work lightens... our song lifts...
A rainbow Of color, complete with pot of gold. Paradise to come. On their way to heaven in tempo.
The pulse, the beat was ever present.
Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom!

A Swingphonic Collection (2015)

arranged by Sammy Nestico* (b.1924)

Sammy Nestico is a man brimming with joy for life and for music. Largely self-taught, Nestico saved the dime his mother gave him for food money each day to buy used jukebox records to play on his secondhand record player. He listened and learned by experience, working as a staff arranger with a radio orchestra in Pittsburgh from age seventeen. He served in the Air Force with the Airmen of Note for twelve years and then served five years as chief arranger in “The President’s Own.” When he returned to Washington, D.C., for an anniversary concert in 2013 he spoke of the importance of integrating individuality with the legacy of the Marine Band: “I didn’t want to be John Philip Sousa, I want to be Sammy. So always in my music I want to make it sound like the Marine Band, but there’s always a little bit of Sammy in there too. You put your own personality, your heart, in there.”

Keeping the “Sammy” in his music proved successful for Nestico in his post-Marine Band career. He has published nearly 600 works for school groups and big bands, worked on seventy television shows, been nominated for eight Grammys, and is perhaps most famous for his work with the Count Basie Orchestra. It was these Count Basie arrangements that Wayne Marshall of the Dresden Philharmonic originally requested when he asked Nestico to collaborate for a joint project with the Dresden Philharmonic and the SWR Swing Band in 2012. Nestico turned down this offer, countering with an alternate subject matter that he thought would have more variety, a collection of the great jazz standards of American history. He selected the tunes before writing a single note: “April in Paris” (Duke), “Take the ‘A’ Train” and “Chelsea Bridge” (Strayhorn), “Cherokee” (Noble), “Stardust” (Carmichael), “A Night in Tunisia” (Gillespie), and “How High the Moon” (Lewis).

Today at age 93, Nestico is retired and enjoying a new hobby of oil painting, saying, “I think painting and music are joined at the heart.” This year he received his eighth Grammy nomination, for “Good ‘Swing’ Wenceslas” with the Count Basie Orchestra in the same category Corea won for *Spain for Sextet and Orchestra*, “Best Arrangement, Instrumental or A Capella.”