



Colonel Jason K. Fettig, Director

UNITED STATES MARINE BAND  
Sunday, February 10, 2019 at 2:00 P.M.  
Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center  
Northern Virginia Community College  
Alexandria Campus  
Captain Ryan J. Nowlin, conducting

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### Portraits

John Philip Sousa\* (1854–1932)

March, “The Diplomat”

Michael Daugherty (b. 1954)

*Desi* (1991)

James Syler (b. 1961)

*Love Among the Ruins* (2016)

*SSgt Sarah Hart, viola soloist*

Richard Strauss (1864–1949)  
transcribed by Mark Hindsley

*Till Eulenspiegel’s Merry Pranks, Opus 28*

### INTERMISSION

Maurice Ravel (1875–1937)  
transcribed by Thomas Knox\*  
text by Paul Morand

*Don Quichotte à Dulcinée*

Chanson Romanesque

Chanson épique

Chanson à boire

*MSgt Kevin Benneer, baritone*

Sir Edward Elgar (1857–1934)  
transcribed by MGySgt Donald Patterson\*

Variations on an Original Theme, Opus 36, *Enigma*

\*Member, U.S. Marine Band

The Marine Band Concerto Competition will take place Feb. 16 at 2 P.M. in Sousa Hall at the Marine Barracks Annex. The Marine Band will perform Feb. 17 at 2 P.M. in the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall at Northern Virginia Community College on the Alexandria Campus.

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# ***PROGRAM NOTES***

## **March, “The Diplomat”** John Philip Sousa\* (1854–1932)

What is the inspiration for many of the suites and arrangements, for which Lieutenant Commander John Philip Sousa, the famous bandmaster, who comes to Bangor, Wednesday, September 19th, would have won a place in the American musical history, had he never written a single march?

“A good tenderloin steak, German fried potatoes and plenty of bread and butter,” answers the March King. “I remember that one of my best marches, from the standpoint of lasting popularity, was written with the best tenderloin I ever had tasted for an inspiration. The march was ‘The Diplomat’ and the city was Mitchell, South Dakota, and mentally at least, I dedicated the march to the unseen cook who prepared that tenderloin.”

While mentally dedicated to Mitchell’s unnamed chef, the march was in actuality dedicated to Secretary of State John Milton Hay, whose diplomatic skill had impressed the composer. When performing this march in the prime of his career, Sousa gave a subtle but highly pleasing display of conducting excellence for the benefit of both his audiences and his musicians. The first section of the march has a catchy melody which he had the band phrase and accent in a style different from the printed music. As the late Dr. Frank Simon, former Sousa Band solo cornetist remarked, “When the ‘Governor’ conducted this march, we could literally visualize the graceful swagger of a handsome diplomat, top hat, tux, striped trousers and all, strutting down the street, nodding cheerfully here and there.”

Paul E. Bierley, *The Works of John Philip Sousa* (Westerville, Ohio: Integrity Press, 1984), 49.  
Used by permission.

## ***Desi (1991)*** Michael Daugherty (b. 1954)

*Desi* was composed for and premièred by the Stephen F. Austin State University Symphonic Band, conducted by John Whitwell at the 1991 College Band Directors National Association in Kansas City, Missouri. Since then, *Desi* has been widely performed in America by ensembles ranging from the U.S. Marine Band to the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra, and abroad by ensembles including the Tokyo Kosei Wind Orchestra, Netherlands Wind Ensemble, and the Zurich Tonhalle-Orchester.

This work is tribute to the persona of Desi Arnaz, who played the Cuban bandleader Ricky Ricardo alongside his wife Lucille Ball in *I Love Lucy*, widely regarded as one of the most innovative television comedy shows of the 1950s.

The opening rhythmic motive is derived from the conga dance made famous by Arnaz when he sang and played bongos in Hollywood film musicals in the 1940s. In *Desi*, the bongo soloist and percussion section provide a lively counterpoint to intricately structured musical canons and four-note cluster chords, creating polyrhythmic layers that intensify and build to a sizzling conclusion. *Desi* evokes a Latin sound punctuated by big band trumpets, trombone glissandi, and dazzling woodwind runs.

–Michael Daugherty

## *Love Among the Ruins* (2016)

James Syler (b. 1961)

In recent works, I have become interested in music that creates a space for contemplation. Music that creates a journey between two points. The subject in this work is love as a timeless force. Its continuation in our lives beyond the grave, throughout time and space, and amidst the personal loss, difficulties, or ruins of our lives. The title is from the poem “Love Among the Ruins” by Robert Browning.

This is not a concerto in the traditional sense, but rather a work that features the viola for its color, expressivity, and voice within a narrative. That narrative is left to the listener. I use a transformational technique where music that appears in the beginning is gradually transformed into new ideas, which are then transformed into even newer ideas. It is always evolving as a metaphor for love as a transforming force. It also borrows from a previous work titled *Fields* that I’ve always felt there was more to say before and after it. The phrase by the Roman poet Virgil seems to have become appropriate for this work – “Amor Vincit Omnia” (Love Conquers All).

–James Syler

### “Love Among the Ruins”

Robert Browning

Where the quiet-coloured end of evening smiles,  
Miles and miles  
On the solitary pastures where our sheep  
Half-asleep  
Tinkle homeward thro’ the twilight, stray or stop  
As they crop—  
Was the site once of a city great and gay,  
(So they say)  
Of our country’s very capital, its prince  
Ages since  
Held his court in, gathered councils, wielding far  
Peace or war.

Now the country does not even boast a tree,  
As you see,  
To distinguish slopes of verdure, certain rills  
From the hills  
Intersect and give a name to, (else they run  
Into one)  
Where the domed and daring palace shot its spires  
Up like fires  
O’er the hundred-gated circuit of a wall  
Bounding all  
Made of marble, men might march on nor be prest  
Twelve abreast.

And such plenty and perfection, see, of grass  
Never was!  
Such a carpet as, this summer-time, o’er-spreads  
And embeds  
Every vestige of the city, guessed alone,  
Stock or stone—  
Where a multitude of men breathed joy and woe  
Long ago;  
Lust of glory pricked their hearts up, dread of  
shame  
Struck them tame;  
And that glory and that shame alike, the gold  
Bought and sold.

Now—the single little turret that remains  
On the plains,  
By the caper overrooted, by the gourd  
Overscored,  
While the patching houseleek’s head of blossom  
winks  
Through the chinks—  
Marks the basement whence a tower in ancient time  
Sprang sublime,  
And a burning ring, all round, the chariots traced  
As they raced,  
And the monarch and his minions and his dames  
Viewed the games.

And I know, while thus the quiet-coloured eve  
Smiles to leave  
To their folding, all our many-tinkling fleece  
In such peace,  
And the slopes and rills in undistinguished grey  
Melt away—  
That a girl with eager eyes and yellow hair  
Waits me there  
In the turret whence the charioteers caught soul  
For the goal,  
When the king looked, where she looks now,  
breathless, dumb  
Till I come.

But he looked upon the city, every side,  
Far and wide,  
All the mountains topped with temples, all the  
glades'  
Colonnades,  
All the causeys, bridges, aqueducts,—and then  
All the men!  
When I do come, she will speak not, she will stand,  
Either hand  
On my shoulder, give her eyes the first embrace  
Of my face,  
Ere we rush, ere we extinguish sight and speech  
Each on each.

In one year they sent a million fighters forth  
South and North,  
And they built their gods a brazen pillar high  
As the sky  
Yet reserved a thousand chariots in full force—  
Gold, of course.  
O heart! oh blood that freezes, blood that burns!  
Earth's returns  
For whole centuries of folly, noise and sin!  
Shut them in,  
With their triumphs and their glories and the rest!  
Love is best.

### **Staff Sergeant Sarah Hart, viola soloist**

Violist Staff Sergeant Sarah Hart joined “The President’s Own” United States Marine Chamber Orchestra in January 2009. Staff Sgt. Hart began her musical training at age six. After graduating in 2002 from Rosati-Kain High School in St. Louis, she earned a bachelor’s degree in biology with minors in music and chemistry in 2006 from Truman State University in Kirksville, Missouri, where she studied with Sam McClure. Staff Sgt. Hart earned a master’s degree in viola performance in 2008 with an additional focus in pedagogy from Indiana University in Bloomington, where she studied with Atar Arad, former member of the Cleveland Quartet. She earned a doctorate in 2015 from the University of Maryland in College Park where she studied with Dan Foster, principal viola of the National Symphony Orchestra in Washington, D.C. She also has studied with Catharine Carroll at the Aspen Music Festival in Colorado. Staff Sgt. Hart was a featured viola soloist for Bohuslav Martinů’s Rhapsody Concerto with the Marine Chamber Orchestra in 2011 and Sir William Walton’s Concerto for Viola and Orchestra in 2016. In addition, she oversees program and script development for the Marine Band’s Music in the Schools and Music in the High Schools educational programs. Prior to joining “The President’s Own,” she performed at the Pacific Music Festival in Sapporo, Japan, and as a member of the Columbus Indiana Philharmonic and the Terre Haute Symphony Orchestra in Indiana.

## *Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks, Opus 28*

Richard Strauss (1864–1949)

transcribed by Mark Hindsley

The celebrated German composer and conductor Richard Strauss began his compositional career following in the footsteps of more traditional composers such as Johannes Brahms. A friend, however, encouraged him to change his musical course and follow the lead of Richard Wagner, writing dramatic and programmatic music, rather than absolute music like symphonies and chamber music. In 1886 he wrote the first of several tone poems that would solidify his meteoric impact on the world of music. These works employed the full pallet of orchestral sonorities and were filled with highly evocative and sensual melodies and lush harmonies. They demonstrated Strauss's amazing ability to depict people, objects, and events, creating musical drama that few would rival.

Strauss's tone poem *Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks* was based on an old legend of a roguish prankster named Till Eulenspiegel. He delighted in playing tricks and hoaxes on the people of his village. The composer's musical introduction suggests the beginning of a fairytale. Till is presented with the jocund and now-famous French horn solo, and the pranks begin. Strauss resisted frequent requests to provide the exact storyline, writing, "It is impossible for me to furnish a program to *Eulenspiegel*; were I to put into words the thoughts which its several incidents suggest to me, they would seldom suffice, and might even give rise to offense. Let me leave it, therefore, to my hearers to crack the hard nut which the Rogue has prepared for them." One prank follows another until a drum roll signals the end of Till's merry-making, as he is finally caught and brought to justice. Judgment is passed with a jarring descending major seventh in the lower instruments followed by a final shrill cry from the doomed trickster. The work ends with a return of the opening fairytale motif. Before it concludes, however, Till's merry theme returns once again, suggesting that even death can't stop his prankish interruptions.

## *Don Quichotte à Dulcinée*

Maurice Ravel (1875–1937)

transcribed by Thomas Knox\*

text by Paul Morand

Master orchestrator Maurice Ravel transcribed several of his own piano works as well as the works of other composers, breathing new life into these compositions. He was born to a Spanish mother and a Swiss father who had moved to Paris three months after their son's birth. They supported his talents early on by sending him to the Paris Conservatoire, first as a preparatory student and then as a piano major. After failing several consecutive years and finding himself unable to meet the demanding requirements of earning a competitive medal for his piano skills, Ravel left the conservatory in 1895. However, he returned in 1897 to study composition with Gabriel Fauré. While the craft of composition was his stronger suit, Ravel was still unable to win the coveted Prix de Rome after several attempts. However, he went on to create some of the most cherished works of all time, including *La valse*, the ballet *Daphnis et Chloé*, and one of his most famous orchestrations, Modest Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*.

Ravel's song cycle *Don Quichotte à Dulcinée* is a charming yet humorous work that reflects the composer's Spanish heritage. He had taken on the assignment of writing film music for the Georg Wilhelm Pabst film *Adventures of Don Quixote*. Unbeknownst to Ravel, Pabst had also approached Darius Milhaud, Marcel Delannoy, and Jacques Ibert about submitting scores for the film project. Ravel's failing health caused him to fall behind in his work, and Ibert ultimately received the commission. Ravel finished his song cycle, and it was premièred on December 1, 1934, but it was the last composition he completed before his death in 1937.

## Master Sergeant Kevin Bennear, baritone

Baritone vocalist and concert moderator Master Sergeant Kevin Bennear joined “The President’s Own” United States Marine Band in January 2000, becoming the third featured vocal soloist since the position was established in 1955. He began his musical instruction at age nine. After graduating in 1990 from Elk Garden High School in Elk Garden, West Virginia, he attended Potomac State College in Keyser, West Virginia, and earned a bachelor’s degree in music in 1996 from West Virginia University (WVU) in Morgantown, where he studied with Peter Lightfoot. He earned a master’s degree in vocal performance in 1999 from the University of Tennessee (UT), in Knoxville, where he studied with George Bitzas.

Master Sgt. Bennear has performed with the UT Opera Theater, WVU Opera Theater, Theatre West Virginia, and the Knoxville Opera Company, where he played the role of Sharpless in Giacomo Puccini’s *Madama Butterfly* with noted soprano Stella Zimbalis of the Metropolitan Opera. He also taught voice as a graduate teaching assistant at UT.

### Variations on an Original Theme, Opus 36, *Enigma*

Sir Edward Elgar (1857–1934)  
transcribed by MGySgt Donald Patterson\*

Occasionally a composer will create a work within a well-established form that is unlike anything that precedes it, serving as a reminder of the incredible creative possibilities that exist all around. This is exactly what the British composer Sir Edward Elgar did with his Variations on an Original Theme, a work better known by its informal title, *Enigma* Variations. A lifelong fan of puzzles, riddles, and codes, the composer had the unique opportunity in this composition to combine his favorite hobby with his passion for music. The work is a mystery on several levels.

First, each of the variations is a musical portrait of a friend or loved one represented by a series of initials or a nickname at the beginning of the variation. This was a puzzle easily solved by anyone familiar with Elgar’s family and friends, and Elgar himself provided the answers in a piano roll version of the music that was published in 1929. The second puzzling element of the work is the unique nature of the melodic fragments that appear to constitute the theme. These fragments are indeed heard at the beginning of the piece, the traditional position of a theme, and it is clearly this material that is developed in the subsequent variations. But Elgar did not label this introduction as the “theme,” instead affixing the term “enigma.” Adding to the mystery was the following statement from the composer:

The Enigma I will not explain—its “dark saying” must be left unguessed, and I warn you that the connection between the Variations and the Theme is often of the slightest texture; further, through and over the whole set another and larger theme “goes,” but is not played...so the principal theme never appears, even as in some recent dramas...the chief character is never on the stage.

Music scholars and codebreakers of every ilk have attempted to solve this riddle for decades, with possible answers ranging from “Auld Lang Syne” to a musical epigram of the last name of Johann Sebastian Bach. Try as they might, no one has yet cracked the code, a fact which would have undoubtedly delighted the composer. Elgar did express concern that the interest in the riddle would overwhelm the work itself, suggesting, “There is nothing to be gained in an artistic or musical sense by solving the enigma...the listener should hear the music as music, and not trouble himself with the intricacies of the programme.” Even without the mystery of the *Enigma*, Elgar created in this composition one of the most beautiful and beloved examples of the theme and variation technique ever written.