



“The President’s Own” United States Marine Band’s mission is to provide music for the President of the United States and the Commandant of the Marine Corps. Founded in 1798 by an Act of Congress, the Marine Band is America’s oldest continuously active professional musical organization. Today, “The President’s Own” is celebrated for its role at the White House and its dynamic public performances, which total more than 500 annually.

The U.S. Marine Band and Inauguration

- This is the Marine Band’s 57th inaugural. In 1801, the Marine Band made its inaugural debut when it is believed to have serenaded Thomas Jefferson with “Jefferson’s March” and other airs before the President-elect walked the short route from his hotel to his swearing-in.
- The Marine Band is the only unit to participate in all three aspects of the Presidential Inauguration: the swearing-in ceremony at the U.S. Capitol, the parade on Pennsylvania Ave., and the Inaugural Balls.
- The band’s inaugural parade formation consists of 99 playing members and is led by the unique assemblage of the Drum Major and all five Marine Band officers.
- During the inaugural parade, the Marine Band will perform The Marines’ Hymn and John Philip Sousa’s “Semper Fidelis” and “The Thunderer.”
- The most famous member of the Marine Band is John Philip Sousa. He was the 17th Director (1880-92) and is responsible for bringing the Marine Band to an unprecedented level of excellence. In his 12 years as leader, he served five presidents, and became known as the “March King.” He composed both “Semper Fidelis” and “The Stars and Stripes Forever.” Sousa’s bio: <https://www.marineband.marines.mil/About/Our-History/John-Philip-Sousa/>

About the Drum Major (spokesperson)

- Master Gunnery Sergeant Duane F. King is the 40th Drum Major of “The President’s Own” United States Marine Band. He joined the Marine Band in May 2014.
- As Drum Major of “The President’s Own,” Master Gunnery Sergeant King serves as the senior enlisted member of the unit and is responsible for the band’s appearance, ceremonial drill, and military decorum. He is charged with directing the band in ceremonial commitments, including the inaugural parade.
- This is Drum Major King’s third inauguration.
- Drum Major King’s full bio: <https://www.marineband.marines.mil/About/Members/Article/2602660/master-gunnery-sgt-duane-f-king/>

About the Uniforms

- Marine Band musicians wear scarlet full dress coats, blue trousers with a unique red and white stripe, and white covers (hats) with gold Marine Corps emblems. The Marine dress uniform is traditionally blue with red trim, but the Marine Band wears these colors in reverse order with scarlet coats and distinctive braid. The tradition dates to the time of the Revolutionary War when field musicians were used to send signals on the battlefield and in camp and needed to be easily recognizable. This uniform has remained largely unchanged since John Philip Sousa was Director of the band.
- The Drum Major’s uniform is unique. The ornate sash worn across his chest is called a baldric. Embroidered with the Marine Band’s crest and the Marine Corps’ battle colors, it signifies his position as Drum Major of the Marine Corps. He wears a bearskin headpiece and carries a mace, embossed with the battles and campaigns of the Marine Corps, which he uses to signal commands to the musicians.

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