

# A Concert by the Community Band of Brevard

## Featuring

### 20<sup>th</sup> Century Works for Band

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The Community Band of Brevard is a 1999 recipient of the prestigious John Philip Sousa Foundation's [Sudler Silver Scroll Award](#)

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Chester Overture for Band.....	William Schuman
Symphony No.3 for Band.....	Vittorio Giannini
I. Allegro energico	
II. Adagio	
III. Allegretto	
IV. Allegro con brio	
Five Folksongs for Soprano.....	Bernard Gilmore
1. Mrs. McGrath (Irish)	
2. All the Pretty Little Horses (American)	
4. El Burro (Mexican)	
Elise Curran, Soprano Vocalist	
Irish Tune from County Derry.....	Percy Grainger
Hail to the Spirit of Liberty March.....	John Philip Sousa
Edited for Contemporary Wind Band by Donald Hunsberger	
Intermission (15 Minutes)	
First Suite in Eb.....	Gustav Holst
I. Chaconne	
II. Intermezzo	
III. March	
Symphony for Band (Symphony No. 6).....	Vincent Persichetti
I. Adagio	
II. Adagio sostenuto	
III. Allegretto	
IV. Vivace	
Celebration.....	Aaron Collins
Movement IV from Symphony No. 1	
Stars and Stripes Forever.....	John Philip Sousa

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## Program Notes

### William Schuman

Born August 4, 1910 New York City  
Died February 15, 1992 New York City

### Chester, Overture for Band

***Chester* is part of Schuman's *New England Triptych (Three Pieces after William Billings)* a work for orchestra which was first performed in Miami in 1956. The other two movements are *Be Glad Then, America*; and *When Jesus Wept*. Shortly after the premier of the orchestral version, Schuman himself modified and arranged the work for band. The band version of *Chester* was first performed at Louisville University in January, 1957. *Chester* has become one of the great classics of band music in the United States.**

**William Billings was a significant early American composer. He organized singing schools and wrote music for them. Many of his tunes were very popular with the colonists and in 1778 some were published in *The Singing Master's Assistant*. His song *Chester* was a hymn and marching song during the American Revolution, and could have been considered the country's unofficial national anthem.**

In high school, William Howard Schuman organized and performed in jazz bands. Schuman received education at Malkin Conservatory in New York, Columbia University where he studied with Roy Harris, and at the Mozarteum Academy in Salzburg where he earned a certificate in conducting. He taught both at Sarah Lawrence College and Columbia University. By 1935 he had over 150 popular songs to his credit, some of which he wrote in collaboration with Edwin B. Marks, Jr. and Frank Loesser. In 1943 his *A Free Song* earned him the first Pulitzer Prize for music and recognition as one of America's leading composers. In 1945 he became the president of Juilliard School of Music where his staff appointments included such prominent figures as Bergsma, Mennin, Persichetti and Weisgall. From 1962 to 1969 he was president of the Lincoln Center in New York, a position that gave him great power in the administration of the arts. His works include an opera, six symphonies, concertos, choral works, band works, and chamber music.

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## Vittorio Giannini

Born October 19, 1903 Philadelphia

Died November 28, 1966 New York City

### Symphony No. 3 for Band

**The *Symphony No. 3* follows no program. The first movement, in sonata-allegro form, offers a victorious opening. Its fundamental germinating force is the interval of a fourth, which is heard immediately in the first theme. The second movement takes advantage of the lyric woodwind sound of the band and in ABA form presents a quiet, restful section of great beauty. The third movement, ABAB, is an example of rhythmic playfulness. Here, the kaleidoscopic shifting pulses of 6/8 and 3/4 meters rebound over and upon one another in intriguing fashion. The final movement, in sonata-allegro form, is announced by a tremendous woodwind sweep. Its pure excitement gives a thrilling emotional climax to the work. (The preceding is quoted from *Band Music Notes* by Norman Smith and Albert Stoutamire, 1989)**

**The work was first performed in 1959.**

Vittorio Giannini, an American composer, first studied violin with his mother. From 1925 to 1930 he studied violin and composition at the Juilliard School. He spent the years 1932-1936 in Rome at the American Academy. From 1939 to 1965 he taught composition and orchestration at the Juilliard School of Music. He was a guiding force in the founding of the North Carolina School of the Arts and ended his career serving as its director.

Giannini's compositions include eleven operas, several large choral works, songs, motets, madrigals, numerous works for piano, chamber music, two melodramas for soprano and orchestra, numerous orchestral works including five symphonies, and several works for band. His works for band are considered by many to be on par with the best including those by Hindemith, Persichetti, Gould and Creston.

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## Bernard Gilmore

Born 1939

## Five Folksongs for Soprano

**Mr. Gilmore provided the following to the writer of these program notes:**

*In each of the five folk songs I tried to express a key element of each text in the accompaniment. "Mrs. McGrath" is clearly march-like, but as the bitter story unfolds, the band accompaniment becomes increasingly dissonant.*

*As an ironic commentary, the march is set in its most conventionally "stirring" manner after the tragedy is revealed. The band accompaniment in "All the Pretty Little Horses" features two lengthy clarinet cadenzas improvisational in feeling. In "El Burro", I had the image of a noisy funeral procession in mind. "Yerakina" is permeated with the sound of Yerakina's bracelets jangling in the sun. And at the end of A "Fiddler", Mama's dreams for her son are hinted at by a brief reference to the Mendelssohn Violin Concerto.*

*I was born in 1939, received the BA (Music) and MA (Composition) from UCLA and the DMA (conducting) from Stanford. I have taught at Cornell (where I composed the Five Folk Songs), Oregon State University and, since 1982, at UC Irvine, where I teach music theory, composition and various courses in 20th Century music.*

*For many years I was active as a professional horn-player. I toured with the Boston Pops Tour Orchestra, played a season with the Haifa (Israel) Symphony Orchestra and occasionally played extra in the Los Angeles Philharmonic.*

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## Percy Grainger

Born July 8, 1882 Melbourne, Australia

Died February 20, 1961 White Plains, N.Y., USA

### Irish Tune from County Derry

**The tune upon which Grainger based this work was collected by Miss J. Ross of New Town, Limavaday, County Derry, Ireland, and published in *The Petrie Collection of Ancient Music of Ireland* in 1885. Grainger wrote *Irish Tune from County Derry* in 1909 and dedicated it to Edward Grieg.**

Percy Aldridge Grainger, a child prodigy, received his earliest musical training from his mother. After formal study and several recitals in Melbourne, he studied further in Germany and London. He toured widely and successfully as a virtuoso pianist. As a composer, he was remarkably innovative. He was among the first to use irregular rhythms, to use tape recorders to collect folk music, to write random music, and to experiment with electronic music. As innovative as he was, however, he wrote little or no major original works, preferring instead to incorporate the music of others in his arrangements. He became a U.S. citizen in 1919.

Of the many interesting characters in music history, Grainger is near the top of the list. He received only 3 months of public education because he refused to go to school after seeing some classmates, who also ridiculed him because of his appearance, torturing a helpless animal. His serious musical achievements were overshadowed by his personal idiosyncrasies. Many people thought he was insane, and they may have been right. He had enormous physical energy, but was crippled by paranoia, hallucination and self-doubt. He once canceled a recital because he considered the local townspeople too ugly. During the orchestral tutti in the first movement of the Grieg Piano Concerto, he liked to sprint from the stage to the rear of the hall and back again before resuming his solo. On ocean-liner trips, he liked to shovel coal in the boiler room. Instead of carrying a briefcase, he fastened papers, pens and other items to his body with pieces of string. In New York, he carted his manuscripts to publishers in a knapsack, spread sheets of the score on the floor and pointed out that "It's not very good." He had formidable and unconventional sexual appetites, leaning towards heterosexual pedophilia and sado-masochism. He propounded unsavory racial theories about the superiority of

blue-eyed, fair-haired people. In his scores he used a nonsensical English vocabulary such as "louden lots" for "crescendo". Possessing prodigious intellect, he excelled in painting, drawing, reading, and speaking foreign languages. He had a command of more than eleven languages. He loved to read, particularly martial epics and the Icelandic Sagas, which he read in the Icelandic languages. For 20 years, he kept a daily log of his weight, which never varied from 145 pounds.

More important than his idiosyncrasies, however, are Grainger's compositions, which number over four hundred. Only a handful of his works are generally recognized, but that should be rectified because his music truly reflects human experience, from shared enthusiasms to the simple joys and sorrows of life.

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## John Philip Sousa

Born November 6, 1854 Washington, D.C.

Died March 6, 1932 Reading, Pa.

### Hail to the Spirit of Liberty

**While on a four-month tour of Europe, its first such tour, the Sousa Band performed for the dedication of the Lafayette Monument in Paris. For that occasion, which took place on July 4, 1900, Sousa composed and provided the first public performance of *Hail to the Spirit of Liberty*.**

***Hail to the Spirit of Liberty* was the only march Sousa wrote in 1900. For that reason, we chose to include it in this concert which takes place in the march's centennial year. Sousa's band rarely marched, a trait shared by the Community Band of Brevard, but did so during that event.**

### Stars and Stripes Forever

**The Stars and Stripes Forever March is the official march of the United States of America. Sousa believed that the piece was divinely inspired. It came to him as he sailed home from vacationing in Europe after learning of his manager's death. When he reached shore, he wrote "down the measures that my brain-band had been playing for me, and not a note of it has ever been changed." The original manuscript is in the Library of Congress and bears the inscription "J.P.S., Xmas, 1896", most fitting because it certainly is a wonderful Christmas gift to the American people.**

John Philip Sousa was the son of immigrants—a Portuguese father and a Bavarian mother. His musical talent was evident at an early age, and he studied violin and harmony at the age of ten. He also learned to play wind instruments. His father played trombone in the U.S. Marine Band, and young Sousa was allowed to participate in its rehearsals starting at the age eleven. He joined the U.S. Marine Band at the age of thirteen as an apprentice musician and became its director at the age of twenty-six, a post he held for twelve years. After departing the U.S. Marine Band, Sousa started his own professional band, which quickly achieved international fame.

Sousa was a patriot of the highest order and his talents included arranging, composing, conducting, and writing. He was an astute businessman and one of the country's best trap shooters as well. He is best remembered for the many great marches he wrote. His marches are characterized by bouncing rhythms, catchy tunes, and brilliant instrumentation that has kept them at the top of popularity polls.

The breadth of Sousa's talent and the vastness of his output can be seen in a tally of his works: 15 operettas, 136 marches, 15 suites, 2 descriptive pieces, 70 songs, 7 other vocal works, 11 waltzes, 12 dance form pieces, 14 humoresques, 27 band fantasies, 3 orchestral fantasies, 6 incidental pieces, 4 overtures, 2 concert pieces, 4 instrumental solos, 12 trumpet and drum pieces, over 300 arrangements and transcriptions, 7 books, and 132 articles for periodicals.

The indefatigable Sousa never stopped working. In April, 1917, the United States declared war on Germany. Sousa, sixty three years old, and at the pinnacle of his success, signed on with the Navy to be in charge of the training of its

bands. After twenty-two months in the Navy, he returned to private life and Sousa and His Band were back in business. He died suddenly at the age of seventy-eight after a rehearsal of the Ringgold Band in Reading, Pennsylvania. He is buried with other family members in the Congressional Cemetery.

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## Gustav Holst

Born September 21, 1874 Cheltenham, England

Died May 24, 1934 London

### First Suite in Eb, Op. 28 No. 1

**Holst composed his *First Suite in Eb* in 1909. Of the several exceptional works for band written by British composers, this one is considered to be the cornerstone.**

**While at the Royal College of Music, Holst met fellow student Ralph Vaughan Williams. They became life-long friends who listened to each other's newest compositions while they were working on them. In 1903, Vaughan Williams developed an interest in English folksongs and started collecting them. Holst was so enthralled with the songs collected by his friend that he learned as much as he could about them from Cecil Sharp, Lucy Broadwood and other folksong collectors. Those studies transformed Holst's compositional style from one which emulated those of others such as Wagner to one of his own. Among the earliest manifestations of his new style were his two suites for military band, and these two works were very influential in establishing a new genre of music for bands.**

Gustavus Theodore von Holst studied composition at London's Royal College of Music where he paid for his room and board by playing trombone on the pier at Blackpool or Brighton and at London theaters. He became a professional trombonist and a teacher (at St. Paul's Girls' School, Morley College, and the Royal College of Music). His compositions reflect many influences including Hindu mysticism, English folk music, and astrology. Holst created three of the greatest works in the band repertoire: First Suite in E-Flat, Second Suite in F for Military Band, and Hammersmith, Prelude and Scherzo. These three works stand almost alone in that they were first written for band and then transcribed for orchestra.

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## Vincent Persichetti

Born June 6, 1915 Philadelphia

Died August 14, 1987 Philadelphia

### Symphony for Band, Op. 69 (Symphony No. 6)

**Washington University of St. Louis commissioned this work which was premiered in March 1956 at the Music Educators National Conference. It was an immediate success and quickly became a standard part of the band literature. The following is quoted from *Band Music Notes* by Norman Smith and Albert Stoutamire, 1989:**

**The four movements have forms with traditional implications. The opening horn call and a following scale-wise passage of the slow introduction section become the two principal themes, in reverse order, in the subsequent Allegro, which includes the standard exposition, development, and recapitulation of sonata form although the traditional key relationships are not completely retained. The slow second movement is based on "Round Me Falls the Night" from the composer's *Hymns and Responses for the Church Year*. The third movement, in trio form, serves as the traditional dance movement, and is followed by a finale in free rondo form, which draws thematic material from the preceding movements.**

Persichetti, a prolific composer, pianist and conductor, was a child prodigy who at age eleven was supporting himself and paying for his music education by performing professionally as an accompanist, radio staff pianist, orchestra member, and church organist. For twenty years beginning at age sixteen he was organist and choir director of the Arch Street Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia. In 1947 he joined the faculty of the Juilliard School of Music and in 1963 became the head of its composition department.

Persichetti received many awards, grants and citations for his compositions, which number over one hundred. He composed his first published work (Serenade, for ten winds) at age fourteen and made substantial contributions to most musical genres. Particularly important are his works for band, which reveal a natural affinity for the medium and have given many students an accessible yet sophisticated introduction to contemporary music. His Symphony No. 6, Psalm for Band, and Divertimento for Band are original works for band that have received wide acclaim.

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## Aaron Collins

Born March 13, 1982 Corvallis, Oregon

### **Celebration, Movement IV from Symphony No. 1**

***Celebration* is the fourth movement of Aaron Collins' Symphony No. 1. This performance by the Community Band of Brevard is the work's world premiere. According to Aaron, "The work is a celebration of the hard work, musicality, and a high level of excellence attained by the Community Band of Brevard. This piece is also dedicated to my grandparents and I thank them for their support and love."**

See this program's front matter for [Aaron's biographical information](#).

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Program Notes by Enoch Moser

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