



**SOUTHWESTERN  
OHIO SYMPHONIC  
BAND**

**GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY CONCERT**

**SUNDAY, MAY 5, 2019**

**PROGRAM NOTES**

## **“Stars and Bars”**

Winner of the 1964 Ostwald Award, Robert E. Jager’s **“Stars and Bars”** is his patriotic salute to America. Based loosely on John Philip Sousa’s **“Stars and Stripes Forever”**, one will be able to hear similarities and Jagers’ interesting twist.

**Robert E. Jager** was born in 1939 in Binghamton, New York, and is a graduate of The University of Michigan. He served in the United States Navy as the Staff Arranger/Composer for four years. Mr. Yager is now retired and is Professor Emeritus at Tennessee Technological University in Cookeville, Tennessee. Jager’s credits comprise over 120 published works for band, orchestra, chorus, and various chamber ensemble combinations. Jager has received many awards for his compositions, including being the only three-time winner of the American Bandmasters Association “Ostwald Award.” He is a member of the American Society of Composer, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP); the American Bandmasters Association; Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia Professional Music Fraternity; Kappa Kappa Psi Band Fraternity; Phi Kappa Phi; and an “Honorary Member” of the Women’s Band Directors Association.

## **“Between Two Rivers”**

**(World Premier)**

**“Between Two Rivers”** was composed by Paul John Stanbery in 2018 and is dedicated to the Southwestern Ohio Symphonic Band and its conductor, Christopher Brandenburg. The piece was commissioned by band member Sam Ashworth in celebration of the Band’s 50<sup>th</sup> year.

**“Between Two Rivers”** refers to the area of Southwestern Ohio between the Little Miami River and the Great Miami River, which is home to the Southwestern Ohio Symphonic Band and most of its musicians. The all-volunteer band has performed regular concerts for 50 years under founder William Stiehl and Christopher Brandenburg, conductor since 1984.

**“Between Two Rivers”** weaves together melodic themes of the two rivers with references to the history of the land, originally part of the Northwest Territory in 1787 and later State of Ohio (1803). Other themes evoke the movement of the eastern pioneers to the western territory and the building of settlements which became the towns and cities of today.

The World Premier of **“Between Two Rivers”** will be conducted this afternoon by Mr. Dan Nichols, Associate Conductor of the Southwestern Ohio Symphonic Band.

**Paul John Stanbery** is no musical stranger to Southwestern Ohio, having served as music director and conductor of the Hamilton-Fairfield Symphony Orchestra, now Butler Philharmonic, for the past 25 years. Mr. Stanbery is acclaimed as both a conductor and composer and in 2005 he won the prestigious Post-Corbett Award for outstanding achievement in performing arts.

Mr. Stanbery is acclaimed as both a conductor and composer. He led members of the Butler Philharmonic Chorus in Carnegie Hall in a special performance of his own ***“Music for Mass”*** on June 17, 2018. The sold-out performance resulted in a sustained standing ovation.

On the podium, the Butler Philharmonic’s music director also serves as music director of the Ohio Mozart Festival, and he has been associate conductor of the Lima Symphony in Ohio. Mr. Stanbery directed the Great Miami Youth Symphony Orchestra (now the Butler Philharmonic Youth Orchestra) for over twenty years.

His guest conducting appearances have included performances with the Western Piedmont Symphony, Mississippi Symphony Orchestra, the Shreveport (La.) Symphony Orchestra and the University of Cincinnati. He is a regular guest with the Miami University Symphony Orchestra.

A native of Toledo, Ohio, Mr. Stanbery studied at Bowling Green State University and the University of Cincinnati. His mentors and teachers included conducting studies with Emil Raab, Ivan Trusler, Robert Porco, and John Leman. He studied composition with Wallace DePue and H. Owen Reed.

Mr. Stanbery was also the founding conductor of the Blue Ash-Montgomery Symphony and the Clermont Philharmonic orchestras.

As associate conductor for the Cincinnati May Festival, Mr. Stanbery collaborated with such noted conductors as Robert Shaw, Jesus Lopez-Cobos, James Conlon, Robert Porco, Eric Kunzel, Ivan Fischer, Kenneth Jean, and Keith Lockhart for performances in Carnegie Hall, Cincinnati’s Music Hall and the Riverbend Music Center. Mr. Stanbery served as chorus master for Telarc recordings of the Cincinnati Pops (*The Hunt for Red October*) and Cincinnati Symphony (Manuel de Falla’s *La Vida Breve*).

Mr. Stanbery worked for 19 years as music director of All Saints Parish and School in Cincinnati, and he has been an educator for more than 30 years, including work in several Toledo area schools. In 2002, Mr. Stanbery was appointed music minister at Hamilton’s “Historic Presbyterian Church”, then held the same position at St. Peter in Chains Church in Hamilton from 2008 to 2013. He is currently the Minister of Music at Zion Lutheran Church in Hamilton, Ohio.

***“Eternal Father, Strong to Save”*** is a British hymn traditionally associated with seafarers, particularly in the maritime armed services. Written in 1860, its author William Whiting was inspired by the dangers of the sea described in Psalm 107. It was popularized by the Royal Navy and the United States Navy in the late 19th century, and variations of it were soon adopted by many branches of the armed services in the United Kingdom and the United States. Services who have adapted the hymn include the Royal Marines, Royal Air Force, the British Army, the United States Coast Guard and the US Marine Corps, as well as many navies of the British Commonwealth. Accordingly, it is known by many names, variously referred to as the Hymn of Her Majesty's Armed Forces, the Royal Navy Hymn, the United States Navy Hymn, and sometimes by the last line of its first verse, "For Those in Peril on the Sea". The hymn has a long tradition in civilian maritime contexts as well, being regularly invoked by ship's chaplains and sung during services on ocean crossings.

**Claude T. Smith** (b. March 14, 1932 – d. December 13, 1987) was an American band conductor, composer, and music educator. His compositions include ***“Flight”***, adopted as the "Official March" of the National Air and Space Museum of the Smithsonian Institution and, ***“Eternal Father, Strong to Save”***, commissioned in 1975, that premiered at a Kennedy Center celebration of the 50th anniversary of the United States Navy Band.

Smith was born in Monroe City, Missouri on March 14, 1932. His grandmother, a piano teacher and organist, influenced his interest in music, and he took up the cornet in eighth grade. He learned to conduct in high school and with a local Boy Scout band.

He switched to the horn during his time under director K.K. Anderson at Central Methodist College in Fayette, Missouri. He joined the 371st US Army Band in 1952 during the Korean War. He finished his Bachelor of Music Education degree in 1958 at the University of Kansas. He began to compose during his time at KU.

Mr. Smith composed over 110 compositions for band; 12 orchestral works; and 15 choral pieces. Smith was a member of ASCAP and the American Bandmasters Association. He was recognized through a resolution from the Missouri House of Representatives in 1976; received the Hall of Fame Award from the Missouri Bandmaster's Association in 1988; and was awarded the Distinguished Service to Music Medal from Kappa Kappa Psi in 1989.

Smith died on December 13, 1987 after conducting a Christmas concert.

***“MacArthur Park”*** is a song written and composed by Jimmy Webb. Richard Harris was the first to record it in 1968; his version peaked at number two on the *Billboard* Hot 100 chart and number four on the UK Singles Chart. ***“MacArthur Park”*** was subsequently covered by numerous artists, including a 1969 Grammy Award for Best Country Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocal-winning version by country music singer Waylon Jennings and a number one *Billboard* Hot 100 disco arrangement by Donna Summer in 1978.

In 1967, producer Bones Howe had asked Webb to create a pop song with classical elements, different movements, and changing time signatures. Webb delivered MacArthur Park to Howe with "everything he wanted", but Howe did not care for the ambitious arrangement or unorthodox lyrics and the song was rejected by the group The Association, for whom it was originally intended.

The song was originally written to be part of an intended cantata. The inspiration for the song was Webb's relationship and breakup with Susie Horton. MacArthur Park, in Los Angeles, was where the two occasionally met for lunch and spent their most enjoyable times together. At that time (the middle of 1965), Horton worked for Aetna Life Insurance, whose offices were located just across the street from the park. When asked by interviewer Terry Gross what was going through his mind when he wrote the lyric, Webb replied that it was meant to be symbolic and referred to the end of a love affair. In an interview with *Newsday* in October 2014, Webb explained:

"Everything in the song was visible. There's nothing in it that's fabricated. The old men playing checkers by the trees, the cake that was left out in the rain, all of the things that are talked about in the song are things I actually saw. And so it's a kind of musical collage of this whole love affair that kind of went down in MacArthur Park. ... Back then, I was kind of like an emotional machine, like whatever was going on inside me would bubble out of the piano and onto paper."

Webb and Horton remained friends, even after her marriage to another man. The breakup was also the primary influence for "***By the Time I Get to Phoenix***", another song written and composed by Webb. After his relationship breakup, Webb stayed for a while at the residence of Buddy Greco, upon whose piano the piece was composed and originally dedicated. Greco closed all his shows with this number for forty years.

The idea to write and compose a classically structured song with several movements that could be played on the radio came from a challenge by music producer Bones Howe, who produced recordings for The Association. The song begins as a poem about love, then moves into a lover's lament. The song consists of four sections or movements:

1. A mid-tempo introduction and opening section, called "*In the Park*" in the original session notes, is built around piano and harpsichord, with horns and orchestra added. This arrangement accompanies the song's main verses and choruses.
2. A slow tempo and quiet section follow, called "*After the Loves of My Life*".
3. An up-tempo instrumental section, called "*Allegro*", is led by drums and percussion, punctuated by horn riffs, and builds to an orchestral climax.
4. A mid-tempo reprise of the first section, concludes with the final choruses and climax.

## **“Procession of the Nobles”**

(from the Opera, “Mlada”)

**“Procession of the Nobles” (Cortege)** was written in 1889 as part of the opera-ballet **Mlada**. Although it was originally begun in 1872 as a collaborative effort with three other composers, the initial project fell through. Rimsky-Korsakov completed it himself nearly 20 years later.

**Mlada** was first produced in 1892 and is half-opera and half-ballet. Set a thousand years ago in an imaginary kingdom called Retra on the shores of the Baltic, **Mlada** attempts to combine Wagnerian opera with ancient Russian legend, and the result is an absolutely fantastic story. **Princess Mlada**, a role that is danced rather than sung, has been murdered by her rival **Voyslava**, who sets out to secure the love of **Yaromir**, Mlada’s lover. The story involves magic, evil spirits, and trips into the underworld, and at the climax an entire village is submerged by an overflowing lake and Yaromir and Mlada are seen ascending on a rainbow.

**Mlada** is no longer performed very often, and the only familiar music from it is the **“Procession of the Nobles”**, the orchestral introduction to Act II, which begins with a festival of tradespeople. The music bursts to life with a rousing brass flourish, soon followed by the processional music. This is music of color and energy, and in the opera, it is punctuated by shouts from the crowd at the festival. A central section just as vigorous as the opening leads to a return of the march tune and a rousing close.

**Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov** (b. March 18, 1844 – d. June 21, 1908) was a nationalist Russian composer and master orchestrator famous for symphonic works like **Scheherazade** and **Capriccio Espagnol**. He was born into a family with a history of military service in which he eventually followed. He started piano lessons at age 6 and composition at 10. Around the time of his graduation from military school, he met Mily Balakirev, who introduced him to fellow young composers Cesar Cui and Modes Mussorgsky, heightening Rimsky-Korsakov’s interest in a composition career. Eventually, with the addition of Alexander Borodin, these composers would call themselves **The Five** and advocate for a specifically Russian approach to composition. Later in his career, Rimsky-Korsakov became the Inspector of Bands for the Russian Navy as well as a professor at the Saint Petersburg Conservatory, which now bears his name.

## **“October”**

**“October”** was commissioned by the Nebraska Wind Consortium, Brian Anderson, Consortium Chairman. **“October”** was premiered on May 14, 2000, and is dedicated to Brian Anderson, the man who brought it all together.

Eric Whitacre composed **“October”** with the intention of evoking a peaceful musical representation of the month he has called his favorite, and the feelings this month evokes for him. In the words of the composer:

“October is my favorite month. Something about the crisp autumn air and the subtle change in light always make me a little sentimental, and as I started to sketch, I felt that same quiet beauty in the writing. The simple, pastoral melodies and subsequent harmonies are inspired by the great English romantics (Vaughan Williams and Elgar) as I felt that this style was also perfectly suited to capture the natural and pastoral soul of the season. I’m quite happy with the end result, especially because I feel there just isn’t enough lush, beautiful music written for winds.”

**Eric Whitacre** (b. January 2, 1970 – Reno, Nevada) is an American composer best known for his choral music. He has also written a large number of wind band compositions and some electronic music. In addition, he has composed works for orchestra and an opera, *“Paradise Lost: Shadows and Wings”*.

Though he showed interest in music in his youth, playing in the Douglas High School Band in Minden, NE, he did not begin advanced music studies until he entered the University of Nevada, where his most important teacher was noted Ukrainian composer Virko Baley. Whitacre also studied choral conducting there with David Weiller.

Whitacre earned his master's degree at Juilliard, where he studied composition with David Diamond and John Corigliano.

## **“Selections from West Side Story”**

The Broadway musical **West Side Story** first came into being in 1957 as a collaboration between composer Leonard Bernstein; choreographer Jerome Robbins; writer Arthur Laurents; and lyricist Stephen Sondheim. Its story is based on William Shakespeare’s **Romeo and Juliet**. Set in the 1950s on Manhattan’s West Side, it tells the tragic tale of Tony and Maria, whose rival gangs doom their young love. The musical became a film in 1961, winning 10 Academy Awards including Best Picture. Bernstein’s music was often a character itself, giving the film psychological direction in many long dance sequences.

This set of **“Selections from West Side Story”** comprises sort of a greatest hits collection from the musical. It is a single movement that transitions smoothly from one tune to the next, focusing on the most popular melodies from the musical.

The medley starts with "*I Feel Pretty*", Maria's crazy-in-love song. Next up is "*Maria*", which Tony sings after meeting her for the first time. This segues to "*Something's Coming*", Tony's song from early in the film in which he expresses his feelings of the endless unknown possibilities in front of him. This is followed by another song of anticipation, "*Tonight*", in which Tony and Maria sing of the excitement of their newly discovered feelings. It is used again later in the climactic number leading up to the Jets' and Sharks' big confrontation. Maria and Tony play rather seriously at getting married, and they sing "*One Hand, One Heart*". After the rumble, in which each gang has lost a member, the Jets regroup and sing "*Cool*", reminding each other to play it cool in spite of their intense anger and anxiety. The medley ends with "*America*", in which the Puerto Ricans sing of the promise (and pitfalls) of their new life in New York.

**Leonard Bernstein** (b. August 25, 1918 – d. October 14, 1990) was an erudite, passionate musician whose exceptional talents and expressive gifts earned him a special place in the hearts of New Yorkers. He rose to instant national fame in 1943, at age 25, when he filled in for the suddenly ill Bruno Walter as conductor of a nationally televised New York Philharmonic performance. He went on to become the Philharmonic's music director until 1969 and remained a frequent guest conductor there until his death. With the Philharmonic, he presented a series of 53 educational Young People's Concerts which were broadcast on CBS, making him a familiar face around the nation. He also composed music, crossing from academic classical music into Broadway musicals, including *West Side Story*, *On the Town*, and *Candide*.

### **"The Stars and Stripes Forever" (1896)**

With the possible exception of "*The Star Spangled Banner*," no musical composition has done more to arouse the patriotic spirit of America than this, John Philip Sousa's most beloved composition. It is symbolic of flag-waving in general, and it has been used with considerable effectiveness to generate patriotic feeling ever since its introduction in Philadelphia on May 14, 1897, when the staid *Public Ledger* reported: "It is stirring enough to rouse the American eagle from his crag, and set him to shriek exultantly while he hurls his arrows at the aurora borealis."

Aside from this flowery review, the march's reception was only slightly above average for a new Sousa march. It grew gradually in public acceptance, and with the advent of the Spanish-American War the nation suddenly needed such patriotic music.

"The Stars and Stripes Forever" had found its place in history. There was a vigorous response wherever it was performed, and audiences began to rise as though it were the national anthem. This became traditional at Sousa Band concerts. It was his practice to have the cornets, trumpets, trombones, and piccolos line up at the front of the stage for the final trio, and this added to the excitement. Many bands still perform the piece this way.



With the passing years the march has endeared itself to the American people. The sight of Sousa conducting his own great band in this, his most glorious composition, always triggered an emotional response. The piece was expected—and sometimes openly demanded—at every concert of the Sousa Band. Usually it was played unannounced as an encore. Many former Sousa Band members have stated that they could not recall a concert in which it was not played, and that they too were inspired by looking into the misty eyes of those in the audience. That the players never tired of it is surely a measure of its greatness.

**John Philip Sousa** (b. November 6, 1854 – d. March 6, 1932) was an American composer and conductor of the late Romantic era, known primarily for American military marches. Because of his mastery of march composition, he is known as "*The March King*", or the "*American March King*" due to his British counterpart, Kenneth J. Alford also being known by the former nickname. Among his best-known marches are "***The Stars and Stripes Forever***" (National March of the United States of America), "***Semper Fidelis***" (Official March of the United States Marine Corps), "***The Liberty Bell***" (used as the theme for *Monty Python's Flying Circus*), "***The Thunderer***", and "***The Washington Post***".

Sousa began his career playing violin and studying music theory and composition under John Esputa and George Felix Benkert. His father enlisted him in the United States Marine Band as an apprentice in 1868. After departing the band in 1875, Sousa learned to conduct. From 1880 until his death, he focused exclusively on conducting and the writing of music. He eventually rejoined the Marine Band and served there for 12 years as director. On leaving the Marine Band, Sousa organized his own band. Sousa aided in the development of the sousaphone, a large brass instrument similar to the helicon and tuba.

Upon the outbreak of World War I, Sousa was awarded a wartime commission of lieutenant commander to lead the Naval Reserve Band in Illinois. Following his tenure, he returned to conduct the Sousa Band until his death in 1932. (In the 1920s he was promoted to the permanent rank of lieutenant commander in the naval reserve, but never saw active service again.)