



# John Philip Sousa

Cincinnati Pops  
**Erich Kunzel**

*alto*

# John Philip Sousa

[1]	<i>Stars and Stripes Forever</i>	3:32
[2]	<i>La Reine de la mer</i>	5:49
[3]	<i>Gliding Girl Tango</i>	3:46
[4]	<i>The Thunderer</i>	2:40
[5]	<i>Myrrha Gavotte</i>	4:39
[6]	<i>Washington Post</i>	2:27
[7]	<i>Peaches Cream</i>	3:31
[8]	<i>High School Cadets</i>	2:39
[9]	<i>Waltz from comic opera Desiree</i>	5:03
[10]	<i>Prelude to comic opera El Capitan</i>	3:09
[11]	<i>Presidential Polonaise</i>	3:58
[12]	<i>Semper Fidelis</i>	2:40
[13]	<b>Julius Fučík: <i>Entry of the Gladiators</i></b>	2:44
[14]	<b>Morton Gould: <i>American Salute</i></b>	4:22
[15]	<b>George Gershwin: <i>Girl Crazy</i></b>	5:45
	<b>Victor Herbert</b>	
[16]	<i>Festival March</i>	6:56
[17]	<i>American Fantasia</i>	9:55

**Cincinnati Pops Orchestra**  
**Erich Kunzel, conductor**

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## NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

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The American composer **John Philip Sousa** (1854-1932) was known as 'the March King', but his other works are worthy of revival. His operetta *El Capitan*, starring the giant basso De Wolf Hopper, was the hit of 1896 on Broadway and is still occasionally revived on stage. He could be seen as one of the most influential American composers of the early 20th century. But it is the quickstep marches that endure, composed at a time when the United States was becoming a world power. The son of immigrant parents, he chose to study close to home, busying himself playing violin in pit bands and later in the US Marine band. In 1879 he conducted one of the many companies playing *HMS Pinafore* and the following year became the conductor of the US Marine band, holding this position until he formed his own band in 1892. Sousa's Band enjoyed phenomenal success, touring the country annually, making four tours of Europe between 1900-05 and in 1910/11 travelling the world. During World War One Sousa served in the Navy training their band to serve the war effort, but following the war he reformed Sousa's Band keeping up a heavy schedule until the Depression forced closure in 1931. He died the following year and was buried in Washington, the city of his birth. Hollywood filmed the story of his life in 1952 (*Stars and Stripes Forever*), but his proudest accolade would probably have been his admission in 1973 to the Hall of Fame for Great Americans.

This collection opens with his most famous march *Stars and Stripes Forever* (1897). Inspiration for the piece came to him as he was pacing the deck of the steamer *Teutonic* following the death of his manager. He wrote: 'I began to sense the rhythmic beat of a band playing within my brain... Throughout the whole tense voyage, that imaginary band continued to unfold the same themes, echoing and re-echoing the most distinct melody.' He had also been suffering from homesickness whilst in Europe on holiday and had longingly recalled the sight of the American



flag fluttering from the flagstaff of the White House. Sousa later explained that the main theme represents the North, the piccolo obbligato the South and the trombone countermelody, the West.

Sousa composed a number of waltzes, of which ***La Reine de la Mer*** (the Queen of the Sea) was allegedly his favourite. Written in 1886 it was dedicated to Mrs W.C. Whitney, the wife of the Secretary of the Navy. Sousa played this piece as part of his farewell to the US Marine Band in 1892. In 1912 the tango was all the rage in Europe. Sousa's daughter Priscilla apparently gave her father a demonstration of the dance upon her return from Europe - Sousa's reaction was to compose ***The Gliding Girl Tango. The Thunderer***, a march dating from 1889, was dedicated to a fellow freemason at the 24th Triennial Conclave of the Grand Encampment. It has been suggested by a member of Sousa's family that this piece is a tribute to the *Times* newspaper, also known as 'The Thunderer', but as Sousa had no known link with the paper, this association seems unlikely.

The ***Myrrha Gavotte*** (1876) stems from the period when Sousa had befriended a diplomat named William Hunter. Hunter kindly gave Sousa work as a violinist in a string quartet and tried to persuade him to take up study in Europe. Sousa dedicated this delightful concert piece to him in return. In 1889 The ***Washington Post*** newspaper ran an essay competition for schoolchildren and commissioned a march from Sousa to be played at the awards ceremony in the presence of President Harrison. This two-step quickly became popular throughout Europe and America but Sousa received just \$35 for his efforts, whilst predictably his publisher made a fortune.

Sousa always liked to be kept abreast of musical fashion: one of his last works was the ***Peaches and Cream Foxtrot***, composed in 1924 and used as an encore piece by the band. The inspiration for the work came after Sousa had watched his granddaughter dance. The ***High School Cadets*** march of 1890

is another example of Sousa's inability to judge the pecuniary value of his compositions, again being paid a mere \$35 for the piece. He was however spared in this case having to pay for the publication and copyrighting costs as was normally the case for composers because the recipients (the marching corps and teachers of this Washington school) were so delighted with Sousa's efforts that they gladly paid the necessary amount.

Sousa was asked by President Arthur to compose a piece to replace *Hail to the Chief* at official functions and he obliged with two. The first, composed in 1886, was ***Presidential Polonaise*** (also known as *In Echelon Polonaise*) and the second, ***Semper Fidelis*** (the motto of the U.S. Marine Corps, meaning 'ever faithful') followed in 1888 (after Arthur's death). The first performance was a spectacular event as an extra complement of trumpets played the 'tune' in unison in front of President Harrison's stand, the resulting applause being led by the President himself.

**Julius Fučík** was born in Prague in 1872. Between 1885-91 he studied under Dvořák among others at the Prague Conservatory. Upon graduating he played the bassoon in the band of the 49th Austro- Hungarian Regiment until 1894 when he played in the orchestra of the German Theatres in Prague and then Zagreb, also playing in the Czech Wind Trio. Between 1897-1900 he was bandmaster of the 86th Austro-Hungarian Regiment stationed first in Sarajevo and then in Budapest. It was at this time that he composed his best known work ***Entry of the Gladiators***. Other works composed during this period include some ambitiously scored waltzes. Following another stint as bandmaster (this time in Terezín and Prague) he married, retired and settled in Berlin where he founded a Czech ex-pat orchestra and also a publishing firm Tempo-Verlag. He died of cancer in 1916.

**Morton Gould** (1913-96) was one of the most successful composers of popular symphonic works of the 20th century. At

the tender age of 21 he was arranger and conductor of a weekly radio programme and soon he was much in demand in the theatre and cinema. He also presented musical education programmes on TV. Much of his work such as *Derivations*, written for Benny Goodman in 1956, was jazz-influenced, or drew upon American Heritage (for example the ballet *Fall River Legend* (1947) or the work presented here: **American Salute**, an orchestral arrangement of 'When Johnny comes marching home', also written in 1947).

**George Gershwin** (1898-1937) also successfully pursued a career in both serious and lighter music with concert works being happily produced alongside musical comedy. In 1930 he and his brother Ira produced one of their most successful shows in **Girl Crazy** which counted among its stars two young ladies making their debut – Ginger Rogers and Ethel Merman. In the pit at various points of the run appeared Red Nichols, Jack and Charlie Teagarden, Glenn Miller, Benny Goodman, Jimmy Dorsey and Gene Krupa who kept things alive during the interval. The overture, arranged here by Don Rose, opens with *I got rhythm*, *Embraceable You* and *Land of the Gay Caballero* before subsiding gracefully into *But not for me* in its slower middle section. *Bronco Busters* takes over leading the overture to a boisterous conclusion.

The massive success enjoyed by Gilbert and Sullivan in the late 1870/80s led eventually to a reaction against British light opera and a search for home-grown American talent. The first to fit this bill was **Victor Herbert**, who was actually born in Dublin in 1859 and gained his musical education in Germany. He made a reputation for himself there as a fine cellist before sailing to New York with his young wife in 1886 where they were both engaged by the Metropolitan Opera, she as soloist, he as cellist in the pit. He also joined the faculty of the newly formed National Conservatory of Music shortly before Dvořák was invited to head the school. Between 1898-1904 he conducted

the Pittsburgh Orchestra and then formed his orchestra specifically to promote light American music. In 1913 he was co-founder of the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP).

Although famous in his time as a virtuoso cellist and conductor his fame today almost entirely rests with his operettas, superbly written and tuneful, which from the late 1890s until c1920 competed successfully with the best of British and European operetta. Shows still being revived today include *Babes in Toyland* (1903), *Eileen* (1917), *Mlle Modiste* (1905), *Naughty Marietta* (1910), *Sweethearts* (1913), *Princess Pat* (1915) and *Wonderland* (1905). He also wrote a successful grand opera *Natoma* (1911) and composed one of the first full-length film scores for *The Fall of the Nation* (1916). A number of his orchestral works are occasionally revived, the best known of which is probably his charming *Suite of Serenades*, first performed in the famous Paul Whiteman concert that introduced *Rhapsody in Blue*. Herbert died just a few months after this concert in May 1924.

The two Victor Herbert pieces represented on this disc are **Festival March** (previously *Auditorium Festival March*), performed by Herbert and the Pittsburgh Orchestra to celebrate the opening of Chicago's Auditorium Theatre. Listeners will recognise 'Auld Lang Syne' as the main theme and also pre-echoes of his more famous 'March of the Toys' from *Babes in Toyland*. The early piece **American Fantasy** from 1893 completes the programme. This work, published as *American Fantasia* uses themes from popular American songs such as Foster's 'Old Folks at Home' (Swanee River), 'The Girl I left behind Me', Dan Emmett's 'Dixie' and lastly 'The Star-Spangled Banner'.

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## NOTES ON THE ARTIST

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**Erich Kunzel's** career was rewarded by his U.S National Medal of Arts, in 2007, the highest honour to those who have contributed to the arts in the United States. The legendary "Prince of Pops" was also honoured in September 2008 as an inductee into the American Classical Music Hall of Fame. Born 1935 and Educated at Dartmouth, Harvard and Brown Universities, Mr. Kunzel studied with, and was personal assistant to, the great French conductor Pierre Monteux. By 1970, when Arthur Fiedler invited him to conduct the Boston Pops for the first time, Erich Kunzel's commitment to "pops" was assured and he led them in more than 100 performances.

Kunzel, a young conductor from Brown University, was invited to join the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra as associate conductor in 1965. That October he conducted his first sold-out "8 O'Clock Pops" concert, marking his ascent as a modern legend. The Cincinnati Pops, part of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, was then officially founded in 1977 with Kunzel at the helm. For decades he led them in packed houses in Cincinnati's Music Hall, and also gained new fans the world over through tours, TV specials and millions of recordings sold. Maestro Kunzel led tours that included Carnegie Hall, Radio City Music Hall and numerous international tours included the UK, and a celebrated tour to China in 2005.

He recorded 100 albums with the Cincinnati Pops. 55 of these albums appeared on the Top 10 Billboard Charts. He was named their Classical Crossover Artist of the Year for four consecutive years. Several Grammy Awards, the distinguished Grand Prix Du Disque, and others highlighted his fantastic recording career.

Kunzel also appeared in more than 100 performances with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra at the Ravinia Festival. In 2004 he made his debut with the San Francisco Opera conducting *The Merry Widow*. In 2005 he made his Viennese debut as part of

the 100th anniversary season of the Vienna Volksoper, conducting *The Sound of Music* and in January 2008 he led the Vienna Volksoper Symphony Orchestra in a Gala New Year's Eve Tour in eight concerts in Japan.

In August of 2009 Erich Kunzel was appointed honorary artistic director for the 2012 World Choir Games, which will host its first-ever event in the U.S.A, but his unexpected death on 1st September closed this next chapter of a unique career.



**Alto ALC1108**

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Recorded in 1978 ([13], [16], [17]), 1979 ([15]), 1982 ([1]-[12]) & 1984 ([14])

Producer: Judith Sherman ([1]-[12], [14]-[15]) and Mark Hood ([13], [16], [17])

Engineer: MacDonald Moore ([1]-[12]), Mark Hood ([13], [16], [17]), Judith Sherman ([14]), David Lau ([15])

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Reissue producer: **Robin Vaughan**

2025 digital edition produced by **Gene Gaudette**, **Urlicht AudioVisual**

Cover image: John Philip Sousa 1900, by **E. Chickering**, courtesy Library of Congress, Washington DC

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