



AMERICAN CLASSICS



John Philip
SOUSA

Music for Wind Band • 21

Selections from *Chris*
and the Wonderful Lamp

Sisterhood of the States

Showing Off Before Company

Royal Birmingham Conservatoire
Wind Orchestra

Keith Brion



John Philip Sousa (1854–1932)

Music for Wind Band • 21

John Philip Sousa personified turn-of-the-century America, the comparative innocence and brash energy of a still new nation. His ever-touring band represented America across the globe, and brought music to hundreds of American towns. Born 6 November 1854, he reached this exalted position with startling quickness. In 1880, at the age of 26, he became conductor of the United States Marine Band. In twelve years the vastly improved ensemble won high renown and Sousa's compositions earned him the title of "The March King." Sousa went one better with the formation of his own band in 1892, bringing him world acclaim.

In its first seven years the band gave 3,500 concerts; in an era of train and ship travel it logged over a million miles in nearly four decades. There were European tours in 1900, 1901, 1903, and 1905, and a world tour in 1910–11, the zenith of the band era.

The unprecedented popularity of the Sousa Band came at a time when few American orchestras existed. From the Civil War to about 1920, band concerts were the most important aspect of US musical life. No finer band than Sousa's was ever heard. Sousa modified the brass band by decreasing the brass and percussion instruments, while increasing its woodwinds, and adding a harp. His conducting genius attracted the finest musicians, enabling him to build an ensemble capable of executing programs almost as varied as those of a symphony orchestra. The Sousa Band became the standard by which American bands were measured, causing a dramatic upgrading in quality nationally. Sousa's compositions also spread his fame. Such marches as *The Stars and Stripes Forever*, *El Capitan*, *The Washington Post*, and *Semper Fidelis* are universally acknowledged as the best of the genre. Sousa said a march "should make a man with a wooden leg step out and dance," and his surely did. Although he standardized the march form as it is known today, he was no mere maker of marches, but an exceptionally inventive composer of over 200 works, including

symphonic poems, suites, operas and operettas. His principles of instrumentation and tonal color influenced many classical composers. His robust, patriotic operettas of the 1890s helped introduce a truly native musical attitude in American theater.

❶ Selections from *Chris and the Wonderful Lamp*

Chris and the Wonderful Lamp (1899) was Sousa's musical re-telling of the Aladdin legend. The show opened at New Haven's Hyperion Theatre in October 1899. On 1 January 1900 it opened on Broadway to favorable reviews at Hammerstein's Victoria Theatre.

❷ Sisterhood of the States

In September 1916, Sousa's Band was engaged as part of an extravaganza associated with the opening of the newly built New York Hippodrome, a predecessor of today's Radio City Music Hall. At the time it was the world's largest theater.

The show was called *Hip Hip Hooray* and claimed to be the most elaborate stage extravaganza New York had ever seen. Sousa's Band accompanied a "ballet of the states" in which each of the 48 states was represented by a sextet of dancing girls. For his *Sisterhood* performances, Sousa arranged characteristic tunes from each state. The act was climaxed with Sousa's *The Stars and Stripes Forever*.

❸ Showing Off Before Company

Sousa devised a clever musical routine he called *Showing Off Before Company*. The concept was perhaps initially inspired by band members who sometimes arrived back late from lunch. Thus, the piece was frequently employed to open his matinee concerts since, when ready, individual sections could emerge from off stage, performing solo pieces for their section, and then take their places on the stage. Sousa did not conduct this work, but instead waited in the wings. After all of the sections had finally entered, the band would break into

Sousa's *Semper Fidelis*. Just as the march was finishing, Sousa would finally stride out to the podium, but then conduct only the march's final "stinger".

Keith Brion

With the prior permission of the author, Paul E. Beirley (1926–2016), program notes for this Naxos Sousa series have been freely adapted from his book *The Works of John Philip Sousa*, Integrity Press, 1984.

Royal Birmingham Conservatoire Wind Orchestra

Flute I Georgina Silverton Abi Keers	Clarinet III Elvinas Reinikovas Will Hammond Louis Stanhope	Bassoon II Jude Crofton Hugh Woolley	Tenor trombone I Ryan Richards Toby Carr
Flute II/III Natasha Hobson Helena Bale	Bass clarinet Emma Mackinder	Contrabassoon Hugh Woolley	Tenor trombone II Charles Denney
Piccolo Faith Tu	E flat clarinet Jacob Perry	Horn Chris Simpson Tom Hayes Barney Stevens Will Snell Henry Wright	Bass trombone Tom Pilsbury
Oboe I Deirdre Glavin	Alto clarinet Zulhafeez Zainuri	Trumpet I & Post horn Alex Leach	Euphonium I Susanna Blamire
Oboe II Catrin Round	Alto saxophone I Paul Lamstaes	Trumpet II Sam Walker	Euphonium II Hal Walker
Clarinet I Anton Clarke-Butler Katie Jenner Nathan Isaac Dominic O'Sullivan Chloe Percy-Smith Izzy Matthews	Alto saxophone II Rebekkah Lycett	Solo cornet Wilson Taylor	Tuba I James Hobbis Luke Atkinson
Clarinet II Tom Gant Kaethe Uken Gloria Castilla Romero	Tenor saxophone Alicia Hillman	Cornet I Mitch Siviter	Tuba II Hywel Williams
	Tenor & Baritone saxophones Isabella Goodwin	Cornet II Glen Carroll Elsbeth Goacher	Percussion I Gloria Yehilevsky
	Baritone & Bass saxophones Cameron Woodhead	Flugelhorn Tom Stoneman	Percussion II Alex Henshaw
	Bassoon I Caroline Simpkins		Percussion III & Timpani Jerome Blackburn
			Harp Rita Schindler

Royal Birmingham Conservatoire



Royal Birmingham Conservatoire is an international, multidisciplinary conservatoire offering undergraduate and postgraduate courses in music, acting, applied performance and stage management; it also has a thriving Junior Department for young musicians. The Conservatoire's focus is on helping its students achieve the extraordinary, and encouraging each individual to become the best that they can be. It prides itself on a vibrant and supportive learning environment and ensuring that it prepares students for the challenging performance industry that awaits them. The Conservatoire is both a school of the Arts, Design and Media faculty of Birmingham City University, and a major concert and performance venue in the city which hosts hundreds of events annually. Based in the dynamic Eastside 'learning quarter' of Birmingham, it is regularly visited by performers, tutors and directors from all over the world. The Conservatoire's recently opened music facilities encompass state-of-the-art performing and teaching facilities, including five new public performance spaces, seven industry standard recording studios, a black box experimental performance space and the Eastside Jazz Club, which is Birmingham's only dedicated jazz venue. The music facility is the first of its kind built for the digital age, and provides students with the space to experiment with new technologies, and the technology to enhance their live performance opportunities.

www.bcu.ac.uk/conservatoire

Keith Brion



Keith Brion leads his own New Sousa Band and is a frequent conductor of light music orchestral concerts throughout America and internationally. He is a specialist in Sousa's period style and has published numerous performing editions of his music.

John Philip
SOUSA
(1854–1932)

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- 1** **Selections from *Chris and the Wonderful Lamp* (1899)**
(arranged by Mike Purton) **21:55**
- 2** **Sisterhood of the States (1915)**
(realized, edited and reconstructed
by Manuel A. Arambola) **10:47**
- 3** **Showing Off Before Company (1919)**
(reconstructed, edited and arranged
by Kevin R. Tam) **33:10**

Caroline Simpkins, Bassoon 3

Rita Schindler, Harp 3

**Royal Birmingham Conservatoire
Wind Orchestra**

Keith Brion

Recorded: 15–17 April 2018 at The Bradshaw Hall,
Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, UK
Producer and editor: Mike Purton
Engineer: Matthew O'Malley
Booklet notes: Keith Brion • Publisher: Willow Blossom Music
For further information on the printed scores in this series,
please email sousa@naxos.com
Cover: John Philip Sousa, c. 1912 (photographer unknown)
(Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division,
Washington, D.C.)



AMERICAN CLASSICS

This current volume of Sousa's music for wind band presents three exceptional examples of Sousa's musical creativity. *Chris and the Wonderful Lamp* is an enchanting retelling of the Aladdin legend, while *Showing Off Before Company* is a clever routine Sousa often used to open matinee concerts. The painstaking reconstruction of *Sisterhood of the States* allows us to hear the 'ballet' that incorporated music from each of the 48 states for a spectacular show in 1916.



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Playing
Time:
66:05