

Stars and Stripes Forever

John Philip Sousa's Music and Legacy

John Philip Sousa, IV and Loras John Schissel, Music Division

Sunday, November 4, 2012
Hill Center at the Old Naval Hospital



Program

Introductions

Screening of *Stars and Stripes Forever* (1952)

Directed by Henry Koster (1905-1988), starring Clifton Webb (1889-1966) as John Philip Sousa

Discussion: John Philip Sousa's Music and Legacy

John Philip Sousa, IV and Loras John Schissel

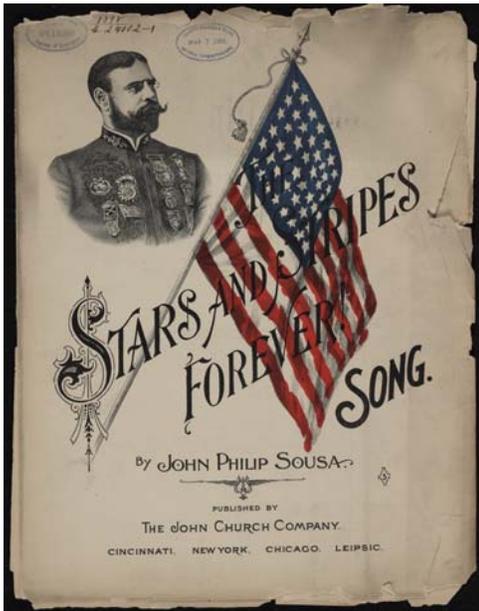
Book-signing—*John Philip Sousa's America: The Patriot's Life in Images and Words*



John Philip Sousa, IV is the great-grandson of John Philip Sousa. Sousa, born in New York City, moved to California with his mother at age 4. During his early teens, he spent three years at schools in New England and then at age 18 joined the United States Air Force where he spent a year in Greece and over three years in the United Kingdom. He was honorably discharged in late 1966. He is a frequent speaker and narrator at Sousa concerts and patriotic concerts around the country. He not only talks about his great-grandfather, his music and the impact he had on this country, but also what Sousa has meant to American cultural heritage. Sousa shares with audiences humorous stories of what it is like to be the great-grandson of such an historic person. He can be seen periodically on television talk shows and is interviewed regularly for radio and print media. Sousa has had a successful career in financial services.

Loras John Schissel has been a regular conductor with the Cleveland Orchestra since 1998. During that time he has produced and conducted concerts of American music both at Severance Hall and at the orchestra's summer home at the Blossom Music Center. Mr. Schissel is also the founder and music director of the Virginia Grand Military Band. This ensemble is comprised of current and retired musicians from the four Washington-based U.S. military bands. As a composer/arranger, Loras John Schissel has a catalogue of over 400 published works and has recorded over 200 compact disc recordings. Mr. Schissel's film scores have been heard regularly on PBS and he scored two films for the FDR Presidential Library in Hyde Park, New York. Loras John Schissel is a senior specialist in music at the Library of Congress and is a regular commentator on NPR, the Voice of America, and the BBC. He has recently co-authored a new book on the life and work of John Philip Sousa.

Presented in cooperation with the Hill Center at the Old Naval Hospital



***Stars and Stripes Forever* [sheet music]**

Sousa, John Philip (1854-1932)

Published 1898, The John Church Company

Music Division, Library of Congress

M1630.3.S (case)

The Music Division, Library of Congress holds the **John Philip Sousa Collection**, a comprehensive archive of materials related to "The March King." The first materials were donated by Sousa at the request of Oscar Sonneck, and members of Sousa's family have continued to make additions to the collection. The collection includes music manuscripts, photographs, literary manuscripts and business papers.



***Stars and Stripes Forever*—Library of Congress Performing Arts Encyclopedia**

*Let martial note in triumph float
And liberty extend its mighty hand...*

John Philip Sousa was America's "March King." He was surrounded by music from birth: his father played trombone with the U.S. Marine Band and as a child he studied violin as well as music theory. He grew up during the Civil War in Washington, D.C., where martial music was frequently played both in homes and on the streets.

Sousa attended band rehearsals with his father and, after his parents disapproved of his joining a circus band, was pressed into service as an apprentice musician with the Marine Band. By age twenty-six he was the Band's director -- a position he held from 1880-1892. During those years Sousa added to the Band's repertoire not only the work of Europe's then contemporary composers (Tchaikovsky, Verdi, Wagner and others) but also compositions of his own such as "President Garfield's Inauguration March (1881)," "Semper Fidelis (1888)," and "The Washington Post" (1889).

Sousa was the greatest musical star of his era, combining the charisma and popularity of Leonard Bernstein and the Beatles. He was so popular that he left the Marine Band to start his own band in 1892. It toured the nation with unparalleled success. Four years later, while on vacation in Europe with his wife, Sousa received word that his good friend and band manager, David Blakely, had died. Sousa quickly returned to the States aboard the S.S. Teutonic. Pacing the deck of the ship, the music of "The Stars and Stripes Forever" began to come to him, its first stirring notes being those of the "Dies Irae." As he wrote in his autobiography, "...absorbed in thoughts of my manager's death and the many duties and decisions which awaited me in New York. Suddenly, I began to sense a 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 distant melody. I did not transfer a note of that music to paper while I was on the steamer, but when we reached shore, I set down the measures that my brain-band had been playing for me, and not a note of it has ever changed." For twenty-five years Sousa's Band played the march at almost every concert it held. Although the piece is always played as an instrumental, Sousa did set words -- somewhat triumphalistic by today's standards -- to it.

*Let martial note in triumph float
And liberty extend its might hand
A flag appears 'mid thunderous cheers,
The banner of the Western land.*

Sousa always wore a neat military-like uniform when he conducted, displayed a lot of vim and vigor on stage, and carried himself with remarkably fine posture. He was the prolific composer of 15 operettas, 70 songs, numerous overtures, concert pieces, vocal works, waltzes, books and articles, along with his 136 marches. "The Stars and Stripes Forever" was declared the National March of the United States in 1987. Sousa's other marches included "El Capitan," "The Pathfinder of Panama," "Hands Across the Sea," "Solid Men to the Front" and "The High School Cadets." Sousa also composed a number of pieces to encourage student bands and music education in U.S. schools: "Marquette University March," "University of Illinois March" and "University of Nebraska March."

source: www.loc.gov/performingarts