

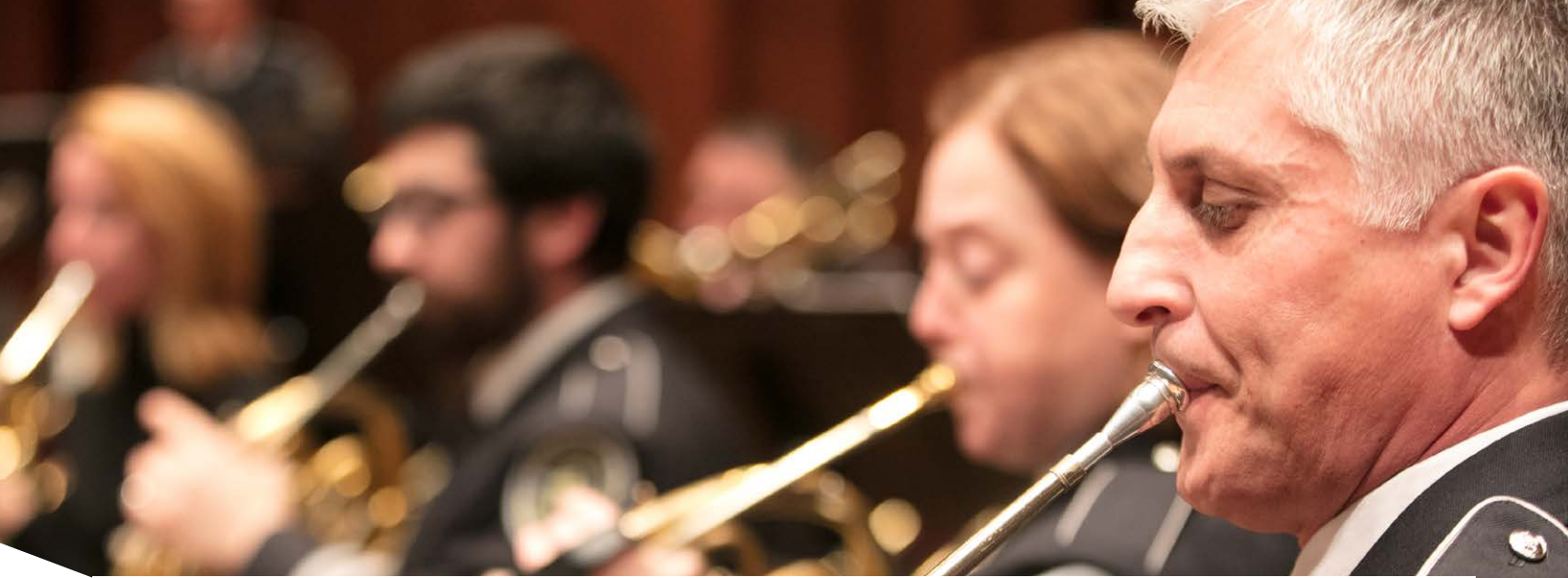
John Philip
SOUZA
BAND FESTIVAL

MARCH 8, 2026

The John F. Kennedy Center
for the Performing Arts



MUSIC
CELEBRATIONS
INTERNATIONAL



Music Celebrations International is pleased to present the Sousa Band Festival, an exclusive music event that will take place on March 8, 2026 in the Concert Hall at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. Four select concert bands will be featured in performance at this historic concert venue. Each band will also take part in a festival clinic with Colonel Dennis M. Layendecker - Former Commander & Conductor of the United States Air Force Band and Orchestra, and retired Chair of Music at George Mason University.

The program will emphasize the life and influence of John Philip Sousa, “The March King,” on the American Band movement. Participating bands will have the opportunity to visit important Sousa sites in Washington, D.C., including Historic Congressional Cemetery, where he was laid to rest.

Sousa began his musical career at age 6, when he first learned the violin. When the young Sousa turned 13, his father, a trombonist in the United States Marine Band, enlisted his son in the Marine Corps as an apprentice. Sousa served his apprenticeship for seven years, until 1875, and learned to play all the wind instruments while honing his mettle with the violin. Several years later, Sousa left his apprenticeship to join a theater orchestra where he learned to conduct.

Founded in 1798, the oldest professional music organization in the United States is the United States Marine Band. For all its rich history and traditions, it is probably best known as being led by Sousa from 1880 to 1892. These years started a very long and prolific period of march composition for Sousa, including legendary marches that are still performed today - The Washington Post, The Gladiator, and of course, Stars and Stripes Forever. Semper Fidelis, in addition to being the motto of the United States Marine Corps, is also the title of the official march of the Corps, composed by Sousa in 1889.



Photo courtesy The Kennedy Center

THE JOHN F. KENNEDY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts is America’s living memorial to President John F. Kennedy, attracting millions of visitors each year to more than 2,000 performances, events, and exhibits. With its artistic affiliates, the National Symphony Orchestra and Washington National Opera, the Center is one of the nation’s busiest performing arts centers dedicated to providing world-class art, powerful education, and outstanding memorial experiences to the broadest possible constituency. On September 7, 2019, the Kennedy Center inaugurated the REACH, its first-ever major expansion, providing visitors with new opportunities to interact and engage with the Center as the nation’s premier nexus of arts, learning, and culture.

SAMPLE ITINERARY

DAY ONE: THURSDAY, MARCH 5, 2026

- Arrive in Washington, D.C.
- Meet your MCI Tour Manager, who will escort you through the duration of your activities
- Enjoy a panoramic motorcoach tour of Historic Washington, D.C., including Lafayette Square for a photo opportunity of the White House
- Dinner at a local restaurant
- Enjoy an evening walking tour of the Jefferson Memorial and the Iwo Jima Marine Memorial
- Check-in to your hotel for overnight

DAY TWO: FRIDAY, MARCH 6

- Breakfast at the hotel
- Enjoy a tour of one of the Smithsonian Institution Museums
- Lunch, on own
- Self-guided tour the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum *Remember the Children: Daniel's Story* (exhibit located on the 1st floor)
- Dinner at a local restaurant
- Return to the hotel for overnight

DAY THREE: SATURDAY, MARCH 7

- Breakfast at the hotel
- Visit the National Archives where the Declaration of Independence and Constitution of the United States are on display
- Lunch, on own
- Visit Historic Congressional Cemetery for a wreath-laying ceremony at the graveside of John Philip Sousa
- Festival lunch cruise on the Potomac River
- *Participate in a clinic with Col. Dennis M. Layendecker*
- Dinner, on own
- Take an evening walking tour of the Lincoln, Vietnam, Korean, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Martin Luther King, and National World War II Memorials, as well as a view of the outside of the Washington Monument
- Return to the hotel for overnight

DAY FOUR: SUNDAY, MARCH 8

- Breakfast at the hotel and check-out
- *Morning sound check at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts*
- Lunch at KC Café
- Tour the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts facilities
- *Sousa Band Festival Performance at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts*
- Following the performance, depart for home



UPCOMING EVENTS

PERCY GRAINGER WIND BAND FESTIVAL | SPRING 2026

Chicago, Illinois | Orchestra Hall at Symphony Center

The annual Percy Grainger Wind Band Festival will feature four outstanding wind ensembles conducting standalone performances of Percy Grainger literature in an afternoon matinée performance in Chicago's Historic Orchestra Hall at Symphony Center. In addition to the performance, each ensemble will have a private clinic with an esteemed conductor.

BOSTON INSTRUMENTAL FESTIVAL | MARCH 28-29, 2026

Boston, Massachusetts | Boston Symphony Hall

Music Celebrations International is pleased to produce the Boston Instrumental Festival taking place in the iconic Boston Symphony Hall. Few cities in the United States rival the historical and musical significance of Boston. From its celebrated symbols of patriotism to its undiscovered neighborhoods, the sights and sounds of the nation's revolutionary birthplace inspire millions of visitors every year. In addition to the performance, each ensemble will have a private clinic with an esteemed conductor.

SUMMA CUM LAUDE INTL. YOUTH MUSIC FESTIVAL | JULY 3 - 8, 2026

Vienna, Austria | Musikverein | Konzerthaus

The Summa Cum Laude Festival is Austria's premier global youth music festival for choirs, bands & orchestras. Taking place every July in Vienna's two main classical concert venues, the Golden Hall of the Musikverein and the Konzerthaus, it offers an international environment where a thousand young musicians enjoy inter-cultural exchanges and build bridges that span continents.



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