

Sounds from the Hudson

Volume 16 Issue 1

Lieutenant Colonel Timothy J. Holtan, Commander/Conductor

GUEST ARTIST SERIES

A Hudson Valley Holiday



Jay Montgomery

A Hudson Valley Holiday with Jay Montgomery, Kevin McKelvy and the Mid-Hudson Ballet Company will occur on Saturday, December 15, 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, December 16, 2:00 p.m. (*note time change*) in the Eisenhower Hall Theatre, West Point, New York.

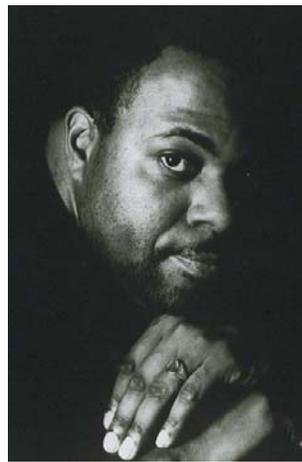
The 2007 A Hudson Valley Holiday promises to bring holiday favorites to families in the area. This year Jay Montgomery returns to sing *Peace on Earth/Little Drummer Boy* with Kevin McKelvy (1986 USMA graduate).

The Mid-Hudson Ballet Company, choreographed by the Estelle and Alfonso Dance Studio, delights audiences every year with selections from *The Nutcracker*. Sgt. 1st Class Laura Bradley will sing *Sleigh Ride* and *Count Your Blessings Instead of Sheep* and Sgt. 1st Class MaryKay Messenger will perform *Christmas Through the Eyes of a Child* and *White Christmas*. *Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree* will feature Staff Sgt. Diana Powers on piccolo and Staff Sgt. Brian Broelmann on bass saxophone. Santa Claus always steals the show at the end.



Kevin McKelvy

A Night of Gershwin



Sgt. 1st Class Alvy Powell

The Concert Band welcomes Sgt. 1st Class Alvy Powell and Gina Watson Powell on Friday, January 25, 7:30 p.m. in the Eisenhower Hall Theatre for *A Night of Gershwin*.

Sgt. 1st Class Powell of the "Pershing's Own" U.S. Army Band and Chorus in Washington, D.C. has had a distinguished career in and out of the military. Powell is one of the world's best-known interpreters of the role of Porgy, having won acclaim for his performances both at home and abroad. Sgt. 1st Class Powell has performed the role of Porgy over 1200 times with such companies as La Scala, New York City Opera, *Live at Lincoln Center*, San Francisco Opera, Cape Town Opera, Sydney Opera and Houston Opera. As a soloist with the U.S. Army Chorus, he has performed at the White House on multiple occasions and for numerous presidents and political figures.

Alvy's wife, Gina Watson Powell, has performed as a member of the Lyric Opera Cleveland and Toledo Opera. She has been a guest artist with the Fairfax Symphony, the National Symphony Orchestra, the Fort Smith Symphony, the Master Works Chorus of Washington, D.C. and the Bowling Green Philharmonic.



Gina Watson Powell

Trombonist Slide Hampton



Slide Hampton

The Jazz Knights take the stage with one of the great jazz legends, trombonist Slide Hampton, on Friday, February 15, 7:30 p.m. in the Eisenhower Hall Theatre at West Point. A charismatic figure, master arranger, and formidable trombonist, Slide Hampton holds a place of distinction in the jazz tradition.

In 2005 Mr. Hampton was named a National Endowment for the Arts Jazz Master. Slide's arranging talents were acknowledged when he received the 1998 and 2005 Grammy Award for Best Instrumental Arrangement. At the age of 20, he was performing at Carnegie Hall with the Lionel Hampton Band. Other legends he has performed with include Maynard Ferguson, Art Blakey, Dizzy Gillespie, Barry Harris, Thad Jones, Mel Lewis and Max Roach. In 1989, with Paquito D'Rivera, he was musical director of *Dizzy's Diamond Jubilee*. In 2004 Slide became musical director of the Dizzy Gillespie All-Star Big Band.

Fairfield County Children's Choir

The Fairfield County Children's Choir has been recently featured in *A Hudson Valley Holiday* concerts. Two springtime 2008 performances will occur: March 15, 7:30 p.m. in Klein Auditorium, Bridgeport, Connecticut; and Sunday, March 16, 3:00 p.m. in the Eisenhower Hall Theatre at West Point, New York.

The Fairfield County Children's Choir is a community-based choral program made up of over 260 children in grades four through twelve from communities in Connecticut's Fairfield County. They have shared the stage with such artists as Renee Fleming, Christopher Plummer, Charles Strouse and Stephen Schwartz.

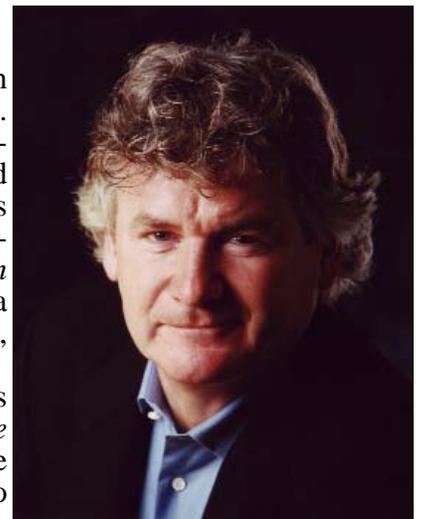


Fairfield County Children's Choir

Irish Tenor John McDermott

On Sunday, May 25th at Eisenhower Hall Theatre at 3:00 p.m., Irish tenor John McDermott returns to sing with the U.S. Military Academy Concert Band. John's first album, *Danny Boy*, was originally recorded as a private and personal 50th anniversary tribute for his parents. Its quality could not be ignored and it eventually found its way into the hands of EMI Music Canada. This album attracted a large North American fan base for McDermott and his tireless touring schedule led to his participation in the PBS phenomenon *The Irish Tenors*. The outcome of that fateful performance has catapulted him into a musical career that, not even ten years later, includes nine full-length albums, three Canadian platinum records and a solid international touring schedule.

In recognition of this commitment to veterans' causes, John was awarded one of the highest accolades in the United States: the *Bob Hope Award* given by the Congressional Medal of Honor Society. Despite the demands of his increasingly busy career as an entertainer, John continues to devote much of his time to the causes of homeless veterans.



John McDermott

USMA Concert Schedule BAND

Guest Artist Series

A Hudson Valley Holiday with **Jay Montgomery, Kevin McKelvy** and the **Mid-Hudson Ballet Company**: Saturday, December 15, 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, December 16, **2:00 p.m. (note new time)** in the Eisenhower Hall Theatre, West Point, New York.

U.S. Military Academy Band Chamber Groups at The Midwest Clinic: Wednesday, December 19, 11:30 a.m. at the Merle Reskin Theater, Chicago, Illinois.

Oboe Recital: Staff Sgt. Carey Winans: Sunday, January 20, 3:00 p.m. in the West Point Jewish Chapel.

Guest Artist Series



A Night of Gershwin, Concert Band with **Sgt. 1st Class Alvy Powell** and **Gina Watson Powell**: Friday, January 25, 7:30 p.m. in the Eisenhower Hall Theatre, West Point, New York.

Euphonium Recital: Staff Sgt. Jason Ham: Sunday, January 27, 3:00 p.m. in the West Point Jewish Chapel.

Jazz Knights: Wednesday, January 30, 7:00 p.m. at Dryden Middle School, Dryden, New York.

Trombone Recital: Sgt. 1st Class Teddy Arnold: Sunday, February 3, 3:00 p.m. in the West Point Jewish Chapel.

Hudson Highlands Trombone Ensemble: Sunday, February 10, 2:00 p.m. at the Hendrick Hudson Free Library, Montrose, New York.

Tuba Recital: Staff Sgt. Nathan Turner: Sunday, February 10, 3:00 p.m. in the West Point Jewish Chapel.

Academy Clarinet Quartet: Sunday, February 10, 3:00 p.m. at the Brookfield Library, Brookfield, Connecticut.

Guest Artist Series



Jazz Knights with special guest trombonist Slide Hampton: Friday, February 15, 7:30 p.m. in the Eisenhower Hall Theatre, West Point, New York.

Trumpet Recital: Staff Sgt. Derek Lance: Sunday, February 17, 3:00 p.m. in the West Point Jewish Chapel.

Saxophone Recital: Staff Sgt. David Loy Song: Sunday, February 24, 3:00 p.m. in the West Point Jewish Chapel.

Jazz Knights: Thursday, March 6, 6:00 p.m. at Oneida High School, Oneida, New York.

For concert information, cancellations and updates, call the Concert Information Hotline (845) 938-2617. All performances by the U.S. Military Academy Band are free and open to the public. Check www.usma.edu/band for the latest news, photos, concert events, highlights and vacancies.

Jazz Knights at the 27th Annual New York State Band Directors Association Symposium: Friday, March 7, 7:30 p.m. in the Wyndham Hotel, Syracuse, New York.

Jazz Knights with Rob Zappulla: Sunday, March 9, 3:00 p.m. in the Stanley Theatre, Utica, New York.

Jazz Knights: Saturday, March 15, 7:30 p.m. at the Taconic Hills Performing Arts Center, Craryville, New York.

Concert Band with the Fairfield County Children's Choir: Saturday, March 15, 7:30 p.m. Klein Auditorium, Bridgeport, Connecticut.

Guest Artist Series

Concert Band with the Fairfield County Children's Choir: Sunday, March 16, 3:00 p.m. in the Eisenhower Hall Theatre, West Point, New York.



Concert Band: Friday, March 28, 7:30 p.m. in the Performing Arts Center at Morristown, New Jersey.

Concert Band: Wednesday, April 2, 8:00 p.m. in the Corning Museum of Glass Auditorium, Corning, New York.

Concert Band: Thursday, April 3, 7:30 p.m. at the Oxford Academy High School, Oxford, New York.

Concert Band with the Young Artist Competition Winners: Saturday, April 12, 7:30 p.m. in the Lycian Center, Sugar Loaf, New York.

Concert Band: Wednesday, April 30, 7:30 p.m. in the Sherman Theater, Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania.

Concert Band: Thursday, May 1, 7:00 p.m. in the Regional Performing Arts Center - Carlisle Theater, Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

Jazz Knights: Thursday, May 1, 7:30 p.m. at the College of New Jersey in Ewing, New Jersey.

Concert Band: Friday, May 2, 7:30 p.m. at the College of New Jersey in Ewing, New Jersey.

Concert Band: Friday, May 16, 7:30 p.m. in the Arthur F. Couch Performing Arts Center, Secaucus, New Jersey.

Jazz Knights: Saturday, May 17, 7:00 p.m. in Brookhaven Amphitheater, Farmingville, New York.

Guest Artist Series



Concert Band with John McDermott: Sunday, May 25, 3:00 p.m. in the Eisenhower Hall Theatre, West Point, New York.

Did you know? In 1825, the Band performed at the official opening of the Erie Canal. Teacher of Music Richard Willis' *DeWitt Clinton's Grand Canal March* was composed for the occasion.



The Concert Band accompanied the inaugural Cadet Glee Club Alumni Concert at Trophy Point Amphitheatre in July.



Members of the Jazz Knights performed at the Rock n' Roll Hall of Fame during their trip supporting the Army vs. University of Akron football game in Cleveland.



Deputy Commander, Capt. Treg Ancelet, with the American Belles following a concert in Ridgefield, Connecticut.



Superintendent Lt. Gen. F. L. Hagenbeck promotes Sgt. Maj. Cal Christensen to Command Sgt. Major, the first ever in USMA Band history.



Lt. Col. Timothy Holtan with Joe Alessi, principal trombonist of the New York Philharmonic, and composer Joe Turrin.



In June, the Hellcats performed at the 2007 Greater Hamilton International Tattoo in Canada. The Hellcats were also featured during the event's grand finale production.



The Academy Band, conducted by Capt. Treg Ancelet, performed the *National Anthem* for the American League Division Series between the New York Yankees and the Cleveland Indians.



Sergeant Major Carmine Grasso, operations, has served the Army and U.S. Military Academy for over three decades. He joined the Academy Band in 1974 as a bugler in the Hellcats. For nineteen years he provided daily ceremonial music for the Corps of

Cadets, a 200-year old tradition at West Point. Sgt. Major Grasso also participated in other performances with the Hellcats, including a performance in Germany in 1992.

In 1994, Sgt. Major Grasso moved into the operations division of the USMA Band, eventually becoming operations chief. In 2002, he was promoted to the rank of Sgt. Major. His experience in the USMA Band made him well-suited for this position, and his deep knowledge of Band and Academy operations has been a great asset to the USMA Band and to the Military Academy.

Upon retirement, Sgt. Major Grasso plans to remain in Marlboro, New York with his wife, Master Sgt. Rachel Grasso, clarinet section leader of the USMA Band, daughter Meaghan and son Patrick.



Sergeant Major Robert Smither, trumpet, will retire from the USMA Band, concluding a career of over twenty three years of dedicated service to the United States Army. Sgt. Major Smither joined the Academy Band in 1984. A native of Freeman, Missouri, he holds a Master of Music from the University of Oklahoma. He has studied with Jacob Larson; Jim

Elswick, principal of the Springfield, Missouri Orchestra; and Mel Broiles, co-principal of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra.

Sgt. Major Smither spent the initial portion of his career performing with the Academy Band's field music group, the Hellcats, later moving to the Concert Band. In addition to his duties as Concert Band Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge, Sgt. Major Smither maintained an active performance schedule with the Academy Band's Heritage Brass Quintet.

Dedicated to serving both the U.S. Military Academy and the Army at large, Sgt. Major Smither takes great pride in his memories of performing funerals for fallen service members and veterans. His retirement plans include building a home in Branson, Missouri where he will be moving with his wife Melissa, their son Greyson and their foster daughter Kim.



Sergeant First Class Robert Jones, percussion, from Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, joined the Jazz Knights in May of 2003. Sgt. 1st Class Jones entered the Army band program in August 1987 and attended the U.S. Army Element School of Music in Little Creek, Virginia. His assignments took him to the 4th Infantry Division Band, Fort Carson, Colorado; the 2nd Infantry Division Band, Camp Casey, South Korea; the 323rd Army Band, Fort Sam Houston, Texas; the 1st Infantry Division Band, Bamberg, Germany and the 283rd Army Band, Fort Benning, Georgia.

After retirement, Sgt. 1st Class Jones will continue playing percussion with the New York Staff Band of the Salvation Army. In addition, he is currently employed by the Salvation Army's Eastern Territorial Headquarters as the property coordinator in the risk management department. Sgt. 1st Class Jones will continue to reside in the Hudson Valley area with his wife Lisa and son Brandon.



Staff Sergeant Nathan Eby, percussion, is originally from Redlands, California. Prior to arriving at the Academy Band in September of 2007, he earned his Bachelor of Arts and Master of Music in Music Performance from California State University and University of California-Los Angeles, respectively. He is currently working towards a Doctorate in Musical Arts at UCLA. Staff Sgt. Eby has held numerous prestigious performing positions, including assignments with the Rhythm Slam Percussion Ensemble and the touring productions of *Shockwave* and *CyberJam*.

Specialist Kristen Mather, clarinet, earned a Bachelor of Music from Youngstown State University in 2005. There she studied with Robert Fitzer. In 2006, she attended DePaul University in Chicago and studied with Chicago Symphony Orchestra principal clarinetist and former USMA Band clarinetist, Larry Combs. Staff Sgt. Mather has a varied musical background, performing with the Warren Philharmonic, the American Wind Symphony Orchestra, the Ohio Light Opera Orchestra and with renowned jazz bassist Dave Holland. She joined the Academy Band in October of 2007.



Staff Sergeant Carla Moebius, trumpet, joined the United States Military Academy Band in August of 2007. She received a Bachelor of Music Education from Indiana University, and has held classroom and private teaching positions in Indiana, Illinois and in Washington, D.C. She received her Master of Music in trumpet performance from the University of Maryland where she served as an adjunct faculty member in instrumental education. Staff Sgt. Moebius also served as the administrator for the Maryland Boys Choir and lead singer and trumpeter for *Retrospect*, a Washington, D.C. based dance/variety band. Her trumpet teachers include Edmund Cord and Chris Gekker.

Staff Sergeant Shane Pettit, instrument repair technician, from Easton, Pennsylvania, joined the U.S. Military Academy Band Support Staff in September of 2007. He holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts in tuba performance from Temple University. Prior to joining the Army band program, Staff Sgt. Pettit was an active freelance tubist as well as a full-time repair technician in the Philadelphia area. He apprenticed under Ed Coles of Regional Music Service in Millville, New Jersey, and was a journeyman repair technician under Bret Gustafson of Gustafson Music in Philadelphia. Prior to joining the USMA Band, Staff Sgt. Pettit served with the 2nd Infantry Division Band in Korea, and was also an instrument repair technician at the Armed Forces School of Music, Little Creek, Virginia. He most recently served as tuba instructor at the Armed Forces School of Music.



Sounds from the Hudson

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