ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: EARLY TIMPANI PERFORMANCE PRACTICE IN MODERN SOLO REPERTOIRE
Joshua Hickman, Doctor of Musical Arts, 2018

Dissertation Directed by: Dr. Michael Votta, School of Music

Timpanists of the Baroque era were virtuoso showmen of privileged rank, protected by royal decrees throughout Europe. These musicians learned by rote through apprenticeship performance mannerisms called Schlagmanieren which encompassed rudimentary rhythmical figures and embellishments, as well as performance style. Timpanists were expected in performance to not only embellish simplistic parts, but expound upon them by improvising. Along with trumpeters, timpanists also served on the battlefield as communication relays from commanding officers to infantry ranks. These musicians performed short pieces which could be heard across great distances, while at the same time preventing opposing armies from directly understanding the communicated information. With two or more drums, timpanists could perform solos that developed the form and phrasing of the original work as well as the utilization of more than two pitches.

Modern timpani repertoire continues to focus on the melodic potential of multiple pedal timpani, musical shaping and phrasing as well as development of basic rhythmical figures and ideas. My performance dissertation consists of recitals focused on the use of
early timpani solos and military signals as a foundation for improvisation, connecting these early timpani performance practices to modern repertoire counterparts. Each recital features selections of standard solo timpani repertoire connected via improvisation to an early-era timpani solo or military signal. On each recital I have also included one standard orchestral repertoire selection that I have arranged for multiple pedal timpani. On my first recital, I included a reduced version of a Baroque style timpani concerto to provide the audience with context; as timpani became an integral part of the orchestral sound, composers had to find a way to remove the improvisatory and embellishing performance practices while maintaining the command and spirit in the written parts. This concerto offered the listeners precisely this experience. Through these performances I hope to exemplify the strong connection of modern repertoire to its seemingly simplistic origins; the expectations of the early timpanist are just as demanding today.
EARLY TIMPANI PERFORMANCE PRACTICE IN MODERN SOLO REPERTOIRE

By

Joshua Hickman

Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the University of Maryland, College Park in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts 2018

Advisory Committee:

Dr. Michael Votta, Chair
Dr. Lee Hinkle, Co-Chair
Jauvon Gilliam
Craig Kier
Drew Baden
William Walters
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the members of my committee for their time and participation on this project: Dr. Michael Votta (Chair), Lee Hinkle (Co-Chair), Jauvon Gilliam (studio teacher), Craig Kier, Drew Baden (Dean’s Representative) and William Walters. Special thanks to Tony Ames, for his incredible generosity of time and musical talents. Thank you to my teachers, Bob Breithaupts, Ben Ramirez and Jauvon Gilliam for your dedication and mentorship.
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Doctor of Musical Arts Recital
Dissertation Recital: Early Timpani Performance Practice in Modern Solo Repertoire
Joshua Hickman, Timpani

September 11, 2018
6pm
Schermerhorn Symphony Center, Laura Turner Concert Hall
Nashville, TN
Teacher: Jauvon Gilliam
Advisor/Co-Chair: Lee Hinkle

Prussian Cavalry Signal No. 7 (Anonymous)

“Movement 3” from Three Episodes for Timpani (1980) John Beck (b.1933)

Ceremonial Timpani Solo Claude Babelon

Prussian Cavalry Signal No. 6 (Anonymous)


“Polonaise Waltz” from Eugene Onegin (1879) Tchaikovsky (1840-1893) arr. Josh Hickman

“Movements 1 and 3” from Concerto con Battaglia (1992) G.F. Salomon/ David Avshalamov (b.1946)
Timpanists of the Baroque Era were required to memorize basic musical patterns, rhythms and phrases. Along with trumpeters, these musicians were protected by royal decree. When used in military campaigns their memorized music fragments functioned as communication of orders and commands to the various ranks of infantry. The information the musicians had at their disposal was of value to opposing armies; significant effort was made to capture musicians of opposing armies to try and decipher the ‘encrypted’ musical codes.

Whether a timpanist had two drums available or more, he was expected to improvise and embellish based upon these patterns, signals or ceremonial solos. These musical elements and the improvisatory nature have become composed parts in modern timpani literature. With the use of modern pedal instruments I will demonstrate how these fundamental early practices are connected to modern timpani repertoire.

Cavalry signals were memorized musical phrases conveying vital information to the various infantry ranks. Timpanists and trumpeters were required to memorize these signals. The use of musical phrases acted as an encryption method; opposing armies would attempt to capture musicians for ransom, as the removal of timpanists and trumpeters severed encoded communication. These signals were preserved by Georg Thouret and were used by the armies of King Frederick the Great (1712-1786).¹

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Prussian Cavalry Signal No. 7 is in 2/4 and comprised of two repeating main sections. Each section is eight measures long.

Prussian Cavalry Signal No. 6 is in 3/8 and features dotted rhythms, providing a galloping feel to the rhythm. This signal is also comprised of two main sections that repeat. Each section is eight measures long.

John H. Beck (b. 1933) is a Professor Emeritus at Eastman School of Music, serving on faculty since 1959. His performing career began in the United States Marine Band in 1955, moving on to serve as Principal Percussion (1959-1962) and Principal Timpanist (1962-2002) in the Rochester Philharmonic.

Three Episodes for Timpani was published in 1980. The piece requires one player to play timpani and piano (first episode). The finale, Episode Three, uses thematic elements very similar to Prussian Cavalry Signal No. 5. Through the use of improvisation, I will connect the Cavalry Signal to Beck’s Episode Three, gradually complicating the rhythmic motives and use of multiple pitch changes.

Claude Babelon was a timpanist for King Louis XIV, as part of the “Timbalier et Trompettes des plaisirs.” These trumpeters and timpanist Babelon were required to follow the King and to play at his discretion. Several solo works composed by Babelon have been preserved through the work of André Philidor serving as Librarian for the Royal Music Library at Versailles. This particular solo is comprised of large repeated sections that contain smaller phrases or couplets. These phrases are grouped into couplets of varying measure numbers. In this particular selection Babelon begins each couplet with the same rhythmic motive.
Elliot Carter (1908-2012) was an American composer who was encouraged by Charles Ives to pursue his interest in composition. After graduating from Harvard in 1932 Carter continued his compositional training with Nadia Boulanger in Paris. Upon returning, Carter taught at various institutions including Peabody Conservatory, Juilliard and Yale.

*Eight Pieces for Four Timpani* was a project that spanned from 1950 to 1966. Six of the pieces were composed in 1950 (“Saeta”, “Moto Perpetuo”, “Recitative”, “Improvisation”, “Canaries”, “March”), while “Canto” and “Adagio” were added in 1966. Each piece makes use of four timpani and various performance effects (using snare drum sticks, pedal glissandi, contrapuntal themes and metric modulation).

“Canaries” (1950) is based upon a traditional and lively French Baroque dance that was inspired by indigenous music of the Canary Islands. The ‘6/8’ dance rhythms and metric modulations imitate the wild jumping and stamping from heel to toe dance choreography.

“Polonaise Waltz” from *Eugene Onegin* (1879) is a selection from an opera composed by Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893), and based upon the novel *Eugene Onegin* by Alexander Pushkin. Tchaikovsky found the plot to be weak and worked around this issue by selecting specific scenes that featured strong emotional content, calling them lyrical scenes. These scenes are not continuously connected by the original story but highlights from the novel. Tchaikovsky was hoping that due to the popularity of Pushkin’s work, the audience would be able to follow along with the missing story pieces.
based upon what he selected for the opera. The Opera is divided into three acts. This selection starts the opening of the third act, and is based upon a specific rhythmic pattern:

David Avshalomov (b. 1946) is a composer, vocalist and conductor, graduating from Harvard and the University of Washington. His compositional publications range the gamut from wind band to choral, chamber, orchestra works and concerti.

Concerto con Battaglia (1992) was a project inspired both by Avshalomov’s work in his own Baroque chamber orchestra, and his honors thesis on the melodic use of kettledrums. The piece is composed in a ‘quasi-Vivaldi-concertato style’ and ‘intended to fill a severe gap in the known solo repertoire timpani...’

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Doctor of Musical Arts Recital
Dissertation Recital: Early Timpani Performance Practice in Modern Solo Repertoire
Joshua Hickman, Timpani

October 30, 2018
2pm
Belmont University
Nashville, TN
Teacher: Jauvon Gilliam
Advisor/Co-Chair: Lee Hinkle

Prussian Cavalry Signal No. 4 Anonymous
(preserved by Georg Thouret)

“Etude No. 11” Jacques Delécluse (1933-2015)
from Vignt Etudes pour Timbales (1968)

“Corrente” from Dwayne Rice (b. 1974)
Baroque Suite for Five Timpani (2014)


Marche de Timballes Jacques Philidor (1657-1708)
par Philidor Cadet (1705)

“Saeta” from Eight Pieces Elliot Carter (1908-2012)
for Four Timpani (1949/1966)

“Polonaise Waltz” from Eugene Onegin (1879) Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)
arr. Josh Hickman
Timpanists of the Baroque Era were required to memorize basic musical patterns, rhythms and phrases. Along with trumpeters, these musicians were protected by royal decree. When used in military campaigns their memorized music fragments functioned as communication of orders and commands to the various ranks of infantry. The information the musicians had at their disposal was of value to opposing armies; significant effort was made to capture musicians of opposing armies to try and decipher the ‘encrypted’ musical codes.

Whether a timpanist had two drums available or more, he was expected to improvise and embellish based upon these patterns, signals or ceremonial solos. These musical elements and the improvisatory nature have become composed parts in modern timpani literature. With the use of modern pedal instruments I will demonstrate how these fundamental early practices are connected to modern timpani repertoire.

Cavalry signals were memorized musical phrases conveying vital information to the various infantry ranks. Timpanists and trumpeters were required to memorize these signals. The use of musical phrases acted as an encryption method; opposing armies would attempt to capture musicians for ransom, as the removal of timpanists and trumpeters severed encoded communication. These signals were preserved by Georg Thouret and were used by the armies of King Frederick the Great (1712-1786).4

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*Prussian Cavalry Signal No. 4* is comprised of two large repeating phrases. The first phrase is eight measures stating the primary theme in E-flat. The second phrase is eight measures long and emphasizes the dominant tonality (B-flat). This is followed by a re-statement of the original theme. The overall structure of this signal is an A-B-A form (A - primary subject in tonic; B - contrasting subject in dominant tonality; A - primary subject again in tonic).

Jacques Delécluse (1933-2015) was a French percussionist and composer. Delecluse studied with Felix Passerone, former principal timpanist of the Paris Opera at the Conservatoire of Paris. There he earned prizes for piano and percussion performance. During his studies he decided to pursue a career as a percussionist and timpanist. He was eventually appointed to the Societe des Concerts du Conservatoire which became Orchestra de Paris in 1967.

Delécluse’s percussion and timpani etudes are the result of years of piano, percussion and composition study that allow the performer to make music out of what otherwise would be a targeted exercise on fundamental aspects of music performance.

“*Etude No. 11*” (1968) is a lively dance like episode in 6/8 meter, similar to that of the triple meter *Prussian Cavalry Signal No. 6*. The piece is comprised of 3 main sections with a coda section to be played faster. Each section is delineated with a long pause or multiple measures of rest which allows the performer to change multiple pitches for the next section. The main theme is fifteen measures, which is then metrically shifted by eighth notes, displacing the rhythm and sense of pulse.
Robert McCormick (b. 1947) is a Professor of Music and director of percussion studies at the University of South Florida in Tampa. He served as principal percussion and timpanist of the Florida Orchestra for twenty seasons and records frequently with the McCormick Percussion Group.

*Fanfare Variations for Solo Timpani* (1984) is a set of variations on a fanfare theme written as one continuous measure of music delineated with a number of fermatas. The piece does not require pitch changes, but uses four timpani tuned to G, A, D and F. This theme undergoes four variations of differing character. The first variation, Andante, requires the performer to accompany a melodic upper voice with an ostinato triplet rhythm in the lower voice. Variation two, Allegro, is comprised of two parts; the first part is twenty eight measures long, outlining the main fanfare theme in half notes and quarter notes accompanied by the flair of grace notes. The second part is thirty two measures using triplet figures and eighth notes. The third variation, Moderato, is thirty two measures emphasizing a more legato character to the fanfare theme. The final variation, Allegro Molto, is fifteen measures and is quite similar to the initial statement of the theme without the pauses between statements. After the completion of the final variation, the original fanfare is to be performed one last time, completing the performance. This selection is chosen for its quasi improvisational structure. This piece in itself embodies the expectations of a Baroque timpanist; an attention gathering introduction that establishes thematic material that is then varied with different rhythmic and melodic complexities.
Dwayne Rice (b. 1974) is a Los Angeles area freelance composer and arranger. He graduated from the University of North Texas with a Masters degree in percussion performance and minored in composition.

“Corrente” from *Baroque Suite for Five Timpani* (2014) is based upon a Baroque era dance that evokes a running or fleeting style in triple meter. This particular movement makes use of five timpani, pedaling as well as the performer being required to accompany a melodic idea. The first instance the melody is accompanied by an ostinato pattern in the left hand. The second instance requires the performer to play a two bar ostinato pattern played on the bowl of the timpani while the left hand plays the melody in the lower register.

Jacques Philidor (1657-1708) was the younger brother of André Danican Philidor, music librarian under the rule of King Louis XIV. Only a few of Jacques’ compositions have survived largely in part to his brother cataloging them in the Royal Music Library at Versailles.5

*March de Timballes* (1705) is a rather simple march comprised of two large repeating sections. The first section features active rhythmic material; use of dotted rhythms, rapid sixteenth notes and short thematic phrases that are united by a simple repeated quarter note passage. The second section features larger note values, essentially slowing down the rhythmic pulse and tempo.

Elliot Carter (1908-2012) was an American composer who was encouraged by Charles Ives to pursue his interest in composition. After graduating from Harvard in 1932

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Carter continued his compositional training with Nadia Boulanger in Paris. Upon returning, Carter taught at various institutions including Peabody Conservatory, Juilliard and Yale.

“Saeta” (1949/1966) is based upon an Andalusian song of improvisatory character that is sung during an outdoor Easter procession. The Saeta is likely inspired by the rain ceremony during which an arrow or Saeta was shot into the clouds with the intention to release rain.

“Polonaise Waltz” from Eugene Onegin (1879) is a selection from an opera composed by Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893), and based upon the novel Eugene Onegin by Alexander Pushkin. Tchaikovsky found the plot to be weak and worked around this issue by selecting specific scenes that featured strong emotional content, calling them lyrical scenes. These scenes are not continuously connected by the original story but highlights from the novel. Tchaikovsky was hoping that due to the popularity of Pushkin’s work, the audience would be able to follow along with the missing story pieces based upon what he selected for the opera. The Opera is divided into three acts. The dance starts the opening of the third act, and is based upon a specific rhythmic pattern in 3/4 time:
Prussian Cavalry Signal No. 6  
Anonymous  
(preserved by Georg Thouret)

“Etude No. 22” from Trente Etudes pour Timballes (1970)  
Jacques Delécluse (1933-2015)

Prussian Cavalry Signal No. 4  
Anonymous  
(preserved by Georg Thouret)

“Corrente” from Baroque Suite for Five Timpani (2014)  
Dwayne Rice (b. 1974)

Marche de Timballes pour les gardes du Roy  
Claude Babelon (unknown)

"Polonaise Waltz” from Eugene Onegin (1879)  
Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)  
(arr. Josh Hickman)

Stars and Stripes Forever (1896)  
John Phillip Sousa (1854-1932)  
(arr. Josh Hickman)
Timpanists of the Baroque Era were required to memorize basic musical patterns, rhythms and phrases. Along with trumpeters, these musicians were protected by royal decree. When used in military campaigns their memorized music fragments functioned as communication of orders and commands to the various ranks of infantry. The information the musicians had at their disposal was of value to opposing armies; significant effort was made to capture musicians of opposing armies to try and decipher the ‘encrypted’ musical codes.

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Delécluse’s percussion and timpani etudes are the result of years of piano, percussion and composition study that allow the performer to make music out of what otherwise would be a targeted exercise on fundamental aspects of music performance.

“Etude No. 22” (1970) is based upon a simple 3/8 theme using quarter and eighth notes, using the pitches G, B flat, E flat and F. The piece is divided into three large sections, A, B and A. The second section is distinguished largely by a change in pitch from E flat to D which also changes the key area from E flat major (with a major ninth, F) to G minor (with a minor 7th, F). This section also introduces the use of sixteenth note values into developing and varying the initial theme of the original A section. The return of the A section, back in E flat is abbreviated, and does not use the sixteenth note values. This piece is similar in simplicity and structure to *Prussian Cavalry Signal No. 6* and is able to be connected to the Etude through improvisation on the Cavalry signal.

Claude Babelon was a timpanist for King Louis XIV, as part of the “Timbalier et Trompettes des plaisirs.” These trumpeters and timpanist Babelon were required to follow the King and to play at his discretion. Several solo works composed by Babelon have been preserved through the work of André Philidor serving as Librarian for the Royal Music Library at Versailles. This particular solo is comprised of large repeated sections that contain smaller phrases or couplets. These phrases are grouped in to phrases of varying measure numbers. In this particular selection Babelon begins each couplet with the same rhythmic motive.

Cavalry signals were memorized musical phrases conveying vital information to the various infantry ranks. Timpanists and trumpeters were required to memorize these
signals. The use of musical phrases acted as an encryption method; opposing armies would attempt to capture musicians for ransom, as the removal of timpanists and trumpeters severed encoded communication. These signals were preserved by Georg Thouret and were used by the armies of King Frederick the Great (1712-1786).6

Prussian Cavalry Signals No. 6 and Prussian Cavalry Signal No. 4 are quite similar. Cavalry Signal No. 6 however features dotted eighth note rhythms which provide a galloping two-beat feel to the rhythm. Cavalry Signal No. 4 is more straight forward, written in 3/8. The strong emphasis on the downbeat quarter notes provides a rhythmic feel of being ‘in one’ compared to Cavalry Signal No. 6. Both signals have two main repeating sections; each section is eight measures long.

Dwayne Rice (b. 1974) is a Los Angeles area freelance composer and arranger. He graduated from the University of North Texas with a Masters degree in percussion performance and minored in composition.

“Corrente” from Baroque Suite for Five Timpani (2014) is based upon a Baroque era dance that evokes a running or fleeting style in triple meter. This particular movement makes use of five timpani, pedaling as well as the performer being required to accompany a melodic idea. The first instance the melody is accompanied by an ostinato pattern in the left hand. The second instance requires the performer to play a two bar ostinato pattern played on the bowl of the timpani while the left hand plays the melody in the lower register.

“Polonaise Waltz” from *Eugene Onegin* (1879) is a selection from an opera composed by Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893), and based upon the novel *Eugene Onegin* by Alexander Pushkin. Tchaikovsky found the plot to be weak and worked around this issue by selecting specific scenes that featured strong emotional content, calling them lyrical scenes. These scenes are not continuously connected by the original story but highlights from the novel. Tchaikovsky was hoping that due to the popularity of Pushkin’s work, the audience would be able to follow along with the missing story pieces based upon what he selected for the opera. The Opera is divided into three acts. The Polonaise dance starts the opening of the third act, and is based upon a specific rhythmic pattern in 3/4 time:

![Rhythmic Pattern](image)

John Phillip Sousa (1854-1932) was an American composer and conductor. He is best known for his collection of military marches. Sousa’s father enlisted him into the United States Marine Corps at the age of 13. He served as conductor of the United States Marine Band and The President’s Own from 1880 - 1892, forming his own touring marching ensemble touring from 1892 to 1931.

*The Stars and Stripes Forever* (1896) is one of Sousa’s most recognizable march compositions. Sections of music in marches are traditionally referred to as strains. This march is comprised of two strains, a trio section, a break strain and a final strain during with all winds are tacet for the unique piccolo solo during the first time through the final strain. The first two strains (measures one through twenty; measures twenty-one through
fifty-three), once repeated, are not recalled in the subsequent strains. This particular arrangement with little exception maintains the compositional structure of the march in its entirety, including the piccolo solo.

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Concluding Summary

Through the course of study and preparation of this project I have developed a great respect for the musical innovations of early timpanists. The spirit of invention in modern repertoire is very much captured in the compositional elements: various cross-stickings, ornamentation, use of multiple drums and pedaling all which require a strong sense of intonation and tone.

I feel that the creative aspect of improvisation for a traditionally orchestral instrument where such liberty is restricted develops a stronger connection of performer to instrument. Many Etudes and study pieces are purposefully crafted to develop strength in select performance skills, yet these study pieces are based upon actual performance repertoire. Instead of focusing the development of a particular skill to improve one aspect of repertoire performance, improvisation based upon that skill can develop abilities across the entire set of instruments which may allow the performer to push his or her limits of not only their own limitations, but also what is expected of the instrument.

Immersive score study, combined with the creativity of improvisation development can further develop the fundamental performance skills of a developing timpanist; transcription and arranging of well known melodies and accompaniments from the orchestral repertoire expands the skill set of the performer by providing a creative connection to the music; this focus on attention to intonation, pedaling and shaping the notes and learning how to effectively use multiple drums becomes easier when the performer decides through the creative process how to solve the problems of performing
repertoire not composed for timpani (for example, the Polonaise Waltz from *Eugene Onegin*). Strong sense of intonation, pedaling and performance technique are already required to play focus pieces and etudes, whereas an original idea the performer has creative control over may develop the skill in question faster than simply learning the study piece or etude. By learning how to make arrangements, transcriptions and improvised ideas work on timpani, the performer will be better trained to handle the technical demands of new orchestral music and focus on not simply playing the piece, but providing musical expression.
Recital 1 CD/DVD Track Listings

1. Prussian Cavalry Signal No. 7.........................................................5:08*

2. Set 1: Prussian Cavalry Signal No. 1;
   “Movement 3” from
   Three Episodes for Timpani (1980), John Beck.........................9:50*

3. Marche de Timballe pour les gardes du Roy, Claude Babelon............5:19*

4. Set 2: Prussian Cavalry Signal No. 6,
   “Canaries”, from Eight Pieces for Four
   Timpani (1950), Elliot Carter (1908-2012)..............................7:16*

5. "Polonaise Waltz” from Eugene Onegin (1879)
   Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)
   arr. Josh Hickman...............................................................4:51*

6. “Movements One and Three” from
   Concerto con Battaglia (1992)
   David Avshalamov (1946)....................................................10:55*

*Contains brief explanation of performance
1. *Prussian Cavalry Signal No. 4* ................................................... 3:22*

2. Set No. 1: *Prussian Cavalry Signal No. 4;*
   “Etude No. 11” from *Vingt Études pour Timbales* (1968)
   Jacques Delécluse (1933-2015);
   *Prussian Cavalry Signal No. 4;*
   “Corrente” from *Baroque Suite for Five Timpani* (2014)
   Dwayne Rice (1974) .............................................................. 11:01*

   Robert McCormick (1947) ..................................................... 6:37*

4. Set No. 2: *Marche de Timballes pour les gardes du Roy,* Claude Babelon (unknown);
   “Saeta” from *Eight Pieces for Four Timpani* (1949/1966)
   Elliot Carter (1908-2012) ....................................................... 9:59*

5. “Polonaise Waltz” from *Eugene Onegin* (1879)
   Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)
   arr. Josh Hickman ............................................................... 5:01

*Contains brief explanation of performance*
1. *Prussian Cavalry Signal No. 6*…………………………………4:15*

2. Set 1:
   *Prussian Cavalry Signal No. 6;*
   “Etude No. 22” from *Trente Etudes pour Timbales* (1970), Jacques Delécluse (1933-2015);
   *Prussian Cavalry Signal No. 4;*
   “Corrente” from *Baroque Suite for Five Timpani* (2014)
   Dwayne Rice (1974)……………………………………………17:12*

3. *Marche de Timballes pour les gardes du Roy,*
   Claude Babelon…………………………………………………6:21*

4. “Polonaise Waltz” from *Eugene Onegin* (1879)
   Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)
   arr. Josh Hickman………………………………………………7:03*

5. *Stars and Stripes Forever;* John Philip Sousa (1854-1932)
   arr. Josh Hickman………………………………………………5:48

*Contains brief explanation of performance*
Bibliography


