



Home > Cadenza Newsletter > Cadenza Apr 08



[Silver Wings Deploy](#) [Singing Sergeants CD](#) [Clinician's Corner](#) [Jazz Appreciation Month](#) [Young Artist](#)

## Silver Wings Deploy and Deliver

by Master Sgt. Matthew Irish

The United States Air Force Band's ensemble **Silver Wings** returned from an historic deployment to Southwest Asia this past December. The two-month mission was the longest single deployment ever for one of the Band's performing units, and they were the first unit of The United States Air Force Band to deploy as part of the newly formed U.S. Central Command Air Forces Band.



Silver Wings performs their "light & lean" acoustic show at a community development center in the capital city of Djibouti.

Under the leadership of Capt. Michael Murray and Master Sgt. Joe Grasso, Silver Wings performed for a wide variety of audiences - from deployed American troops to villagers in Africa. The group delivered 46 performances in 55 days, reaching a total of over 15,000 American servicemen and servicewomen, coalition allies, and host nation citizens in Djibouti, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, Qatar, and Iraq.

"We began preparation for this deployment by attending the Advanced Contingency Skills Training at Ft. Dix, N.J., back in July," Captain Murray explained. "This course helped prepare the team for riding in convoys and handling weapons - two things bandmen don't typically do."

Each part of the training course helped prepare the 10-member team for unexpected situations they might encounter while in Southwest Asia. "The team gained a large measure of confidence because of the course, and it helped them feel prepared to handle the deployed environment," said Captain Murray.

Even with this training, the random sound of mortar and AK-47 fire throughout the day and night gave members of the ensemble an occasional shock. "One morning we received a familiar warning over the base speaker system telling us that there was about to be a large explosion nearby," recalls **Master Sgt. Dennis Hofmann**, Silver Wings' NCOIC. "We all heard the announcement and rolled back over in bed, but one of our members still fell out of bed when the sound of the blast occurred."

Fortunately for the team, the only consistent blast heard around them during time in theatre was the enthusiastic applause and cheering from their audience.



MSgt Shani Prewitt interacts with some her newest fans after a concert in a Djiboutian village.

Concerning the band's commitment to community outreach, Sergeant Hoffmann remarked, "Going into the village in Djibouti, Africa, and seeing how they reacted to the music was the most rewarding part of the deployment." The group also performed for Iraqi troops and their families who are living alongside American Airmen at Camp Sather near Baghdad. This particular show was a welcome surprise for **Master Sgt. Shani Prewitt**, one of the vocalists in Silver Wings. "Who would have thought several years ago that we would one day be performing for Iraqi troops in Iraq?" [Back to top...](#)

## Singing Sergeants Release New CD

The **Singing Sergeants** latest recording, *An American Mosaic*, explores America's rich cultural landscape in a collection of music that emerged from distinct customs and traditions. There are songs from China, Taiwan, Japan, Ireland, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, South Africa, and Senegal, as well as some traditional American spirituals and folk songs.

SMSgt Angela Burns, the Musical Director of the Singing Sergeants, reflected on the importance of the project, "This medium of universal communication transcends all barriers and reminds us why music is truly the universal language shared by all." She also noted, "Every nuance, vocal

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Search

search USAF Band

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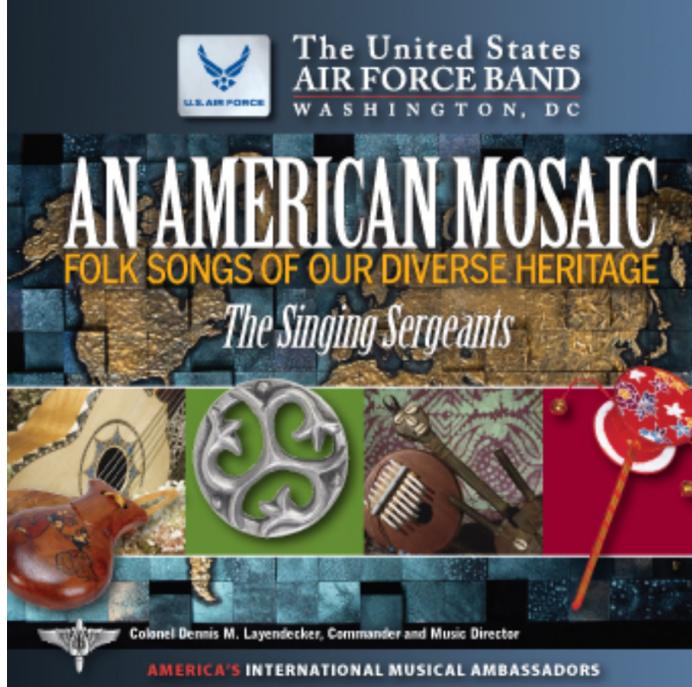
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- [2013](#)
- [2011](#)
- [2010](#)
- [2009](#)
- [2008](#)
- [2007](#)
- [2006](#)

inflection and musical passage was rehearsed and executed with exact precision."

American Mosaics will be distributed to music educators at conventions for the American Choral Directors Association, the California Music Educators Association, the Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic, and several other workshops and performances. The CD will also soon be available for listening on our [website](#).

[Back to top...](#)



## Clinician's Corner

**Audition Day: It's All About You**  
by Technical Sgt. Jay Heltzer

The day of your audition has finally arrived. All of your hard work and preparation will finally pay off. Or will it? There are some things that can't be mastered in the practice room--dealing with stage fright, facing the competition and the sheer excitement of the event are just a few. Here are some ideas to help you manage the things both in and out of your control to ensure that you have a successful day.

On the big day, focus on what you have to do, instead of listening to what others are doing. The other contestants are probably just as nervous as you are, so don't waste your energy worrying about the "other guys."



**Technical Sergeant Jay Heltzer**, Bass Trombonist, Ceremonial Brass

Eat right! Make sure you have eaten a good meal and bring snacks to help sustain you through what could be a very long day. Bring recordings of your music to aid your concentration and provide a aural diversion. As you listen, make mental notes to remind yourself about how you plan to play each passage. Don't be a warm up "jock." Your preparation should be targeted to ensuring a great audition--not to intimidate anyone else that might be listening. Save your best notes for the stage. Remember that your long term preparation is what you will carry to the audition--don't change bowings, fingerings or breath marks at the last minute--it's too late and could have a negative impact on your performance. If it worked before, why change it?

When your number comes up, and it's time to perform, remember that the audition committee is hoping to hear GREAT playing. They are pulling for you, so give them an exciting performance. Exhibit confidence from the moment you walk in, proud of the hard work that earned you the privilege to audition. A positive attitude can actually make you sound better. As you walk on stage, say to yourself, "Get ready for the best player of the day, ME!" Find the furthest corners of the room and visualize filling the space with your sound. Most importantly, enjoy the moment.

[Back to top...](#)

## Airmen of Note Celebrate Jazz Appreciation Month

For nearly two decades the Airmen of Note has presented its Jazz Heritage Series to music lovers in the nation's capital. Now, jazz lovers around the world can enjoy these programs on the radio and internet. This year featuring guest artists Karrin Allyson, Paquito D'Rivera, and Butch Miles, the Jazz Heritage Series broadcasts are emceed by broadcast and Air Force veteran John Tegler. Check your local radio listings to find our program. Jazz Heritage Series radio broadcasts are provided free of charge to broadcasters as a public service of the United States Air Force. The broadcasts are also available via our [website](#).

Program 1 features jazz vocalist Karrin Allyson. Born in Great Bend, Kansas, Karrin Allyson became a classical piano student and eventually made it her major in college. She first performed professionally as a singer-pianist playing '70s pop and funk-rock repertoire with an all-female band. But she soon caught the jazz bug from fellow college students. Allyson established her mastery of lyric interpretation on nine Concord releases, including the Grammy



nominated Ballads: Remembering John Coltrane, In Blue, and Wild for You.

Program 2 stars the Cuban-born reed player, composer and author Paquito D'Rivera. He was a founding member of the Orquesta Cubana de Musica Moderna, directing that group for two years, while at the same time playing both the clarinet and saxophone with the Cuban National Symphony Orchestra. An eight-time Grammy Award winner, D'Rivera has been honored as a solo artist and composer in the jazz, Latin and classical music categories. He was a recipient of the National Medal for the Arts, presented at the White House by President George W. Bush in 2005, and was honored in 2007 with the Living Jazz Legend Award in a ceremony at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.

Jazz drummer Butch Miles headlines Program 3. He was a member of the world-famous Count Basie Orchestra (1975-1979 and 1997-2007), and quickly became renowned for his swinging big band style and techniques. Playing with such luminaries as Frank Sinatra, Sammy Davis, Jr., Mel Torme, Ella Fitzgerald, Woody Herman, Zubin Mehta, Itzak Perlman, and others, Butch has recorded over 100 albums and has been a part of four Grammy-winning albums. He was honored by the Texas State Senate in 2005 for his accomplishments as a drummer, and is currently a faculty member in jazz studies, Texas State University, San Marcos, Texas.

On the air and the [web](#), don't miss the 2008 Jazz Heritage Series broadcasts!

[Back to top...](#)

### [Young Artist Shines with Concert Band](#)

Marimba soloist Philip McPeck wowed an audience of nearly 3,000 February 17 with his captivating performance of Paul Creston's Concertino for Marimba. McPeck shared the stage with the Concert Band as a part of the Band's 2008 Guest Artist Series at DAR Constitution Hall.

McPeck, this year's winner of the [Colonel George S. Howard Young Artist Competition](#) is a junior at Lafayette High School in Lafayette, La. Born in Chanute, Kansas, he began musical training at age 5 and percussion studies at age 10. At Lafayette High he is a member of the Wind Ensemble, Percussion Ensemble, Marching Band and Jazz Band. He also performs with community groups such as the Lafayette Concert Band and the Acadian Wind Symphony. When he isn't performing, he is actively involved in his school's Math Club, Science Club, Quiz Bowl team, and Beta Club. The [Young Artist Competition](#) has been held annually since 1994 and is named after Col. (Ret.) George S. Howard, the commander and music director of the Band from 1944-1963. It was created to encourage and showcase young talent, and has featured young artists from as close as Rockville, Maryland, and as far away as Hawaii.

[Back to top...](#)



### [Correction from Last Edition](#)

In the previous edition of The Cadenza, the email address for USAF Band Marketing and Outreach was listed incorrectly. The correct address is [bandmarketingandoutreach@bolling.af.mil](mailto:bandmarketingandoutreach@bolling.af.mil). Please excuse any inconvenience this may have caused.

[Back to top...](#)