

## **Bruce H. Gilkes**

Colonel H. Bruce Gilkes, former Commander and Conductor of The United States Air Force Band of the Rockies and The United States Air Force Academy Band, Colorado Springs, Colorado, is a native of New York. In 1962 he entered the Eastman School of Music where he studied trombone with Emory Remington and voice with Metropolitan opera bass-baritone Julius Huehn. In 1965 Colonel Gilkes enlisted in The United States Air Force Band as a euphonium player. During the next several years he performed with various units of the Air Force Band and sang in the Camerata Chorus of Washington, D.C. while concurrently pursuing undergraduate studies at Catholic University of America. In 1973, he received the Bachelor of Music degree in Voice (magna cum laude) and later earned a Master of Music in Voice. During Colonel Gilkes' military career he also served as Commander/Conductor of the Military Airlift Command Band, Scott Air Force Base, Illinois, the Air Force Band of the East, McGuire Air Force Base, New Jersey, and the Air Force Band of New England, Pease Air Force Base, New Hampshire. He was also conductor of the Singing Sergeants, the official chorus of the Air Force, and Assistant Conductor of The U.S. Air Force Band, Washington, D.C. He formed and directed Festival Choruses in New Hampshire, Illinois, and Colorado and was director of the Seacoast Community Chorus in York, Maine.

During his 33-year Air Force career, Colonel Gilkes toured in nearly all 50 states, as well as Europe, Central and South America and the Caribbean. He has performed before U.S. Presidents, both chambers of Congress, foreign heads of state, His Holiness Pope John Paul II, and other high-level foreign dignitaries, both military and civilian.

Colonel Gilkes military decorations include the Legion of Merit, the Meritorious Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters, and the Air Force Commendation Medal with oak leaf cluster. He is a graduate of Air War College and a Distinguished Graduate of Air Command and Staff College. The Air Force Association also recognized him as a Jimmy Doolittle Fellow. He is a recipient of The Colonel George S. Howard Citation of Musical Excellence for Military Concert Bands from The John Philip Sousa Foundation.

Colonel Gilkes has been a guest conductor with Poland's premier Orkiestra Koncertowa Wojska Polskiego (Concert Band of the Polish Army) in Warsaw, the Louisville Orchestra, the Houston Symphonic Band and the Japan Ground Self Defense Force Central Band in Tokyo. Annually, since 2005, he has served as conductor/clinician in Japan, working with performers in different musical organizations in the Hiroshima area, teaching rehearsal and performance techniques to conductors and students. He also has worked with youth as conductor of such groups as the Indiana High School Honors Band and the St. Olaf College Honors Band. For twelve summers, he served as a conductor at the Great Lake Music Camp in Indiana.

From 1998 to 2011 Colonel Gilkes served as the music director at USAA in San Antonio, Texas, where he directed the corporate concert band, jazz band and chorus. In 1999, he established Musica Propria, and began publishing the new band works of American composers Julie Giroux and Joseph T. Spaniola. Committed to producing high quality printed music for performers, there is a continually growing number of band and orchestra works available that have become successful internationally.