Twist of Fate, the first binary movement, begins loudly and dramatically and ends quietly in sadness. Between these extremes come two very different tempos and moods: Twist of Fate clambering ahead in blows and screams and followed by an ironic Mazurka. The whole is a meditation on the seeming inevitability of war and tragedy in human existence.

The first of the next pair, *Apotheosis of J.V.*, requires separate explanation. John Verrall, who was born in 1909 in Britt, Iowa, studied at the Budapest Conservatory and the Royal College of Music in London. He taught me composition, counterpoint, orchestration, and so much else from 1949 on through my teens in Washington State. While not utilizing any of Verrall's thematic material, this music is reminiscent of his style. We move directly into *Dithyramb* after a short transitional passage. Here, headlong and frenetic, the music's forward drive is only slightly held back toward the midpoint by a recall of the mysterious section from *Twist of Fate*. We return to the main tempo, which leads to a frenetic coda."

- notes by Walter Verdehr

# CONCERTS AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART Under the Direction of George Manos

### **JANUARY 1997**

19 Jason Stearns, *baritone* Diane Winter Pyles, *pianist*  Schumann: *Liederkreis, Opus 39*Debussy: *Ariettes oubliées*Poulenc: *Le bestiaire* 

26 Wu Han, pianist
Honoring the exhibition:
Splendors of Imperial China:
Treasures from the National
Palace Museum, Taipei

Haydn: Sonata, Hoboken 52
Beethoven: "Moonlight" Sonata
Chopin: Andante spianato et
Grande polonaise, Opus 22
Debussy: Estampes

Concerts from the National Gallery are broadcast in their entirety at 7:00 p.m. on Sundays on radio station WGTS, 91.9 FM, four weeks after the live performance. The use of cameras or recording equipment during the performance is not allowed.

For the convenience of concertgoers the Garden Café remains open until 6:30 p.m.

## The Fifty-fifth Season of

# THE WILLIAM NELSON CROMWELL and F. LAMMOT BELIN CONCERTS

# National Gallery of Art



2216th Concert

# THE VERDEHR TRIO WALTER VERDEHR, violin ELSA LUDEWIG-VERDEHR, clarinet GARY KIRKPATRICK, piano

Sunday Evening, January 12, 1997 at Seven O'clock West Building, West Garden Court

Admission Free

#### **PROGRAM**

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, arr. J. Niblock (1756-1791)

Trio in B-flat Major (1774)

Allegro Adagio

Molto presto

Max Bruch, arr. E. L. Verdehr

Three Pieces, Opus 83

(1838-1920)

(1910)

No. 6 - Night Song: Andante No. 2 - Allegro con moto

No. 7 - Allegro vivace, ma non troppo

Gian Carlo Menotti

Trio

(b. 1911)

(1996)

Capriccio Romanza Fuga

Commissioned by the Verdehr Trio and Michigan State University Washington Premiere Performance

#### **INTERMISSION**

Jonathan Kramer (b. 1942)

Serbelloni Serenade

(1995)

Commissioned by the Verdehr Trio and Michigan State University World Premiere Performance

William Bolcom

Trio

(b. 1938)

(1993)

Twist of Fate Mazurka Apotheosis of J. V. Dithyramb

Commissioned by the Verdehr Trio and Michigan State University Washington Premiere Performance The VERDEHR TRIO has a record of more than twenty years of leadership in the field of molding and defining the personality of the violin-clarinet-piano trio. Violinist Walter Verdehr was born in Gottschee, Yugoslavia and received his first violin instruction at the Conservatory of Music in Graz, Austria. Later he became the first violinist to earn a doctorate from the Juilliard School of Music in New York. A veteran of many performances as soloist with orchestras, recitalist, and chamber musician, Dr. Verdehr is professor of music and chairman of the string department at Michigan State University in East Lansing.

Elsa Ludewig-Verdehr studied clarinet at the Oberlin Conservatory and at the Eastman School of Music, from which she received a Performer's Certificate and a Doctor of Musical Arts degree. She has performed and lectured at numerous International Clarinet Congresses and has participated in the Marlboro Music Festivals. She has appeared frequently in the United States and Canada as recitalist, clinician, and soloist with orchestras, including the Houston, Lansing, and Grand Teton Symphonies. Dr. Verdehr has received the Distinguished Faculty Award at Michigan State University, where she is professor of music.

Pianist Gary Kirkpatrick was born in Kansas and graduated with honors from the Eastman School of Music and the Academy of Music in Vienna. After having claimed top prizes at the Stepanov Piano Competition in Vienna and the International Piano Competition in Jaen, Spain, Mr. Kirkpatrick has given solo tours in Spain, Italy, Greece, Mexico, and Austria, and has performed as soloist with orchestras in Germany, Texas, New York, Florida, Michigan, and New Jersey. He has taught at the Interlochen Center for the Arts in Michigan and at the University of Kansas in Lawrence, and is currently on the faculty of William Paterson College in New Jersey.

Through the commissioning efforts of the Verdehr Trio, more than eighty works, some by world-renowned composers, have been added to the chamber music repertoire. In addition, the trio has rediscovered as well as transcribed eighteenth- and nineteenth- century works which were previously unknown as trios in this form. The Verdehr Trio has also commissioned trio concertos from Stanislaw Skrowaczewski, Thomas Christian David, William Wallace, David Ott, and Alexander Harut'unyan. Active in recording as well as performing new music, the Verdehr Trio has embarked upon a video series entitled "The Making of a Medium," consisting of programs featuring interviews and discussions with composers and performers as an adjunct to the complete performance of each work. Issued by the Media Center of Michigan State University, the series includes

composers Leslie Bassett, Alan Hovhaness, Karel Husa, Thea Musgrave, Ned Rorem, and Gunther Schuller, and is hosted by Martin Bookspan and Peter Schickele. The Verdehr Trio is in residence at Michigan State University and appears at the Gallery through-the cooperation of Dodie Lefebre, Artists Representative, of New York City.

Mozart's *Trio in B-flat Major* is a transcription of the *Sonata for Piano*, *Four Hands*, *K. 358*, which was played earlier this season here at the Gallery by pianists Igor Kipnis and Karen Kushner. The orchestral characteristics of the writing become strikingly apparent as the work is heard with other instruments carrying the melodic lines. At times, the trio takes on the character of a concerto, as each instrument takes its turn to stand out.

Max Bruch's most famous compositions are his *Scottish Fantasy* for violin and orchestra and his *Kol nidrei* variations for cello and orchestra. He also wrote a considerable amount of chamber music, including the *Eight Pieces*, *Opus 83*. They were first performed in 1909 by a trio consisting of clarinet, viola, and piano, with the clarinet part played by Bruch's son, Max Felix.

Created specifically for the celebration of the composer's 85th birthday at the Festival of Two Worlds in Spoleto, Italy, Gian Carlo Menotti's *Trio for Violin, Clarinet, and Piano* was given its premiere performance (first and second movements only) at that Festival on July 17, 1996 by the Verdehr Trio. The capricious first movement combines witty dance-like figures with the composer's innate feeling for drama and melodic line. An expressive slow movement displays the true genius of the operatic master, as emotionally intense melodies ring forth spontaneously. The third movement, a lively fugue, was not completed until September of 1996, when the trio presented the work in its entirety on the occasion of Menotti's visit to the campus of Michigan State University.

About his work on tonight's program, Jonathan Kramer writes: "I composed the *Serbelloni Serenade* at the Villa Serbelloni in Bellagio, Italy. This wonderful place, run by the Rockefeller Foundation as a retreat for scholars and artists, is beautiful and peaceful. As I had previously been writing a book on music and postmodernism, I had little time before coming to Bellagio to plan what music I would compose. I knew only that it was to be a trio for clarinet, violin, and piano, for the magnificent Verdehr Trio. My first day at the Rockefeller Center I went to the composer's studio, in the woods

overlooking Lake Como. I stared at blank music paper. Three weeks later, I drew a double bar at the conclusion of the piece. Freed from concerns of daily existence and living far away from the outside world, I was able to work uninterrupted for eight to ten hours a day, seven days a week.

Since one of the theses of my book is the demise of structural unity in postmodern music, I wanted the music to have a healthy degree of disunity: *non sequiturs*, discontinuities, unrelated materials, surprises. But pieces have a mind of their own. Probably because I wrote it in one intense period, the *Serbelloni Serenade* ended up tightly unified. I kept discovering that different parts of the piece, which had tricked me into believing that they were unrelated, were actually thinly disguised variants of each other. I saw that the form, far from being the free association of ideas I had wanted, was quite logical. To my amazement, I found the piece beginning and ending in the same key.

This serenade is nonetheless postmodern in its use of different styles, references to various historical periods, and suprising juxtapositions. But, because of how it was written, it is more integrated than I had expected or planned it to be.... The *Serbelloni Serenade* shows how orderly my existence was when I composed it. It resolutely refused to become the statement on disorder I had tried to make it."

Jonathan Kramer was born in Hartford, Connecticut and received his Bachelor of Arts degree *magna cum laude* from Harvard and his Ph.D. from the University of California at Berkeley. His composition teachers included Karlheinz Stockhausen, Roger Sessions, Leon Kirchner, Seymour Shifrin, and Andrew Imbrie. Currently a professor at Columbia University in New York City, he has previously taught at Oberlin, Yale, and the University of Cincinnati.

About his *Trio for Clarinet, Violin, and Piano (1993)*, William Bolcom writes: "I have always been interested in the binary form in which both parts are mutually exclusive or nearly so; the first *G Minor Nocturne* of Chopin is one of the few pure examples I know of, but I suppose the first two movements of Mahler's *Fifth* taken together become a binary form of sorts. So I will discuss the two pairs of movements as just that - pairs that comment on each other, just as each half faces its counterpart musically within each double movement.