

Strauss' *Four Last Songs* bathe in an autumnal spirit of sentimentality. Long enamored with music for voice and orchestra, Strauss wrote his first song cycle with orchestra (*Lieder aus letzte Blätter, Op. 10*) at age twenty and returned to this genre for the last time at age eighty-four, a year before his death. For this cycle Strauss chose three poems by the German novelist Hermann Hesse (1877–1962): *Frühling, September,* and *Beim Schlafengehn*, and one by Joseph von Eichendorff (1788–1857): *Im Abendrot*. About the first three songs, critic Heinz Becker stated: "All the tonal magic of his life's creative achievements once again came into its own," and about the fourth, "It [afforded] a crowning conclusion to this cycle [in] song."

Because of his genuine love of children and their uniquely personal world, Elgar was inspired to compose a series of compositions dealing with this subject matter, one of which was *The Wand of Youth Suite, Op. 1b*. The story is told that Elgar's teenage children wrote a play depicting a faultless world free of meddling adults, who were excluded. Allowed in, however, were the likes of wild bears, moths, butterflies, fairies and giants. Adults were admitted only if they could repent their adult behavior, while at the same time begging for forgiveness, which would have to be on a judgmental basis. The first of the two suites inspired by this story (*Op. 1a*) was presented to the public in 1907. It was so successful that Elgar immediately composed a second suite and presented it the next year.

Program notes by Elmer Booze

*The use of cameras or recording equipment during  
the performance is not allowed.*

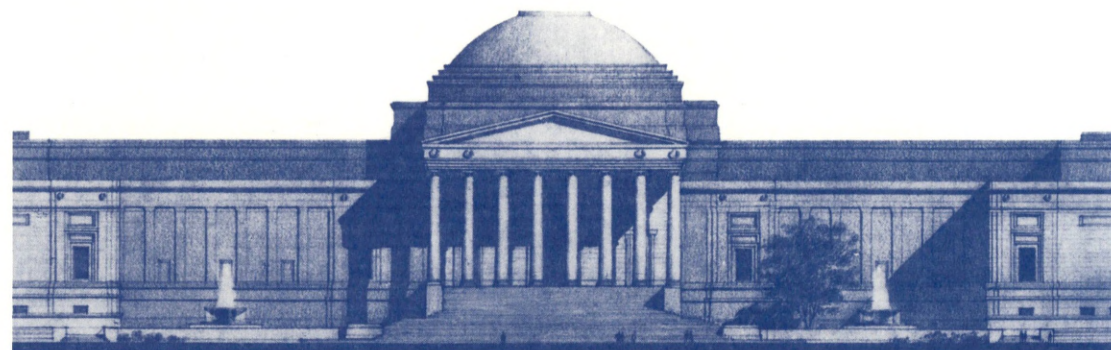
*For the convenience of concertgoers  
the Garden Café remains open until 6:30 p.m.*

*Selections from concerts at the Gallery  
can be heard on the second Sunday of each month  
at 9:00 p.m. on WGMS, 103.5 FM.*

*The Fifty-ninth Season of*

THE WILLIAM NELSON CROMWELL and  
F. LAMMOT BELIN CONCERTS

**National Gallery of Art**



*2362d Concert*

**NATIONAL GALLERY ORCHESTRA**

**GEORGE MANOS, conductor**

**ALESSANDRA MARC, soprano, guest artist**

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Sunday Evening, 19 November 2000

Seven O'clock

West Building, West Garden Court

*Admission free*



## PROGRAM

Antonín Dvořák  
(1841–1904)

Czech Suite in D Major  
Op. 39 (1879)

1. Preludium: Allegro moderato
2. Polka: Allegretto grazioso
3. Minuetto: Allegro giusto
4. Romanza: Andante con moto
5. Furiant: Presto

Richard Strauss  
(1864–1949)

Vier letzte Lieder (Four Last Songs)  
(1948)

1. Beim Schlafengehen
2. September
3. Frühling
4. Im Abendrot

## INTERMISSION

Sir Edward Elgar  
(1857–1934)

The Wand of Youth, Suite No. 2  
Op. 1b (1908)

1. March
2. The Little bells
3. Moths and Butterflies
4. Fountain Dance
5. The Tame Bear
6. The Wild Bears

Conductor, composer, and pianist **George Manos** has been director of music at the National Gallery of Art and conductor of the National Gallery Orchestra since 1985. He is also artistic director of the American Music Festival and the National Gallery vocal and chamber ensembles, which he founded. Manos' career as a performing pianist and teacher has included several years on the faculty of The Catholic University of America in Washington, DC, where he taught piano, conducting, and chamber music. In addition, he held the directorship of the Wilmington, Delaware School of Music, presenting an annual jazz festival and clinic. Maestro Manos founded and directed for ten years the renowned Kilarney Bach Festival in the Republic of Ireland and was the music director of the 1992 Scandinavian Music Festival in Kolding, Denmark.

"Une étoile est née (A Star is Born)," headlined *Le Figaro* (Paris). *The New Yorker* proclaimed: "...an instrument of unsurpassed beauty and impact and perhaps the richest, fullest, most beautiful big soprano voice around." Such accolades have been and continue to be a staple in the career of the outstanding American soprano **Alessandra Marc**. Frequent guest appearances in the most prestigious opera houses and concert halls throughout the world have brought her into collaboration with the most eminent conductors of our time, including Giuseppe Sinopoli, Daniel Barenboim, Sir George Solti, Zubin Mehta, Michael Tilson Thomas, and Lorin Maazel. Miss Marc's discography is likewise impressive. Delos Records issued her first aria recital recording, *American Diva*, and her newest releases include four on the Teldec label: Schoenberg's *Erwartung*, Berg's *Altenberg Lieder* and *Lulu Suite*, with Sinopoli and the Dresden Staatskapelle, and the final scene of Richard Strauss' *Salome* with the North German Radio Orchestra.

In his *Czech Suite, Op. 39*, Dvořák set five indigenous Czech folk dances for orchestra. He originally intended to write a triptych from a series of his orchestral serenades, but abandoned the idea and instead wrote five dance pieces to form a suite. The full title *Czech Suite* was incorporated for the premiere performance, held in 1879 at the Academy of the Association of Czech Journalists at the New Prague Theater and conducted by Adolf Čech.

**Texts and Translations**

**Richard Strauss: Four Last Songs**

(The songs will be sung in the order in which the texts appear.)

**Im Abendrot** (von Eichendorff)

Wir sind durch Not und Freude  
Gegangen Hand in Hand:  
Vom Wandern ruhen wir beide  
Nun überm stillen Land.

Rings sich die Täler neigen,  
Es dunkelt schon die Luft,  
Zwei Lerchen nur noch steigen  
Nachträumend in den Duft.

Tritt her und lass sie schwirren,  
Bald ist es Schlafenzeit,  
Daß wir uns nicht verirren  
In dieser Einsamkeit.

O weiter, stiller Friede!  
So tief im Abendrot,  
Wie sind wir wandermüde –  
Ist dies etwa der Tod?

**In the Glow of the Sunset**

Through troubles and joys  
we have gone, hand in hand.  
Now both of us rest from our  
wanderings, high above the  
still countryside.

All around us, the valleys  
descend; the sky grows dark;  
Only two larks, remembering a  
dream, rise into the haze.

Come here, and let them fly  
(soon it will be time to sleep),  
lest we lose our way in this  
loneliness.

O, wide, still peace!  
So deep in the glow of the sunset;  
How weary we are with  
wandering—  
Can this, then, be death?

**Frühling** (Hesse)

In dämmrigen Grüften  
Träumte ich lang  
Von deinen Bäumen und blauen  
Lüften,  
Von deinem Duft und  
Vogelgesang.

Nun liegst du erschlossen  
In Gleich und Zier,  
Von Licht übergossen  
Wie ein Wunder vor mir.

Du kennst mich wieder  
Du lockest mich zart,  
Es zittert durch all meine Glieder  
Deine selige Gegenwart!

**Spring**

In twilight valleys  
I have long dreamt  
of your trees and  
blue skies,  
your perfumes and your  
bird-song.

Now you lie before me, revealed  
in glistening splendor,  
flooded with light,  
like a miracle.

You know me again;  
You lure me gently;  
All my limbs tremble  
with your blessed presence!



**September (Hesse)**

Der Garten trauert,  
 kühl sinkt in die Blumen der  
 Regen.  
 Der Sommer schauert  
 still seinem Ende entgegen.

Golden tropft Blatt um Blatt nie-  
 der vom hohen Akazienbaum.  
 Sommer lächelt erstaunt und matt  
 in den sterbenden  
 Gartentraum.

Lange noch bei den rosen  
 bleibt er stehn,  
 sehnt sich nach Ruh.  
 Langsam tut er die Müd-  
 gewordenen Augen zu.

**September**

The garden mourns;  
 The cool rain sinks into the  
 flowers;  
 The summer shudders  
 silently toward its end.

Leaf after golden leaf  
 drops from the tall acacia.  
 The summer smiles, astonished  
 and weary, into the garden's  
 dying dream.

He remains standing among the  
 roses for a long time,  
 yearning for rest.  
 Slowly he closes his eyes, heavy  
 with fatigue.

**Beim Schlafengehen (Hesse)**

Nun der Tag mich müd gemacht,  
 Soll mein sehnliches Verlangen  
 Freundlich die gestirnte Nacht  
 Wie ein müdes Kind empfangen.

Hände, laßt von allem Tun,  
 Stirn, vergiß du alles Denken,  
 Alle meine Sinne nun  
 Wollen sich in Schlummer  
 senken.

Und die Seele unbewacht,  
 Will in freien Flügen schweben,  
 Um im Zauberkreis der Nacht  
 Tief und tausendfach zu leben.

**Going to Sleep**

Now the day has tired me;  
 May my passionate longing  
 receive the starry night like a  
 sleepy child.

Hands, leave your doing;  
 Brain, leave your thinking;  
 All my senses would now sink  
 into slumber.

And the unwatched soul wants to  
 soar up freely; to live, in the  
 magic circle of the night, a  
 thousand times more  
 intensely.