

short movements of a lyrical (hence its title) rather than symphonic character." Eschewing the classical forms, Berg replaces them with the dramatic and psychological aspects of the work. It is in this suite that Berg uses for the first time the twelve-tone system formulated by his mentor, Arnold Schoenberg (1874–1951). As a prime example of the new composing techniques that originated from the New Viennese School, *Lyric Suite* has taken its place as a gem among twentieth-century chamber works.

Beethoven was in Baden, Austria, near Vienna, when his *String Quartet in A Minor, Op. 132*, was completed in late July 1825. The first movement (*Assai sostenuto; allegro*) commences with an unhurried eight-measure introduction that presents a short phrase of just four notes (G#, A, F, E) in the cello. The *Allegro* section begins with the introduction's four-note phrase in a change of sequence (F, E, G#, A). The development section repeats the four-note phrase in its original arrangement. What starts out as a restless opening theme for the development section changes to a more restful second theme. After the occurrence of the recapitulation, the movement closes forcefully with repeated notes in the violins. The second movement (*Allegro ma non tanto*) is a *scherzo* of an unusual nature for Beethoven. It begins jovially and playfully, as one might expect, only to dovetail into a gracious and atmospheric trio, in which the "impression of disembodied gaiety is accentuated" (Desmond Shawe-Taylor, music critic for London's *New Statesman and Nation*).

While he was working on the *A Minor Quartet*, Beethoven was stricken with a severe abdominal inflammation, delaying completion of the work. On his return to health, he wrote a *Song of Thanksgiving to the Deity on Recovery from an Illness*. He ascribed that tune to the third movement of the quartet, transposing it to the ancient Lydian mode. The mode corresponds to the scale of F major, with B-natural used in place of B-flat. The fourth movement (*Alla marcia, assai vivace*), employing a strong masculine rhythm coupled with a favorite march, is the return to a happier time for Beethoven, who grew stronger each day following his illness. The finale (*Allegro appassionato*) is believed to have been sketched earlier than the other movements. The date of the sketches and the fact that it was originally in the key of D minor imply that it was intended as an instrumental finale for the *Ninth Symphony*. It was displaced in favor of a choral setting of Friedrich von Schiller's *An die Freude* (*Ode to Joy*).

Program notes by Elmer Booze

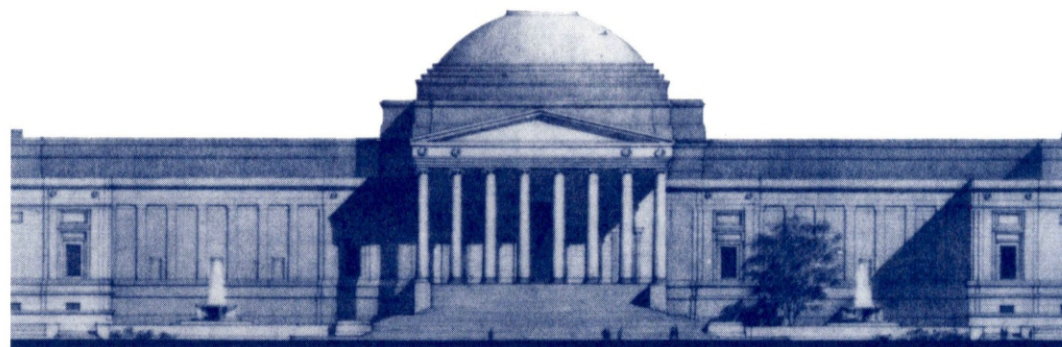
The use of cameras or recording equipment during the performance is not allowed.

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

The Fifty-eighth Season of

THE WILLIAM NELSON CROMWELL and
F. LAMMOT BELIN CONCERTS

National Gallery of Art



2348th Concert

HUGO WOLF QUARTET

JEHI BAHK, *violin* RÉGIS BRINGOLF, *violin*

WLADIMIR KOSSJANENKO, *viola* FLORIAN BERNER, *cello*

Sunday Evening, 14 May 2000
Seven O'clock
West Building, West Garden Court

Admission free

PROGRAM

Alban Berg
(1885–1935)

Lyric Suite for String Quartet
(1925–1926)

Allegretto gioviale
Andante amoroso
Allegro misterioso; Trio estatico
Adagio appassionato
Presto delirando; tenebroso
Largo desolato

INTERMISSION

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770–1827)

String Quartet in A Minor
Op. 132, No. 15 (1825)

Assai sostenuto; allegro
Allegro ma non tanto
Canzona di ringraziamento (Heiliger Dank-
gesang eines Genesenden an die Gottheit, in
der lydischen Tonart): Molto adagio
Alla Marcia, assai vivace
Allegro appassionato

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

Founded in 1993, the **Hugo Wolf Quartet** has established a reputation as a sensitive, refined ensemble that knows how to combine technical excellence with the innovative use of timbre. The quartet honors by its name the celebrated Austrian composer Hugo Wolf (1860–1903), acknowledged as one of the greatest masters of the German *Lied*. From the beginning the four members, violinist **Jehi Bahk** (born in Vienna, 1971), violinist **Régis Bringolf** (born in Lausanne, 1970), violist **Wladimir Kossjanenko** (born in Alma-Ata, 1968), and cellist **Florian Berner** (born in Vienna, 1973), have devoted themselves enthusiastically to chamber music. Having spent several years coaching with such illustrious ensembles as the Amadeus, LaSalle, and Alban Berg Quartets, the Hugo Wolf Quartet has pursued the goal of joining the international elite of string quartets. Press reviews have been most encouraging: “The Hugo Wolf Quartet has mastered the light and dark sides of music by means of a precarious balancing act in the mysterious and pale introduction of Beethoven’s Opus 59k, No. 3, as well as in the lightness that pervades Haydn’s penultimate quartet” (*Münchener Abendzeitung*). “They penetrate the expressiveness of Beethoven with passion and verve” (*Süddeutsche Zeitung*). “Haydn’s ebullient and sparkling *Rider Quartet*, with its exquisite conceptions, was especially pleasing, due to the dancelike *Allegro* and the *Minuet*. The *Largo* possessed plain seriousness without pathos and the closing *Allegro* offered a thrilling ride over hill and dale.” (*Vorarlberger Nachrichten*). The quartet has performed in many of Europe’s finest venues, including the Vienna Konzerthaus and Musikverein, the Salzburg Mozarteum, the Rudolfinum in Prague, the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, and the Cité de la Musique in Paris. In 1999 the quartet toured Japan for the first time. The Hugo Wolf Quartet appears at the National Gallery by arrangement with Till Dönch Künstlermanagement of Vienna, Austria.

Composed in Berg’s maturity and cast in six movements, *Lyric Suite for String Quartet* was given its premiere performance on 8 January 1927 in Vienna by the Kolisch Quartet. The second of only two quartets written by Berg (the first is his *Op. 3*, written in 1910), *Lyric Suite* is a succession of movements alternating between fast and slow tempos. The fast tempos increase progressively in speed: *Allegretto gioviale* (the first movement), *Allegro misterioso* (the third), and *Presto delirando* (the fifth), while the slow movements reverse the process by sequentially slowing down: *Andante amoroso* (the second movement), *Adagio appassionato* (the fourth), and *Largo desolato* (the sixth). Berg’s analytical notes for Rudolf Kolisch explain that each link joining the separate sections is not mechanical, but galvanized by the large unfolding through the hyper-disposition increase within the whole composition. A work with enormous psychological implications in its overall mood and concept, *Lyric Suite*, as described in a letter by Berg to Anton Webern on 12 October 1925, was conceived as “six rather