

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART CONCERTS — 1987-88

December-January

December

6 Joseph Porrello, *tenor*, Kenneth Merrill, *piano*

13 National Gallery Orchestra  
George Manos, *Conductor*  
*Works by* Beethoven, Bales and Stravinsky

20 UMBC Camerata  
Samuel Gordon, *Director*  
*Christmas Choral Concert*

27 Francis Conlon, *piano*  
*Works by* Haydn, Barber, Ravel, Liszt

January

3 National Gallery Orchestra  
George Manos, *Conductor*  
*Music of Vienna*

10 Jose Ramos Santana, *piano*  
*Works by* Bach-Siloti, Bach-Busoni,  
Scriabin and Chopin

17 Yosif Feigelson, *cello*  
Masha Tishkoff, *piano*  
*Works by* Bach, Schubert and Kabalevsky

24 Constance Moore, *piano*  
*Works by* Bach, Schumann and Prokofiev

31 National Gallery Orchestra  
George Manos, *Conductor*  
Spyros Sakkas, *baritone*

*Concerts are open to the public, free of charge.*

THE WILLIAM NELSON CROMWELL CONCERTS

National Gallery of Art

*1873rd Concert*



JOSEPH PORRELLO, *tenor*  
KENNETH MERRILL, *piano*

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Sunday Evening, December 6, 1987  
at Seven O'clock  
West Building, West Garden Court

PROGRAM

I

Henry Purcell ..... Music for a While  
(1659-1695) *from "Oedipus" (1692)*

I'll Sail Upon the Dog Star  
*from "A Fool's Preferment" (1688)*

An Evening Hymn  
*from "Harmonia Sacra" (1688)*

II

Franz Schubert ..... Nachtstück (Mayrhofer)  
(1797-1828) Die Forelle (Schubart)

Nacht und Traüme (von Collin)  
Ganymed (Goethe)

III

Gian Carlo Menotti ..... Five Songs for Tenor  
(b. 1911) (1983)

The Longest Wait  
The Idle Gift  
My Ghost  
The Eternal Prisoner  
The Swing

*Washington Premiere Performance*

INTERMISSION

*Twelve minutes*

IV

Ottorino Respighi ..... Stornellatrice (C. Zangarini)  
(1879-1936) Pioggia (V. A. Pompili)

Ildebrando Pizzetti ..... I Pastori (G. D'Annunzio)  
(1880-1968)

V

Gerald Ginsburg ..... Spring is like a perhaps hand  
(e. e. cummings)

Ned Rorem ..... Catullus: On the Burial of his Brother  
(b. 1923)

Early in the Morning  
(Robert Hillyer)

Charles Ives ..... Tom Sails Away  
(1874-1954) Circus Band

VI

Sicilian Folk Songs

Storia della fanciulla rapita dai pirati  
Muttètti di lu Pàliu  
Chiòvu "Abballàti"

JOSEPH PORRELLO, a native of New York and a graduate of the Manhattan School of Music, has appeared as soloist with the Opera Orchestra of New York, Clarion Concerts, the Masterworks Chorus and Orchestra and the New York Vocal Arts Ensemble. Here in Washington, he has sung with the National Symphony and at the Library of Congress. His operatic credits include the Metropolitan Opera's American premiere of Britten's *Death in Venice* and the WNET-TV Opera's world premiere of *La Cubana* by Heinz Werner Henze.

A highlight of Mr. Porrello's career took place in 1981, when he sang the world premiere in New York of *Four Songs for Tenor*, written for him by Gian Carlo Menotti. A fifth song was added in 1983, to bring the cycle to the form in which we hear it tonight.

Mr. Porrello teaches voice at the New School for Social Research in New York.

KENNETH MERRILL is a graduate of the Juilliard School, where he accompanied the master classes given by Elizabeth Schwarzkopf and Peter Pears. He also studied at the Mozarteum in Salzburg, Austria, where he was a pupil of Antonio Janigro in chamber music. He has appeared in recital with such artists as Gerard Souzay, Anna Moffo, Robert Merrill and James King. Mr. Merrill is Associate Professor of Accompanying and Opera at the Eastman School of Music, and teaches and performs each summer at the Aspen Music Festival in Colorado.

### Stornellatrice

"Flowers of the birch tree, what's the use of singing? Were you the sun and I the star, moving across the heavens -- dreaming of nothing?" "Nothing," the echo answers. Flowers of flowers, you are my love, today and yesterday, forever and undying. The echo answers "Dying?"

### Pioggia

It was raining. From the window, opened for relief from the heat, there arose from the garden a fresh breath of restored flowers. The colors were subdued under the so long implored rain. The trees drank from the thirsty soil. I thought: how marvelous to be a plant or leaf and be restored from the anguished heat by the heavens. The rain beat on my head.

### I Pastori

September. Time to leave Abruzzi, the mountain pasture, and go toward the sea, the wild green Adriatic. The herd drank from the springs. They followed the old paths on the plain where the sun glows warmly on their coats. Oh, why am I not with my shepherds?

### Storia Della Fanciulla Rapita dai Pirati

From valley to forest to sea I search for my beloved Agatha. I ask the waves. The echo answers: "She is captured by the pirate." If I had Orlando's spade I would dig through the earth and free her.

Muttètti di lu Pàliu (A Victory Song for Horse of John IV Winner of the Paliu - an Ancient Horse Race)

Uje! Uje! How fast he runs! Uje! Uje!  
How well he carries the flags of the king!  
Uje! Uje! How well he will be fed!

### Chiòvu Abballàti

Dance! Dance! Women single and married dance!  
If you don't dance well I will not sing and play for you. Sciu! Sciu! Sciu! There are so many women I don't know what to do.

### Nachtstück

When the mist is heavy over the mountains and the moon fights with the clouds, the old man takes his harp, walks in the woods and sings; "You holy night! Soon all is finished, and long sleep will release me from all pain." The green trees offer him sweet sleep, the grass offers him a peaceful covering. The birds call, "Let him rest peacefully on the grassy grove." The old man listens. . . He says nothing. . . He is at peace with death.

### Die Forelle

In a sparkling brook a playful trout swims with the speed of an arrow. I stand on the bank and watch. A fisherman also watches the fish in the clear water. He muddies the water, jerks his rod and catches the fish. My blood stirs as I gaze on the cheated trout.

### Nacht und Traüme

O sacred night, gently you fall. Moonlight steals into each room. Dreams float down and enter the hearts of men. Receive these dreams with joy. When day breaks they cry, "Come back, sweet night, lovely dreams come back!"

### Ganymed

In the splendor of morning, how you glow about me, spring, beloved. My heart is filled by your eternal warmth and endless beauty. On your bosom I lie, languishing, and your flowers and grass press against my heart. The nightingale calls from the misty valley. I come! But where? Upwards I soar. The clouds take me upward to thy bosom, All-loving Father!



## Five Songs for Tenor

I.

### *"The Longest Wait"*

No, it is not love that I desire but only an answer to my love — a kiss of peace that bears no sting, the final seal to close my days.

Still the silent question burns my lips and I despair ever to hold the angelic dialogues that will disclose the yearned-for answer.

I stand alone by stormy seas, waiting for and fearing the aimless rescue of the deliv'ring ship. Behind me the search is halted. In the dark'ning forest all calls and cries are silenced.

No, I shall not ever tread again the tortuous path of my mistakes! Here I stand scanning the sky, down to the unmasked horizon.

II.

### *"The Idle Gift"*

Do not despise the rose because its beauty is manifest; do not decry the thistle for its elusive grace.

I love what must be searched as well as readily offered, if joy or pain accompany the gift.

Your easy words and kisses neither burned nor stung. You left me at dawn on a dreamless bed.

III.

### *"My Ghost"*

O yes, I too have a ghost in my home; but mine is a friendly ghost. It doesn't frighten me; nor my cat, nor my dog.

I cannot tell what its sex is, for it wears a dirty sheet as children do on Halloween.

Like all ghosts, it fancies creaky doors and windy nights. Sometimes behind my bedroom door it sounds as if it were dragging heavy chains. Sometimes it sighs.

But once it appears inside my room, it stands there not quite knowing what to do and stares at me rather embarrassedly.

Once I asked it why it wandered so aimlessly between heaven and earth. Well, I remember its melancholic answer: "Earth bores me, but heaven frightens me."

A jolly ghost indeed!

However, it never smiles. After all, death is a serious thing!

IV.

### *"The Eternal Prisoner"*

How can one age the heart? What wound, what memory will ever teach it wisdom?

Never again, one says — then, deliberately, unlocks the torture chamber and smiles at the executioner.

V.

### *"The Swing"*

Up toward the sky, to a hesitant point of stillness, and down again to earth, and up again in ever fresh delight to capture short lived joy — and then again the anxious plunge into the waiting void.

Don't be apprehensive. The game holds no surprise. Have you not always known it must come to an end?

There soon will be no waiting arms to push you up again. The ropes are worn; the iron rings with rusty screeches mark the ever slower and lower swings.

Don't fret — don't move. Let it at last come to the final stop. And turn your face away from the deceptive sky as patient earth receives your stillness.