

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART CONCERTS

March and April 1989

March

- 5 Neil Penesis, *piano*
Works by Mozart, Liszt and David del Tredici
- 12 National Gallery Orchestra
George Manos, *Conductor*
The Maryland Camerata
Maurice Duruflé: *Requiem*
- 19 Nina Tichman, *piano*
Works by Schubert, Debussy and Carter
- 26 Continuum Chamber Singers
Joan Reinthaler, *Conductor*
*Motets and Anthems by Obrecht, Dufay,
Palestrina, Sweelinck, Byrd and others.*

April

THE 46th AMERICAN MUSIC FESTIVAL

- 2 National Gallery Orchestra
George Manos, *Conductor*
- 9 Ramon Salvatore, *piano*
Works by Foote, Beach and LaMontaine
- 16 National Gallery Vocal Arts Ensemble
George Manos, *Artistic Director*
- 23 Lois Shapiro, *piano*
Works by Copland, Brody and Sessions
- 30 John Lewis and the Modern Jazz Quartet
Third annual jazz concert

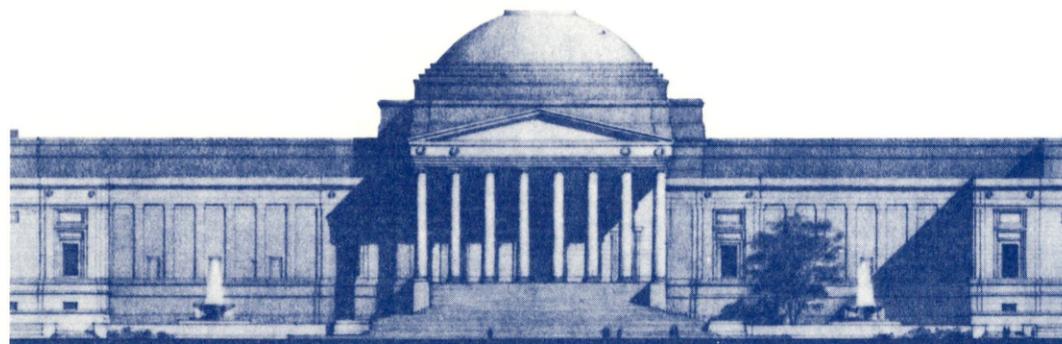
These concerts are broadcast live on Radio Station WGMS, 570 AM and 103.5 FM. The use of recording devices or cameras during the performance is not allowed.

Concerts are open to the public, free of charge.

THE WILLIAM NELSON CROMWELL CONCERTS

National Gallery of Art

1923rd Concert



NEIL PENESIS, *pianist*

Sunday Evening, March 5, 1989
at seven o'clock
West Building, West Garden Court

PROGRAM

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart Fantasia in C Minor
(1756-1791) K. 475 (1785)

Franz Liszt Un sospiro
(1811-1886) *from* Trois études de concert
(1838)

David del Tredici Fantasy Pieces I-IV
(b. 1937) (1960)
Adagio, espressivo
Poco allegretto
Allegro minacciando
Largo, senza tempo

INTERMISSION
(*Twelve minutes*)

Maurice Ravel Gaspard de la nuit
(1875-1937) (1908)
Ondine
Le gibet
Scarbo

Alexander Scriabin Two Poems, Opus 32
(1872-1915) (1903)
No. 1 in F-sharp Major
No. 2 in D Major
Sonata No. 5 in F-sharp Major
Opus 53 (1908)

*"I call you to life, O mysterious forces!
Submerged in depths obscure
Of the Creator Spirit, timid embryos of life,
To you I now bring audacity."*

from Poem of Ecstasy (Scriabin)

Pianist NEIL PENESIS, a native of Chicago, made his debut in that city's venerable Orchestra Hall at the age of eighteen. At the time, he was a student of Dmitry Paperno at DePaul University. Subsequently, he studied under Lillian Freundlich at the Peabody Conservatory, where he received Second Prize in the Peabody Concours and presented broadcast performances over Johns Hopkins University Radio. He has also studied with Jerome Lowenthal at the Music Academy of the West.

Making his Washington debut in this performance, Mr. Penesis has also appeared in recital in the Chicago Art Institute's Dame Myra Hess Memorial Concerts, at the Interlochen Academy and for the United Hellenic-American Congress. He competed in the 1986 Tchaikowsky International Piano Competition and was a top prize winner the next year in the Young Keyboard Artists International Competition. His compositions have been featured on the CRS label for contemporary piano music.

The *Fantasia in C Minor* of Mozart dates from a period in which he composed some of his most tragic works, reaching his extremes of grand proportions, passionate outbursts and nobility. The drama of the *Fantasia* is enhanced by the frequency of cadenzas, which range freely through the whole compass of Mozart's five-octave keyboard.

Of the three concert etudes that Liszt wrote in 1838, the last, which Mr. Penesis has included in this program, is the most appealing and original. It has a plaintive quality, with passages suggesting angelic harps.

The four *Fantasy Pieces* of del Tredici are contrasting examples of how intellectually conceived compositions may present expressive and almost arbitrary effects. The performing directions combine romantic rubato with harsh dissonance, with a result that is spontaneous, kaleidesopic and even delirious.

The inspiration for Ravel's *Gaspard de la nuit* was a set of fifty-one prose poems by the nineteenth century poet Aloisius Bertrand, which bore the same title, with the subtitle, "Fantasies in the manner of Rembrandt and Callot." The link between the music, the poems and the vivid water colors of the seventeenth century French painter Callot is the effort to represent in the arts the mysterious, ineffable and sometimes evil forces in nature and man.

The two *Poems* from Scriabin's Opus 32, although they are works from his middle period, already point in their rich harmonies and complex rhythms to his later style. The *Sonata*, which is Opus 53, shows in many ways the culmination of what was presaged in the earlier works. Its inspiration was a "Poem of Ecstasy", which Scriabin himself had written several years before the sonata. This work has been likened to a piece of wizardry; moments of fervent exaltation dissolve suddenly into playfulness as if by sleight of hand. Feverishly active sections alternate with interludes of sensual languor, all of which indeed creates a musical poem of ecstasy.