NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART CONCERTS

February and March, 1990

February

4 National Gallery Orchestra
George Manos, Conductor
Concert in honor of Richard Bales’ 75th birthday
Works by Bales, Franck and Debussy

11 Ben Holt, baritone
John Keene, piano
Works by Spohr, Ravel, Nathaniel Dett and Hall Johnson

18 Dmitry Feofanov, piano
Works by Sergey Prokofiev

25 National Gallery Vocal Arts Ensemble
Works by Hindemith, Debussy and Ravel

March

4 National Gallery Orchestra
George Manos, Conductor
Henriette Schellenberg, soprano
Works by Rachmaninoff, Villa-Lobos and J.S. Bach

11 Glenda Maurice, mezzo-soprano
Ruth Palmer, piano
Songs by Poulenc, Vaughan Williams, Korngold and Marx

18 Vienna String Trio (Austria)
Works by Mozart, von Einem and Beethoven

25 Stephen Honigberg, cello
Kathryn Brake, piano
Works by Shostakovich, Schubert and J.S. Bach

Concerts at the National Gallery are open to the public, free of charge.

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

THE WILLIAM NELSON CROMWELL CONCERTS

National Gallery of Art

1955th Concert

THE CHARLESTON STRING QUARTET

Charles Sherba, violin
Lois Finkel, violin
Consuelo Sherba, viola
Daniel Harp, violoncello

Sunday Evening, January 28, 1990
at Seven O’clock
West Building, East Garden Court
PROGRAM

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart . . . . . . Quartet in C Major ("The Dissonant") (1756-1791) K. 465 (1785)
Adagio; Allegro
Andante cantabile
Menuetto: Allegro
Allegro

Joseph Castaldo ........................................... Quartet, 1978 (b. 1927)
Washington Premiere Performance

INTERMISSION
(Twelve minutes)

Robert Schumann ................. Quartet in A Minor, Opus 41, No. 1 (1810-1856) (1842)
Introduzione: Andante espressivo; Allegro
Scherzo: Presto; Intermezzo
Adagio
Presto

These concerts are broadcast live on Radio Station WGMS, 103.5 FM.

The CHARLESTON STRING QUARTET was founded in 1983 and since September 1986 has been Quartet-in-Residence at Brown University. For the past two summers, the ensemble has also been in residence at the Grand Teton Music Festival in Teton Village, Wyoming, where it presents a series of concerts called "Music in the Present Tense." Both as performers and teachers, the members of the quartet have presented over 450 concerts and master classes, including appearances in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago and Washington. Each member of the quartet has been concertmaster or principal in an orchestra: Mr. Sherba with the Atlanta Chamber Orchestra, the Atlanta Ballet Orchestra and the Charleston (West Virginia) Symphony Orchestra, Ms. Finkel with the University of Rochester Symphony Orchestra, Mrs. Sherba with the Atlanta Chamber Orchestra and Mr. Harp with the Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra, the Cincinnati Ballet Orchestra and the Charleston Symphony. All four are members of the string faculty at Brown University.

The subtitle "The Dissonant" was not affixed to the Mozart's Quartet, K. 465 by the composer; it was given that nickname by contemporary Viennese performers and publishers, who found the false relations in the opening introduction shocking. Some of them went so far as to rewrite those passages, as is evidenced by some of the first editions. The questioning uncertainty of the harmonies of the introduction and the time-arresting rhythmic heartbeat of the cello underneath them serve as a dramatic foil for the effortless Allegro which follows. Mozart wrote in one of his letters that he looked forward to having the set of quartets of which this is the sixth as a solace in his old age. Although he did not live to enjoy them in this way, they have indeed served as a musical solace for subsequent generations.

Joseph Castaldo is an American composer whose early training included jazz and clarinet studies in New York and composition studies with Vincent Persichetti. He is a former president and member of the composition faculty of the Philadelphia College of the Performing Arts. His String Quartet, 1978 is based on the Golden Mean and on a philosophical position known as emergent form, which was put forth by Karl Popper. Castaldo extends the color possibilities of the string quartet by calling upon the players to vocalize some of the pitches as they play them.

During the year 1842 Schumann was inspired to produce a great deal of chamber music, including a piano quartet, a piano quintet and three string quartets, of which the Quartet in A Minor is the first. He dedicated them to Mendelssohn, who he felt had been the only composer since Beethoven to have done justice to the string quartet medium. Like Mozart, whose quartets he greatly admired, Schumann begins this work with a slow, contemplative introduction, which contrasts greatly with the F major Allegro which constitutes the main body of the movement. The Scherzo owes a stylistic debt to Mendelssohn, but it bears the unmistakable stamp of Schumann in the form of its undercurrent of unrest. The beautiful slow movement, with its dark, searching alternation between tenderness and turbulence, is a musical expression of Schumann's personality, as is the exuberant finale, in which he can almost be seen to be snapping back to reality after a fantastic dream.