

1981st Concert

November 4, 1990

NATIONAL GALLERY ORCHESTRA

GEORGE MANOS, *Conductor*

PROGRAM

Ottorino Respighi Gli uccelli (The Birds)
(1879-1936) (1927)

Preludio (B. Pasquini)
La colomba (J. de Gallot)
La gallina (J. Ph. Rameau)
Lusignuolo (A. Inglese)
Il cuccù (Pasquini)

Daniel Pinkham Symphony No. 4
(b. 1923) (1990)

I. Purling
II. Pining
III. Prancing
(World Premiere Performance)

INTERMISSION

(Twelve minutes)

Sergey Prokofiev *Romeo and Juliet*
(1891-1953) Suite No. 2, Opus 64-ter

The Montagues and the Capulets
Young Juliet
Friar Laurence
Dance
Dance of the Antillian Girls
Romeo at the Grave of Juliet

The young Ottorino Respighi was so talented as both a violinist and a composer that he was admitted not only to the composition classes of Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakow in Moscow, but also to the violin studio of the great Max Bruch in Berlin. Respighi eventually decided against a career as a virtuoso violinist, and returned to Rome in 1913 to teach composition at the St. Caecilia Academy, of which he eventually became the director. One of his strengths as a composer lay in his ability to incorporate ancient music into new forms for the symphony orchestra. He made liberal use of Renaissance songs and dances, as in the suite, *Antiche arie e danze*, Gregorian chant, as in *Concerto gregoriano* and *Three Preludes on Gregorian Melodies*, and baroque keyboard pieces, as is the case in *Gli uccelli*. Each movement is an arrangement of a piece by a seventeenth or eighteenth century composer which imitates the sounds made by the bird in the title.

Symphony Number Four of Daniel Pinkham is the first of five compositions which have been commissioned by the National Gallery for performance during the 50th anniversary celebration. Later this year the orchestra will present works by Robert Ward, John LaMontaine, Richard Bales and George Manos. Daniel Pinkham is a native of Massachusetts and a graduate of Harvard University. An accomplished organist and harpsichordist as well as a composer, he studied with Putnam Aldrich, Wanda Landowska and E. Power Biggs. He is professor of composition and chair of the department of early music at the New England Conservatory and music director of King's Chapel in Boston. His most recent work is the *Dryden Te Deum*, commissioned by the United States Air Force Band. Each movement of his fourth symphony bears a title that not only implies the nature of the music, but also begins with the same letter as the composer's last name: "Purling" means to run swiftly round, eddy, or swirl, and can also refer to the sound water makes as it runs over stones. "Pining," the second movement, is an extended plaintive aria. "Prancing" characterizes the good-humored rhythmic finale, which incorporates not only the familiar waltz rhythm, but also the *furiant*, a Bohemian dance which alternates between three-four and six-eight time.

Prokofiev wrote the full ballet *Romeo and Juliet* in 1935 for the Bolshoi Theater, but it was some time before it was performed. In order to accommodate the choreographer, the librettist came up with a happy ending, with Juliet awakening in the nick of time to find Romeo still alive by her side. Prokofiev prepared a piano score for this libretto and rehearsals began. When the Bolshoi directorate heard and saw the results, they sent both the librettist and the composer back to the drawing boards. The change in the story was deemed ridiculous, while the music was judged unsuitable for dancing! In the process of carrying out large-scale revisions in the score, Prokofiev created three suites for orchestral performance, which met with immediate success and were published and performed before the ballet itself. The second suite from *Romeo and Juliet* received its world premiere in Chicago in 1937, with Prokofiev himself conducting the Chicago Symphony.