

1991st Concert

January 13, 1991

ZVI ZEITLIN, *violinist*

Barry Snyder, *pianist*

PROGRAM

Giuseppe Tartini Fugue in C Major
(1692-1770)

Robert Schumann Zweite grosse Sonata in d-moll
(1810-1856) Opus 121 (1851)

Ziemlich langsam
Sehr lebhaft
Leise, einfach
Bewegt

Igor Stravinsky Duo Concertante
(1882-1971) (1932-33)

Cantilene
Eglogue I
Eglogue II
Gigue
Dithyrambe

INTERMISSION
(Twelve minutes)

Gioachino Rossini Elégie: Un mot à Paganini
(1792-1868) from *Péchés de vieillesse* (1857-68)

Darius Milhaud Cinema-Fantaisie: Le boeuf sur le toit
(1892-1974) (1919)

Violinist ZVI ZEITLIN returns to the National Gallery to join in celebrating its 50th anniversary, having first performed here in January of 1955, in a recital of works by Bach, Schubert, Ben-Haim and Bloch. Born in Russia and raised in Israel, Zvi Zeitlin at age eleven became the youngest scholarship student in the history of the Juilliard School in New York, studying there with Sascha Jacobsen, Louis Persinger and Ivan Galamian. Apart from his solo career, Mr. Zeitlin is highly regarded as a teacher. A professor of violin at the Eastman School of Music, he also coordinates that institution's string chamber music program, and has taught master classes in many of the major universities and conservatories of music throughout the United States, as well as in China, Korea, Israel, Norway and Great Britain. He has been invited to adjudicate the prestigious John D. Rockefeller and Concert Artists

Guild Violin Competitions, as well as those of Montreal and Indianapolis. A frequent soloist with major orchestras, his recording of the Schoenberg *Violin Concerto* with the Bavarian State Orchestra under Rafael Kubelik was recently re-issued in Deutsche Grammophone's "Collector's Series". Mr. Zeitlin has also recorded the complete violin works of Igor Stravinsky.

Giuseppe Tartini is widely regarded as the father of virtuoso violin playing as it is known today, not only because he developed new techniques, but also because he wrote about them and took on many pupils, among whom was none other than Niccolò Paganini. In addition to a large output of sonatas and concertos for his own instrument, Tartini wrote numerous *concerti grossi* and works for chamber ensembles, to almost all of which he appended a poetic motto from the works of Metastasio. It is indicative of the restrictive atmosphere of Italy at his time that he felt obliged to couch the mottoes in a secret code, which only his closest friends knew how to decipher.

The unusual title of Schumann's *Sonata, Opus 121* – "The Second Large Sonata" – was evidently attached by the composer to distinguish it from a violin sonata he had written earlier in the same year, and which in a short time had already gained great popularity. The second sonata is indeed grander in scale and larger in scope than the first, and was written for one of the "larger than life" violinists of Schumann's time, Joseph Joachim.

Stravinsky's *Duo concertante* is a suite of movements based on ancient Greek and Italian dances. The two *Eglogues*, which take their name from idyllic pastoral poems, are contrasting in nature; the first begins as a canonic hymn and evolves into a strongly rhythmic dance. The second resembles an early Baroque aria. Baroque music was again the model for the Italianate *Gigue*, while the *Dithyrambe* harks back to the frenzied music that accompanied the worship of the Greek god Dionysius.

Un mot à Paganini is an example of a composer, namely Rossini, living long enough to have the last laugh. Throughout his career, Paganini had composed and performed a number of variations on favorite Rossini arias, works which, in the opinion of Paganini's many fans, surpassed the original arias in interest and excitement. By the time Rossini turned late in life to composing the pieces he called "Sins of My Old Age," Paganini had been dead for seventeen years. In this work, Rossini took advantage of the opportunity to try his own hand at creating virtuoso violin variations on material from his operas.

Le boeuf sur le toit was written in 1919 as music for use with Charlie Chaplin's silent film series, *Charlot*. It reflects the composer's fascination at that time with Brazilian folk songs and dances. The humor of the work is broadly hinted at by its title, which is the name of a bar, and is enhanced by the obvious use of two unrelated keys at the same time. So that its performance would not be limited just to the cinema, Milhaud transcribed the work within a year of its completion for violin and piano. He need not have worried about a continuing life for the work as an orchestral piece, however; it has continued through the years to be a consistent favorite in symphonic programs.