CONCERTS AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

FEBRUARY-MARCH 1992

FEBRUARY 1992

9 Bradford Gowen, pianist
Bach/Busoni/Hess: Chorale Transcriptions
Leon Kirchner: Sonata (1948)
Mendelssohn: Three Pieces
Irving Fine: Music for Piano
Faure: (Four Pieces)

16 The Lafayette String Quartet
Resident String Quartet of the University of Victoria, British Columbia
Mozart: Quartet, K. 421
Barber: Quartet, Opus 11
Tchaikovsky: Quartet No. 1, Opus 11

23 David Buechner, pianist
Henry Martin: Preludes and Fugues
Manuel de Falla: Dances from The Three-Cornered Hat
Joaquin Turina: Bailete, Opus 79
Gershwin: Rhapsody No. 2

MARCH 1992

1 National Gallery Orchestra
George Manos, Conductor
(Honoring the exhibition: John Singer Sargent's "El Jaleo")

8 University of Wisconsin Concert Choir
Robert Fountain, Director
J.S. Bach: Jesu, meine Freude
Britten: Hymn to St. Cecilia
Messiaen: O sacrum convivium
Argento: In Praise of Apollo

15 Paul Galbraith, guitarist
(honoring the exhibitions: Guercino Drawings from Windsor Castle and Guercino: Master of the Baroque)
Laurenzini: Fantasia
Di Milano: Ricercari
Frescobaldi: Variations
Britten: Nocturnal on John Dowland

22 The Vienna Trio
Bach/Mozart: Adagio and Fugue
Von Einem: Trio, Opus 74
Beethoven: Serenade, Opus 8

29 Peter Vinograde, pianist
Music of J.S. Bach: Fifteen Two-part Inventions, BWV 772-786
Goldberg Variations, BWV 988

Concerts at the National Gallery are broadcast live on Radio Station WGMS, 103.5 FM. The use of cameras or recording devices during the performance is not allowed.

THE WILLIAM NELSON CROMWELL and F. LAMMOT BELIN CONCERTS at the National Gallery of Art

1991-1992 Season
Celebrating Fifty Years of Free Concerts in the Nation's Capital

George Manos
Director of Music

Sunday Evenings at Seven O'clock
West Building, West Garden Court
2035th Concert
February 16, 1992

THE LAFAYETTE STRING QUARTET
Ann Elliott-Goldschmid, violin
Sharon Stanis, violin
Joanna Hood, viola
Pamela Highbaugh, cello

PROGRAM

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart ........................... Quartet in D Minor, K. 421
(1756-1791) (1783)
Allegro vivace assai
Andante
Allegretto
Allegretto ma non troppo

Samuel Barber....................................................................... Quartet, Opus 11
Molto allegro e appassionato
Molto adagio
Molto allegro come primi

INTERMISSION
(Twelve minutes)

Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky ........................... Quartet No. 1 in D Major
(1840-1893) Opus 11 (1871)
Moderato e semplice
Andante cantabile
Allegro non tanto
Allegro giusto

This concert is presented in cooperation with the
Embassy of Canada

The members of the Lafayette String Quartet met in 1984, when they were members of a Detroit-based chamber orchestra, and have since achieved renown as one of the Western hemisphere’s leading string quartets. They have been greeted with critical acclaim on both sides of the Atlantic, with performances throughout Canada, the United States, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, England, and the Netherlands. In 1985 the Lafayette Quartet won the Grand Prize at the Fischoff National Chamber Music Competition, as well as the Portsmouth (England) International String Quartet Competition and the 1989 Chicago Discovery Competition. After winning the Cleveland Quartet Competition at the Eastman School of Music, the Lafayette Quartet has worked closely with the former ensemble. The Lafayette Quartet has been named Quartet-in-residence at the University of Victoria in British Columbia, and appears at the Gallery through the cooperation of Marietti Anders Artists Management, Inc., of San Francisco.

Mozart usually composed in response to a commission, or to demonstrate his credentials for a particular position. The six string quartets that he wrote between 1783 and 1786 are a notable departure from that norm, in that they were composed purely in response to the example of Haydn’s Six Quartets, Opus 33. Mozart heard these while Haydn was visiting Vienna in 1781, and, although they served as Mozart’s models, it was Haydn who later remarked that he “learned from Mozart how to write quartets.”

Although Samuel Barber is clearly one of America’s own composers, he has a style which is rooted in romantic European traditionalism, rather than in any specifically American idiom. The String Quartet, Opus 11, was written when the composer was twenty-six years old. The second movement, Molto adagio, has eclipsed the existence of the original quartet, as well as that of virtually all of Barber’s other works, in that it has become universally known in the form of the arrangement for string orchestra which Barber created in 1938 for Arturo Toscanini and the NBC Symphony. Among its more celebrated uses have been its broadcast on the radio after the announcement of Franklin Roosevelt’s death, its repeated performance after the assassination of John F. Kennedy, and its use in the sound track of the Vietnam War movie, Platoon.

Tchaikovsky’s biographers consistently point out his exceptional sensitivity and penchant for pathos, which frequently reveal themselves in the music he composed. A profusion of deeply expressive melody is the hallmark of his style, and his quartets are no exception. Coincidentally, Tchaikovsky’s Opus 11, like the quartet of Barber with the same opus number, contains a movement which is much more famous than the quartet as a whole. The Andante cantabile has been a popular favorite ever since it was first transcribed for other instruments, including a version for the harmonica! Tchaikovsky claimed to have learned its main theme from a carpenter in the Kanenka province. Whether this is memory of a true incident or just a romantic anecdote, the theme has that combination of tenderness and intensity that is intrinsic to Russian folk tunes.