

3. I have a glowing knife, a knife in my breast, alas! alas! It cuts so deep into every joy and every delight, so deep, so deep! Ah, what an evil guest it is! It never keeps still, it never rests, neither by day nor by night when I would sleep! Alas! Alas! Alas! When I look up to heaven, I see two blue eyes there! Alas! Alas! When I walk in the yellow field, I see from afar the blonde hair blowing in the wind! Alas! Alas! When I awake from the dream and hear her silver laughter ringing, alas! alas! I wish that I were lying on the black hier, and could never, never open my eyes!

4. The two blue eyes of my sweetheart have sent me into the wide world. So I had to take leave of the dearest place! O eyes, blue! Why did you look at me? Now I have eternal pain and sorrow! I went out in the still night, over the gloomy heath. No one said farewell to me, Farewell! Farewell! Farewell! My companion was love and sorrow! On the highway stood a linden tree, there for the first time did I rest in sleep! Under the linden tree, which snowed its blossoms down on me, there I knew not how life goes, everything was fine again, oh, everything was fine again! Love and pain! And world and dream!
PROGRAM

Gustav Mahler .................................................. Adagietto from Symphony No. 5 (1860-1911) (1900-02)

Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen .................................. Carl Maria von Weber (1943)

I. Wenn mein Schatz Hochzeit macht ........................................... (1786-1826) (1809)
II. Ging heut' morgens iibers Feld ........................................... (1809)
III. Ich hab' ein gliihend Messer ........................................... (1860-1911) (1901-02)
IV. Die zwei blauen Augen ........................................... (1883-85)

INTERMISSION

(Twelve minutes)

Carl Maria von Weber .......................................... Overture and March from Turandot (1786-1826) (1890)

Paul Hindemith ................................................. Symphonic Metamorphosis on Themes of (from 1890-1963)

This concert is presented in honor of the exhibition Kathe Kollwitz...

Bartone Robert Kennedy appears frequently as soloist with the National Gallery Orchestra, having most recently sung the role of Colas in a stage production of Mozart's Bastien and Bastienne at the 1988 Washington Mozart Festival under the direction of George Manos. A native of Florida, Mr. Kennedy earned his bachelor of arts and master of music degrees from Wake Forest College, where he studied voice with Phyllis Curtin and opera with John Manueti and Richard Crittenden. He is instructor of voice and director of the opera program at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, and he has been a member of the National Gallery Vocal Arts Ensemble since it was founded by George Manos in 1985.

The Adagietto from Mahler’s Fifth Symphony is one of just a few movements from the symphonic repertoire that have taken their place in concert programs as works to be performed on their own, apart from the full symphony from which they come. The sublime orchestration that characterizes the Adagietto and the whole symphony are the result of years of painstaking revision on the part of the composer, who re-orchestrated the work for almost every performance of it that he conducted. It was not until the year of his death that he was able to confide in a friend, Georg Gobih, that “the Fifth is finished.”

Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen (Songs of a Wayfarer) is the first song cycle Mahler wrote for solo voice and orchestra. Rather than turning to existing poetry for inspiration, Mahler wrote the poems himself, thus revealing his thoughts and moods in a way that is more immediate, although not necessarily more eloquent, than the way in which they are revealed in his instrumental music. The texts, which appear in translation on the following pages, deal with unrequited love, loneliness, and sorrow, mitigated only temporarily by the writer’s joy in beholding the beauties of nature.

The legend of the Chinese princess Turandot was known to nineteenth-century Europeans by way of a play by Friedrich Schiller that was based on it. The Overture and March are both from incidental music which von Weber provided in 1809 for a production in Stuttgart of Schiller’s Turandot. One hundred thirty-four years later, Paul Hindemith chose these same two pieces as the thematic material for his Symphonic Metamorphosis on Themes of Carl Maria von Weber. The originals would surely have remained in complete obscurity, had not Hindemith brought them to life in a new form. Both Kathe Kollwitz and Paul Hindemith were among those German artists who felt a need to respond to the tumultuous conditions that prevailed in that country in the 1920s. The response in the case of both the artist and the composer can be characterized as an effort to communicate with the average viewer or listener and to avoid what was seen to be the irrelevancy of some of the innovations of the previous decade. In Hindemith’s case, the response took the form of Gebrauchsmusik, or as Hindemith himself preferred to call it, Sing- und Spiebnusik. Solidly grounded in German Renaissance popular song and simple enough that it could readily be sung or played by amateurs as well as professionals, this music played such a role in the world of sound that realism played in the world of art. It served to bridge what had often been a wide gap between the contemporary composer and the general public. Although he ceased composing music in this style in the mid-1930s, Hindemith remained convinced of the importance of amateur music-making in the cultural life of a nation. In A Composer’s World, published in 1932, he wrote: “It is not impossible that out of a tremendous movement of amateur music a peace movement could spread over all the world...”

Tests and Translations

Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen

(Tests by Gustav Mahler)
