

The tone poem *En Saga* was Sibelius' first major orchestral work. It dates from the period in his life when he first returned to Finland after three years of music study in Berlin and Vienna. He formed a bond with several other young Finnish musicians who called themselves the "Young Finns" and allied themselves openly with the growing movement for liberation of Finland from Russian control. Their political expression took the form of pieces of music that were deliberately and unmistakably patriotic in nature. By means of such devices as the opening horn call, the use of Finnish melodies, and the theatrical climaxes that punctuate it, *En Saga* expresses in music the longing for uprising and freedom that could not be expressed in words at the time.

Georges Bizet was a precocious young musician who had his first lessons from his parents, both of whom were music teachers. There was no minimum age for entry to the Paris Conservatory at his time; nevertheless, he set a record by entering the conservatory at age nine, and began taking prizes at the school at age eleven. Bizet climaxed his meteoric rise by winning the coveted *Grand prix de Rome* at the age of nineteen. Ironically, none of the four operas and three operettas he wrote after returning from Rome to Paris met with much success, and he had to earn his living by teaching piano and doing free-lance editing and copying for Paris music publishers. By 1872, the tastes of Paris concertgoers seemed to have caught up with him, and his incidental music to the play, *L'Arlésienne* received as much favorable attention as the stage production. He devoted the next two years of his life to the creation of his magnum opus, *Carmen*, only to discover that its realism was too much for the same public that had hailed his music two seasons earlier. Depressed and bewildered by the reaction to a work for which he had held such high hopes, Bizet became ill and died in 1875.

CONCERTS AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART
Under the direction of George Manos

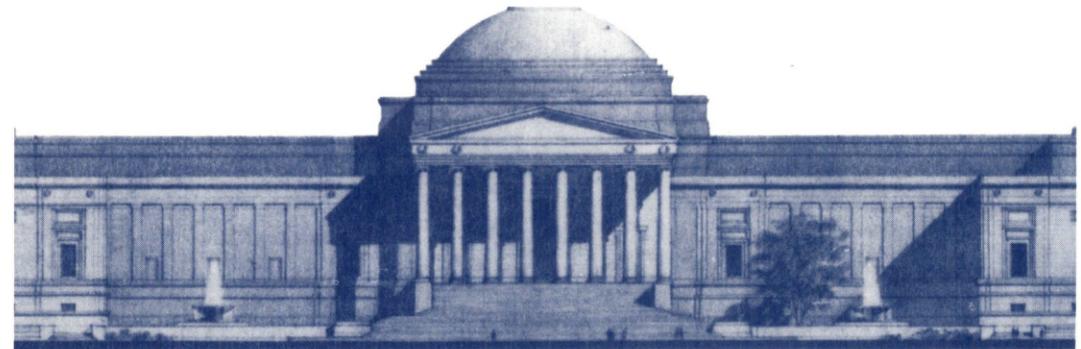
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|--------|---------------------------------------|---|
| May 26 | André-Michel Schub,
<i>pianist</i> | Schubert: <i>Wandererfantasie</i>
<i>Sonata in B-flat Major</i>
<i>Impromptus, Opus 90</i> |
| June 2 | The Brentano String
Quartet | Boccherini: <i>Quartet, Opus 32,</i>
<i>No. 4</i>
Berg: <i>Lyric Suite</i>
Beethoven: <i>Quartet, Opus 130</i> |

The Fifty-fourth Season of

THE WILLIAM NELSON CROMWELL and
F. LAMMOT BELIN CONCERTS

at the

National Gallery of Art



2195th Concert

NATIONAL GALLERY ORCHESTRA

GEORGE MANOS, *Conductor*

BEVERLY BENSO, *contralto, Guest Artist*

Sunday Evening, May 19, 1996
at Seven O'clock
West Building, West Garden Court

Admission Free

PROGRAM

Antonin Dvorák
(1841-1904) Concert Overture: In Nature's Realm
Opus 91 (1891)

Edward Elgar
(1857-1934) Sea Pictures, Opus 37
(1897-99)

Sea Slumber Song
In Haven (Capri)
Sabbath Morning at Sea
Where Corals Lie
The Swimmer

INTERMISSION

Jean Sibelius
(1865-1957) Tone Poem: En Saga
Opus 9 (1892)

Georges Bizet
(1838-1875) Suite: Jeux d'Enfants
(1871)

1. Marche: Trompette et tambour
2. Berceuse: La poupée
3. Impromptu: La toupie
4. Duo: Petit mari, petite femme
5. Galop: Le bal

Concerts from the National Gallery are broadcast in their entirety at 7:00 p.m. on Sundays on radio station WGTS, 91.9 FM, four weeks after the live performance. The use of cameras or recording equipment during the performance is not allowed.

For the convenience of concertgoers the Garden Café remains open until 6:30 p.m.

Where Corals Lie
Richard Garnett

The deeps have music soft and low
When winds awake the airy spray,
It lures me, lures me on to go
And see the land where corals lie.

By mount and mead, by lawn and rill,
When night is deep, and moon is high,
That music seeks and finds me still
And tells me where the corals lie.

Yes, press my eyelids close, 'tis well;
But far the rapid fancies fly
To rolling worlds of wave and shell,
And all the lands where corals lie.

Thy lips are like a sunset glow,
Thy smile is like a morning sky,
Yet leave me, leave me, let me go
And see the land where corals lie.

The Swimmer
A. Lindsay Gordon

With short, sharp, violent lights
made vivid,
To southward far as the sight can
roam,
Only the swirl of the surges livid,
The seas that climb and the surfs
that comb.
Only the crag and the cliff to
nor'ward
And the rocks receding, and reefs
flung forward,
Waifs wreck'd seaward and wasted
shoreward,
On shallows sheeted with flaming
foam.

A grim, grey coast and a seaboard
ghastly,
And shores trod seldom by feet of
men -
Where the batter'd hull and the
broken mast lie,
They have lain embedded these
long years ten.
Love! When we wandered here
together,
Hand in hand through the sparkling
weather,
From the heights and hollows of
fern and heather,
God surely loved us a little then.
....

O, brave white horses! You gather
and gallop,
The storm sprite loosens the gusty
reins;
Now the stoutest ship were the
frailest shallop
In your hollow backs, on your high-
arched manes.
I would ride as never a man has
ridden
In your sleepy, swirling surges
hidden;
To gulfs foreshadow'd through
strifes forbidden,
Where no light wearies and no love
waned.

TEXTS OF THE SEA PICTURES

Sea Slumber Song

The Hon. Roden Noel

Sea birds are asleep,
The world forgets to weep,
Sea murmurs her soft slumber song
On the shadowy sand
Of this elfin land;
"I, the mother mild,
Hush thee, O my child,
Forget the voices wild!
Isles in elfin light
Dream, the rocks and caves,
Lulled by whispering waves,
Veil their marbles bright;
Foam glimmers faintly white
Upon the shelly sand
Of this elfin land;
Sea-sound, like violins,
To slumber woos and wins;
I murmur my soft slumber-song,
Leave woes, and wails, and sins,
Ocean's shadowy might
Breathes good-night!"

In Haven (Capri)

C. A. Elgar

Closely let me hold thy hand,
Storms are sweeping sea and land;
Love alone will stand.

Closely cling, for waves beat fast,
Foam-flakes cloud the hurrying
blast;
Love alone will last.

Kiss my lips, and softly say:
"Joy, sea-swept, may fade today;
Love alone will stay.

Sabbath Morning at Sea

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

The ship went on with solemn face
To meet the darkness on the deep;
The solemn ship went onward.
I bowed down weary in the place;
For parting tears and present sleep
Had weighted mine eyelids downward.

The new sight, the new wondrous
sight!

The water around me, turbulent,
The skies, impassive o'er me,
Calm in a moonless, sunless light,
As glorified by even the intent
Of holding the day glory!

Love me, sweet friends, this
sabbath day,

The sea sings round me while ye
roll

Afar the hymn, unaltered,
And kneel, where once I knelt to
pray,

And bless me deeper in your soul
Because your voice has faltered;

And though this sabbath comes to me
Without the stoled minister
And chanting congregation,
God's Spirit shall give me comfort.
He who brooded soft on waters
drear,

Creator on creation.

He shall assist me to look higher,
Where keep the saints, with harp
and song,

An endless sabbath morning;
And, on that sea commixed with
fire,

Oft drop their eyelids raised too
long

To the full Godhead's burning.

Conductor, composer and pianist GEORGE MANOS has been director of Music at the National Gallery of Art and conductor of the National Gallery Orchestra since 1985. He is also artistic director of the Gallery's American Music Festival and its resident vocal and chamber ensembles, which he founded. His career as a performing pianist and teacher has included several years on the faculty of Catholic University in Washington, D.C., where he taught piano, conducting, and chamber music, and directorship of the Wilmington, Delaware, School of Music, where he presented an annual jazz festival and clinic.

Maestro Manos founded and directed for ten years the renowned Killarney Bach Festival in the Republic of Ireland, which received repeated acclaim in both Irish and international media. He has conducted numerous other chamber and symphonic orchestras in Europe, the United States and South America, and he was the music director of the 1992 Kolding, Denmark, International Music Festival.

Contralto BEVERLY BENSO is well known in Washington as a uniquely gifted singer in her range, and has carried that reputation to all parts of the world through her appearances as recitalist and oratorio soloist in Germany, Denmark, the former Yugoslavia, and at the Salzburg Festival in Austria. As soloist with the Washington Bach Consort, she appeared in Leipzig and Halle, Germany, in concerts celebrating the 300th anniversary of the birth of J. S. Bach. Ms. Benso has been a frequent guest soloist with the National Gallery Orchestra under the direction of George Manos, and has also sung at Charleston, South Carolina's Spoleto Festival and at the Mahler Festival in Canada.

Dvorák's instrumental music is often compared to that of Schubert, since he shared with Schubert the traits of writing abundantly and spontaneously and tending to excel in short, lyrical pieces. Both composers also exhibited a fresh naiveté and closeness to the folk idioms of their home regions. *In Nature's Realm* bears the unmistakable stamp of the composer's Bohemian background; its melodies have the lilt and rhythm of folk songs, and its emotional message is warm and direct, even though the music is without text.

Elgar's *Sea Pictures* reflect not only the composer's love for the sea, but also a desire on his part, stemming perhaps out of the fame that accompanied his successes of the late 1890s, to exhibit an English composer's response to poetry from some of his English contemporaries. One of those, whose credit in the score is "C.A. Elgar," was his wife, Alice.