

intense crystallizations of a particular mood or subject, and the *Etudes tableaux* could also be described as small tone-poems in their own right. Indeed, the fifteen *Etudes tableaux* which comprise Opus 33 and 39 were thought to be sonic representations of the same number of paintings, but the source of Rachmaninoff's inspiration for these impassioned works remains a mystery.

– Notes by Chris Pritchett

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

JUNE 1996

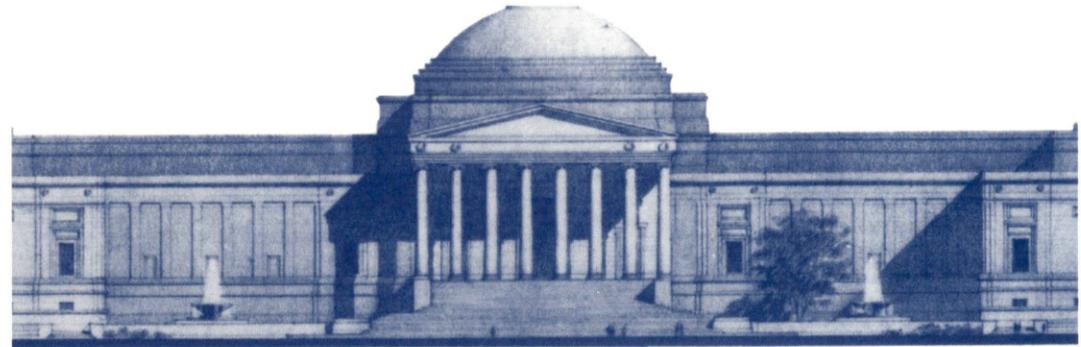
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|----|---|--|
| 23 | Fritz Gearhart, <i>violinist</i>
Paul Tardif, <i>pianist</i> | Mozart: <i>Sonata in B-flat Major</i>
William Grant Still: <i>Suite for
Violin and Piano</i>
Grieg: <i>Sonata in C Minor</i> |
| 30 | Enrique Graf, <i>pianist</i> | Mendelssohn: <i>Variations
sérieuses</i>
Mussorgsky: <i>Pictures at an
Exhibition</i> |

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.*

The Fifty-fourth Season of
THE WILLIAM NELSON CROMWELL and
F. LAMMOT BELIN CONCERTS

at the
National Gallery of Art



2199th Concert

STEPHEN PRUTSMAN, *pianist*

Sunday Evening, June 16, 1996
at Seven O'clock
West Building, West Garden Court

Admission Free

PROGRAM

John Harbison
(b. 1938)

Sonata No.1
(1985)

Maurice Ravel
(1875-1937)

Miroirs
(1904-05)

Noctuelles
Oiseaux tristes
Une barque sur l'Océan
Alborada del gracioso
La vallée des cloches

INTERMISSION

Sergey Rachmaninoff
(1873-1943)

Etudes tableaux
Opus 39 (1916-17)

No. 1 in C Minor
No. 2 in A Minor
No. 3 in F-Sharp Minor
No. 4 in B Minor
No. 5 in E-Flat Major
No. 6 in A Minor
No. 7 in C Minor
No. 8 in D Minor
No. 9 in D Major

Since his public debut at the age of seven in his native Los Angeles, STEPHEN PRUTSMAN has enchanted audiences worldwide with his dramatic and eloquent mastery of the piano. At age twelve he performed as guest soloist with the San Diego Symphony. He went on to study at the University of California, and later at the Peabody Conservatory with renowned pianist Leon Fleischer as his mentor. Mr. Prutsman has also studied under Jack Wilson and Leonard Shure and has received the Liberace and Yale Gordon Scholarships at the Peabody. He is currently a candidate for its Artists Diploma.

Winner of the Aspen Music Festival Competition and also the Young Keyboard Artists International Competition, Mr. Prutsman received the Fourth place medal in the 1990 International Tchaikovsky Competition, held in Moscow.

Mr. Prutsman's recitals have taken him to Britain, Japan and Russia, as well as performing extensively with orchestras across America. He has been featured in live performances by the BBC and has recorded Frank Bridge's *Piano Trio No.2* for Pearl Records.

Although better known for his larger vocal works and operas, John Harbison's fusion of modern jazz improvisational techniques and clearly defined chord structures creates a strong linear compulsion to his imaginative and eclectic music. Educated at Harvard, The *Berliner Hochschule* and later at Princeton, he has received a Guggenheim Fellowship and the Kennedy Center-Friedheim Award. Also known for his conducting prowess, Harbison has been a guest conductor for the San Francisco and Boston Symphonies.

The *Sonata No.1* has been recorded by Ursula Oppens and by Robert Shannon. Subtitled "Roger Sessions in Memoriam," the work was written as a tribute to one of Harbison's teachers and influences, who died in 1985.

Born in Ciboure in Southwest France, Maurice Ravel studied at the Conservatoire de Paris with Bériot and Fauré, and later met Erik Satie, whose experimental approach to composition influenced Ravel's subsequent work. As a member of a buoyant *coterie* of fellow artists, he enjoyed an elegant, fashionable social life in the many salons and bars in the city. The emotional sensitivity cultivated in this company seemed at odds with Ravel's fastidious adherence to musical forms and structures, but it is generally accepted that this does not detract from the lyric content of his music, as Ravel's contemporary critics suggested it did.

As the title suggests, *Miroirs* does not intend to present focused descriptions, but provides a suggested, reflective picture. Night moths fluttering around a light are the image created by the light, agitated variations of the initial motive in *Noctuelles*. The use of the waltz time implies that there is a dance being performed by the fragile, fluttering creatures.

Oiseaux tristes (*The Sad Birds*) is a beautifully melancholic piece, built on a repeated note figure and the occasional flourish of melody from birds who have lost the urge to sing. An undulating broken figure, played by the left hand, establishes the impression of gentle waves in the third number, *Une barque sur l'Océan* (*A Boat on the Oceanus*), possibly inspired by the yachting cruise to Holland that Ravel had taken the previous year. This provides a sharp contrast to the next piece, *Alborada del gracioso* (*Dawn Song of the Jester*), where the gyrations of a Spanish clown are described by animated imitations of a Flamenco guitar and repeated, rhythmic fragments. After this lift of tempo and mood, we are transported by *La vallée des cloches* (*The Valley of the Bells*) to a pastoral setting, with the all-important bell motive dominant.

Sergey Rachmaninoff was one of the leading piano virtuosos of the twentieth century, and is equally known for the beauty of his own music. His use of strong melodies embellished with elaborate technical flourishes creates