

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

NOVEMBER 1996

- 10 National Gallery Vocal Arts Ensemble
George Manos, *Artistic Director*
Quartets, Trios, and Duos by Brahms, Schubert, Stephen Foster, and others
- 17 Igor Kipnis and Karen Kushner, *duo pianists*
Schubert: *Polonaises*
Brahms: *Hungarian Dances*
Ravel: *Mother Goose Suite*
- 24 National Gallery Orchestra
George Manos, *Conductor*
Works of Franz Schubert
Overture: The Devil as Hydraulicus
Symphonies No. 8 and No. 5

DECEMBER 1996

- 1 Justin Blasdale, *pianist*
Schubert: *Sonata in C Minor*
J. S. Bach: *Partita No. 4 in D*
Robert Helps: *Homages*
- 8 James Ehnes, *violinist*
Eduard Laurel, *pianist*
Beethoven: *Sonata No. 2 in A*
Bartok: *Rhapsody #2*
Brahms: *Sonata No. 2 in A*
- 15 Orli Shaham, *pianist*
Mozart: *Sonata in C, K. 330*
Schumann: *Faschingschwank aus Wien*
Beethoven: *Variations, Op. 26*
Chopin: *Nocturne, Op 27, No. 2*
Ballade in F Minor, Op. 52

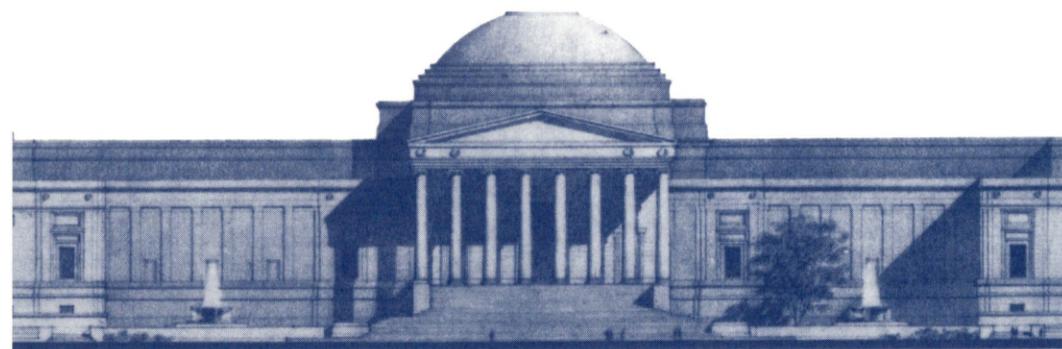
Concerts from the National Gallery are broadcast in their entirety at 7:00 p.m. on Sundays on radio station WGTS, 91.9 FM, four weeks after the live performance. The use of cameras or recording equipment during the performance is not allowed.

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

The Fifty-fifth Season of

THE WILLIAM NELSON CROMWELL and
F. LAMMOT BELIN CONCERTS

National Gallery of Art



2206th Concert

NATIONAL GALLERY ORCHESTRA

GEORGE MANOS, *Conductor*

*Honoring the Exhibition: Adolph Menzel (1815-1905):
Between Romanticism and Impressionism*

Sunday Evening, November 3, 1996
Seven O'clock
West Building, West Garden Court

Admission Free

PROGRAM

Felix Mendelssohn
(1809-1847) Overture: The Hebrides
Opus 26 (1830)

Robert Schumann
(1810-1856) Overture, Scherzo, and Finale, Opus 52
(1841)

INTERMISSION

Johannes Brahms
(1833-1897) Serenade No. 1 in D Major
Opus 11 (1857-58)

Allegro molto
Scherzo: Allegro non troppo
Adagio non troppo
Menuetto
Scherzo: Allegro
Rondo: Allegro

Adolph Menzel (1815-1905) lived in a time and place which were ideally suited for the interaction of great music and art. He was the most respected artist of his age in the German-speaking world, an age which also witnessed the apogee of musical creativity in the courts and concert halls of Germany and Austria. The exhibition of Menzel's works which is currently at the National Gallery includes several of the many works he created as a result of his interest in music and his contact with the leading musicians of his time. The primary example is his history painting, *The Flute Concert of Frederick the Great at Sanssouci*, 1850-52 (Berlin, Nationalgalerie), in which he chose to portray Frederick II pursuing his hobby as an amateur musician. A famous composer of the time, Carl Friederich Emanuel Bach, is shown in his role as conductor at the keyboard. In another history painting, *Crown Prince Frederick Pays a Visit to the Painter Pesne on his Scaffold at Rheinsberg*, 1861 (Berlin, Nationalgalerie), the concertmaster of Bach's orchestra, Franz Benda, is shown in another capacity. He is seen playing his *viola da braccia* in the room where a painter is at work, providing atmosphere and inspiration for his fellow artist.

When Menzel turned to painting scenes from contemporary life, he had opportunities to portray the great performers of his own time,

including Joseph Joachim and Clara Schumann. *The Bilse Concert*, 1871 (Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett) features the work of a conductor and impresario who has passed into obscurity, but whose fame in the nineteenth century equalled that of Montovani in the twentieth. Benjamin Bilse (1816-1902) was a conductor who organized orchestral concert tours which were a much anticipated event in every European city. Some of the Bilse concerts took place under less than ideal circumstances, such as the café setting shown in Menzels' gouache. Menzel makes it quite clear that most of the patrons are not listening to the orchestra, busy as they are with eating and socializing. Some in the audience are at least polite enough to communicate with each other noiselessly, using mime gestures, which Menzel portrays with great relish.

Shortly after his trip to England, Scotland, and the Hebrides Islands in 1829, Felix Mendelssohn wrote to his sister, Fanny: "In order to make you understand how extraordinarily the Hebrides affected me, the following came into my mind there." The letter proceeds with a manuscript of the first twenty-one measures of the melody which later became the opening passage in the overture known as *The Hebrides, or Fingal's Cave*. Mendelssohn's ability to translate the wild, desolate beauty of that world into music may well be linked with his skill as a draughtsman and water-colorist. Indeed, some of his best landscape drawings were done in the course of that same journey.

Schumann's pattern as a composer was to create a number of works in the same genre during a limited time period, after which he would leave that genre altogether and go on to another. 1841 was a year in which he turned to the full orchestra, producing two symphonies and the *Overture, Scherzo, and Finale* which is on the program this evening. The latter work is rarely performed, having been overshadowed by Schumann's symphonies, but like them it exhibits his strengths as a composer: balance and contrast of musical colors, lyricism, and a poetic approach to music.

Brahms' *Opus 11* has all of the qualifications of a symphony, but bears the title *Serenade* because it was originally conceived for string octet. When Clara Schumann first heard the work, she commented that it could only be improved by fuller instrumentation. Inspired by this, Brahms expanded and rearranged the *Serenade* several times, first for piano solo, and then in 1858 for a chamber orchestra he was conducting in Düsseldorf. Two years later, he collaborated with Joseph Joachim in expanding the scoring for use by the Hanover Symphony Orchestra, which Joachim was conducting at the time.