

After spending the winter of 1892-1893 in New York City as director of the newly established National Conservatory of Music, Antonín Dvořák went for a vacation in June of that year to a Czech farm colony in Spillville, Iowa. There he composed the *New World Symphony* and the *String Quartets, Opus 96 and 97*. Three days after arriving with his family and secretary, Dvořák began work on the first movement of the former quartet, which he completed in the early morning hours of the next day. He immediately started the second movement and had written the whole quartet by the end of the third day. So much for being on vacation! The "*American*" Quartet, as *Opus 96* came to be known, is marked by themes Dvořák felt were "in the spirit of American folk melodies," although the spirit is perhaps better identified as nostalgia for the folk music of Dvořák's homeland. Dvořák's impact on music in America has recently been acknowledged by way of the visual arts. A full-length sculpture of the composer has been placed in New York's Stuyvesant Square Park. Its dedication ceremony on September 13 coincided with the opening of an exhibition of photographs and documents from Dvořák's years in the United States.

*-Program notes by Dr. Robert F. Wermuth,  
adapted and edited by Rachel Brintnall*

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

**OCTOBER 1997**

19 Sharon Christman, <i>soprano</i> Michael Patterson, <i>Pianist</i>	Wolf: <i>Verschwiegene Liebe</i> Debussy: <i>Quatre chansons de jeunesse</i> Rowley: <i>Three Mystical Songs</i>
26 Alexei Lubimov, <i>pianist</i>	Brahms: <i>Two Rhapsodies Op. 79 Fantasien, Op. 116</i> Schubert: <i>Three Impromptus, Op. 90 Fantasy in C Major</i>

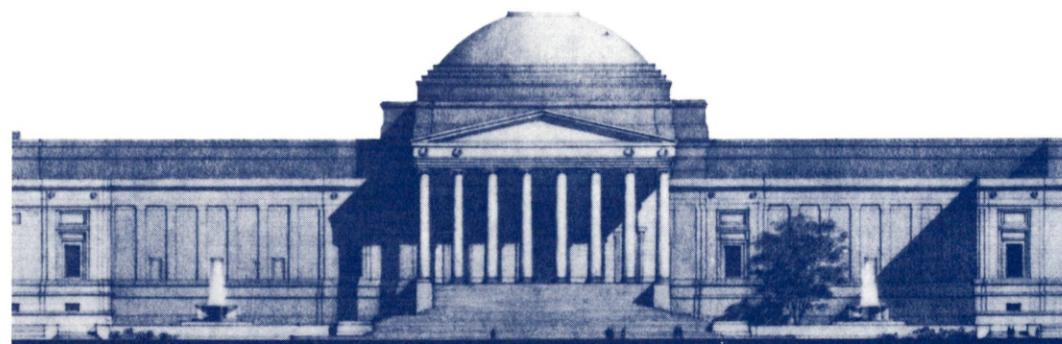
*The use of cameras or recording equipment  
during the performance is not allowed.*

*For the convenience of concertgoers  
the Garden Café remains open until 6:30 pm.*

*The Fifty-sixth Season of*

THE WILLIAM NELSON CROMWELL and  
F. LAMMOT BELIN CONCERTS

National Gallery of Art



*2241st Concert*

**KOCIAN STRING QUARTET**

**PAVEL HŮLA, violin ZBYNĚK PAD'OUREK, viola**  
**JAN ODSTRČIL, violin VÁCLAV BERNAŠEK, violoncello**

Sunday Evening, October 12, 1997  
at Seven O'Clock  
West Building, West Garden Court

*Admission Free*

## PROGRAM

Bedřich Smetana  
(1824–1884)

String Quartet No. 2 in D Minor  
(1882-1883)

Allegro  
Allegro moderato; andante cantabile  
Allegro non più moderato, ma  
agitato e con fuoco  
Finale (Presto)

Erwin Schulhoff  
(1894–1942)

String Quartet No. 1  
(1924)

Presto con fuoco  
Allegretto con moto e  
con malinconia grottesca  
Allegro giocoso, alla slovacca  
Andante molto sostenuto

## INTERMISSION

Antonín Dvořák  
(1841–1904)

String Quartet No. 12 in F Major  
Opus 96, "American" (1893)

Allegro ma non troppo  
Lento  
Molto vivace  
Finale: Vivace ma non troppo

Having taken its name in 1975 in honor of the Czech violin virtuoso and pedagogue Jaroslav Kocian, the KOCIAN QUARTET continues the long Czech tradition of teachers passing along their artistic experience to the next generation. Winner of the 1981 artistic prize of the Czech Association for Chamber Music, the Quartet has often been featured at the Prague Spring Festival and in concert cycles of the Czech Philharmonic. Tours to numerous countries, including Germany, France, Russia, Japan, the United States, and Canada, have brought its extraordinary musicianship to audiences around the world. The Quartet now performs nearly 125 concerts per year.

PAVEL HŮLA (born in 1952 in Prague), first violin, is a professor at the Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts in Prague. He is a double winner of the Kocian Violin Competition and the prizewinner of the Czech radio competition "*Concertino Praga*".

JAN ODSTRČIL (born in 1944 in Zabreh), second violin, graduated from the Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts in Prague, where he studied under Jiří Novák, the first violinist of the Smetana Quartet. Until 1979 he was a member of the Prague Symphony Orchestra.

ZBYNEK PAD'OUREK (born in 1966 in Prachalice), viola, is a protégé of Jaroslav Motlík at the Academy of Music in Prague. He was a member of the Czech Nonet until 1992 and joined the Kocian Quartet early in 1993.

VÁCLAV BERNÁŠEK (born in 1944 in Kladno), cello, was the prize winner of the International Competition in Vienna in 1967. He graduated from the Academy of Music and the Dramatic Arts in Prague in the class of Professor Sádlo and was principal cello in the Prague Symphony Orchestra until 1980.

While Bedřich Smetana wrote several orchestral compositions and operas, it is his chamber music that is his most personal expression. His first and second string quartets are intensively autobiographical. As we have learned from Smetana's letters, his music describes his reaction to many important events in his life: the thrills of young love, his feelings of allegiance to his country, and the onset of deafness. Smetana uses traditional Czech harmonies and rhythms and is considered one of the fathers of Czech national music. His combination of psychological and nationalistic elements results in an interesting link between his music and the quartets of Beethoven and Bartók.

Ervín Schulhoff's musical talent was first recognized by Antonín Dvořák, who saw to it that he enrolled in the Prague Conservatory in 1904. Later he studied in Leipzig with Max Reger and took lessons in composition from Debussy. After serving in the Czech Army in World War I, Schulhoff spent the 1920s in Germany, where he associated with many avant-garde artists, including George Grosz, Paul Klee, and the German dadaists. It was during this time that he wrote his *String Quartet No. 1*. In the 1930s Schulhoff joined the Communist Party. This open commitment, combined with his Jewish religion, made him a target for early arrest and imprisonment when the Germans invaded Czechoslovakia in 1938. He died in a concentration camp in 1942.