

Liszt, on the other hand, lived a vigorous and active life, cultivating contacts with some of the most influential people of his time and concertizing with astounding success all over Europe. He was the greatest piano virtuoso of his era, and was blessed with extremely long fingers, enabling him to play tenths as easily as many pianists play octaves. As a result, many of his compositions are notorious for their technical difficulty, especially the *Transcendental Etudes*. A deeply religious but paradoxical personality, he had several mistresses and three highly publicized love affairs, two of which were with married women. Robust in health, he continued to play recitals until just a few weeks before his death at the age of seventy-five. In spite of the inevitable rivalry between the two, Liszt was a great admirer of Chopin's music. His *Second Ballade* is one of a number of works he wrote in "Chopinesque" style.

- Program notes prepared by Rachel Brintnall

Concerts at The National Gallery of Art
Under the Direction of George Manos

November 1997

30 National Gallery Orchestra
George Manos, *conductor*

Bizet: *"Carmen" Suite*
Persichetti: *Serenade*
Weber: *Symphony No. 1*

7 Todd Crow, *pianist*

Schubert: *Sonata, D. 960*
Bartók: *Dance Suite*
Haydn: *Sonata in C Major*

14 Dunsmuir Piano Quartet

Haydn: *Piano Trio in E*
Helps: *Quartet (1997)*
Brahms: *Quartet in G Minor*

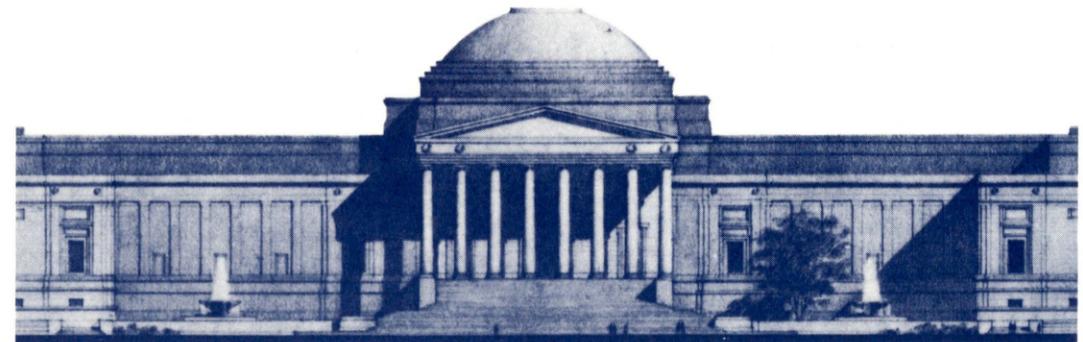
The use of cameras or recording equipment during the performance is not allowed.

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

The Fifty-sixth Season of

**THE WILLIAM NELSON CROMWELL and
F. LAMMOT BELIN CONCERTS**

National Gallery of Art



2247th Concert

KEMAL GEKIĆ , *pianist*

Sunday Evening, November 23, 1997
at Seven O'Clock
West Building, West Garden Court

Admission Free

PROGRAM

Franz Liszt
(1811–1886)

Six Consolations
(1849–1850)

Frédéric Chopin
(1810–1849)

Andante spianato et
Grande polonaise brillante
Opus 22 (1830–1831)

Liszt

Ballade No. 2 in B Minor
(1853)

INTERMISSION

Liszt

Transcendental Etudes
(1851)

No. 8: Wilde Jagd
No. 9: Ricordanza
No. 10: In F Minor (Untitled)
No. 11: Harmonies du soir
No. 12: Chasse-neige

Born in Split, Yugoslavia, KEMAL GEKIĆ amazed his family by accurately picking out melodies on the piano at the age of eighteen months. He received his early musical training from his aunt, Lorenza Batturina, after which he entered the Art Academy of Novi Sad, Yugoslavia. During his school years he won numerous awards and finished with the highest honors ever given to a piano student by the Novi Sad Academy. He was immediately appointed to the faculty and has taught at the school ever since. Throughout his performing career, Gekić has delighted audiences and baffled competition judges, who have several times found themselves with an audience in revolt after failing to grant Gekić first prize. Mr. Gekić returns to the concert stage this season after an extended period of devoting himself almost exclusively to recordings, such as his landmark recording of the complete Liszt *Transcendental Etudes*. Mr. Gekić appears at the National Gallery by arrangement with Jacques Leiser Artists' Management of San Diego, California.

In his choice of music for this recital, Mr. Gekić brings together the lyricist Frédéric Chopin and the showman Franz Liszt, two of the most performed keyboard composers of all time. The two men were contemporaries who had numerous friends in common. Despite their intimate relationships with women, neither ever married. It was Liszt who introduced Chopin to the author George Sand (at her request) and Chopin's infatuation with her lasted for the next ten years. Neither friends nor enemies, the two composers respected each other's work, but each also found fault with the direction taken by the other. Chopin criticized Liszt for abandoning musicality for the sake of show-stopping virtuosity. His own style was much more subtle, marked by the intricate use of pedal and lyrical lines.

Afflicted from an early age with a pulmonary weakness, Chopin was ill most of his life. He often made his health worse by frequenting salons and performing when he should have been resting. Although toward the end of his life he was in demand as a teacher, he had trouble competing as a concert performer with the virtuosity of pianists such as Liszt. Chopin frequently improvised when he performed, and that style was not very effective in public concerts in large halls. His preference was for more intimate settings, such as the salons of Paris. He performed only about thirty formal concerts during his career, but became known to the wider public through his compositions.