

About the *Four Etudes for Ursula*, Tobias Picker writes: "In order to understand something of my attitude toward the *Four Etudes for Ursula*, I would like the listener to know that I have been composing piano music for Miss Oppens for twenty-two years. It is just as thrilling [for me] today to be asked by Ursula Oppens for a piece as it was when I was a very young composer. The first three etudes were composed in the fall of 1995 and the fourth in the fall of 1996. Of all the pieces I have given her, these four etudes seem to stand apart in both our minds. [After her first reading of them, Ursula said:] 'With these etudes you've made a double portrait of our long, crazy, wild, funny, serious, musical friendship.' [Those] adjectives may apply to these little studies, but it is a thing beyond the call of friendship which drives Ursula Oppens's intrepid muse into the outer reaches of technical difficulty and my musical imagination."

Beethoven's *Sonata No. 27 in E Minor, Opus 90* is imbued with romantic notions: intimateness, elusiveness, poignancy, gentleness, and even happiness. The colliding harmonic structure within the first movement perplexed many of Beethoven's intellectual friends. In trying to explain the work to his patron, Count Lichnowsky, Beethoven is purported to have said, "This movement is a dispute between the head and the heart." In contrast to the compactness of the first movement, the second is more rambling and episodic, but its sections are closely allied to one another and never depart from the prevailing song-like character.

Beethoven's *Sonata No. 28 in A Major, Opus 101*, the first of the great five last sonatas, was published in 1816. It may best be described as a *Sonata-fantasia*, particularly in the light of the instructions Beethoven provides in the score, which call upon the pianist to exercise considerable imagination – "with deeply felt emotion," "like a lively march," "yearning," and "with determination." Beethoven goes beyond the restrictions of sonata form to produce a highly contrapuntal work that never surrenders its lyric elements. He enters into a new world of expression, encompassing both the majesty of the symphonic ideal and the intimacy of chamber music.

-Program notes by Elmer Booze

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

February 1998

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|--------------|--|--|
| 1 | National Gallery Orchestra
George Manos, <i>conductor</i> | Mozart: <i>Symphony No. 41</i>
Mahler: <i>Adagietto from Symphony No. 5</i>
Korngold: <i>Suite: "Much Ado About Nothing"</i> |
| 8 | Hugh Sung, <i>pianist</i> | Clementi: <i>Sonata in B-flat Major</i>
Ravel: <i>Gaspard de la nuit</i>
Mussorgsky: <i>Pictures at an Exhibition</i> |
| 15 | Kolja Blacher, <i>violinist</i>
Jessica Krash, <i>pianist</i> | Schumann: <i>Sonata in A Minor</i>
Prokofiev: <i>Sonata No. 1</i>
Brahms: <i>Sonata in A Major</i>
Ravel: <i>Oiseaux tristes from Miroirs Tzigane</i> |
| 22 | Talich String Quartet | Beethoven: <i>Quartet, Opus 131</i>
Mozart: <i>Quartet in D Major</i>
Janáček: <i>String Quartet #1</i> |
| March | | |
| 1 | National Gallery Orchestra
George Manos, <i>conductor</i> | Delius: <i>On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring</i>
Dvorák: <i>Scherzo capriccioso</i>
Schumann: <i>Symphony No. 1</i> |

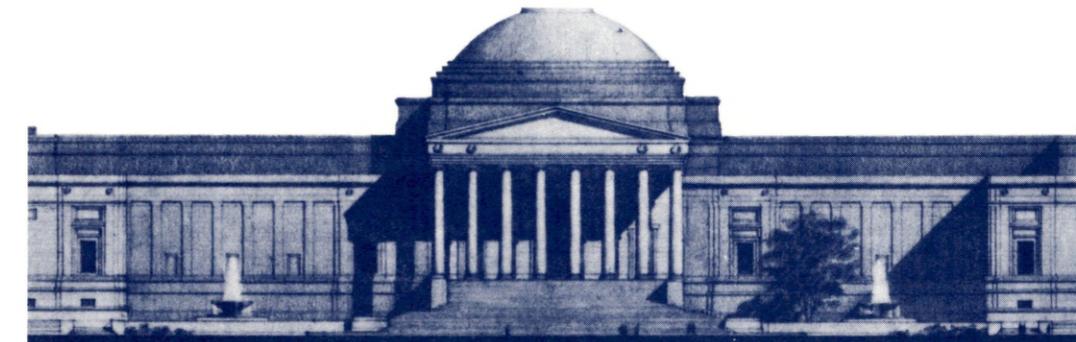
The use of cameras or recording equipment during the performance is not allowed.

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



2256th Concert

URSULA OPPENS, *pianist*

Sunday Evening, January 25, 1998
at Seven O'Clock
West Building, West Garden Court

Admission Free

