Maestro Manos' career as a performing pianist and teacher has included several years on the faculty of Catholic University where he taught piano, conducting, and chamber music, as well as directorship of the Wilmington, Delaware, School of Music, where he presented an annual jazz festival and clinic. Manos founded and directed for ten years the renowned Killarney Bach Festival in the Republic of Ireland and was the music director of the 1992 Scandinavian Music Festival in Kolding, Denmark.

- Program notes by Elmer Booze

Concerts at the National Gallery of Art 1998-1999

Under the Direction of George Manos

October 1998

11 Anthony Goldstone and Caroline Clemmow, duo pianists
Music for piano, four hands by Mozart, Schubert, and Rimsky-Korsakov

18 Francine Kay, pianist
Schumann: Novelletten Fantasiestücke
Satie: Préludes Écoute joyeuse
Debussy: String Quartet This Is My Voice

25 The Alcan String Quartet
Debussy: String Quartet
Kelly-Marie Murphy: Grieg

November

1 National Gallery Orchestra George Manos, conductor
Kathryn Hearden, soprano
Beethoven: Coriolanus Overture; Scene "Ah, perfido!"; Symphony No. 7

8 Mark Rush, violinist
Tannis Gibson, pianist
Beethoven: Sonata in G, Op. 30/3
Nicholas Maw: Piano Sonata for Solo Violin
Prokofiev: Sonata, Op. 94a

15 Kirill Glazkovsky, pianist
Clementi: Sonata, Op. 24/2
Beethoven: "Moonlight" Sonata
Prokofiev: Sonata No. 3
Schumann: "Ruts Bütter" Symphonic Etudes

22 National Gallery Orchestra George Manos, conductor
Claudia Chudacoff, violinist
Marcio Botelho, cellist
Mozart: Don Giovanni Overture; Symphony No. 35
Brahms: Concerto for Violin, Cello, and Orchestra

29 João Carlos Martins, pianist
J. S. Bach: Ten Preludes and Fugues from "The Well-tempered Clavier"
Mozart: Sonata, K. 309; Sonata, K. 330

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 p.m.

NATIONAL GALLERY ORCHESTRA

GEORGE MANOS, conductor

Sunday Evening, October 4, 1998
at Seven O’Clock
West Building, West Garden Court
Admission Free
For the most part, Vincent van Gogh's preferences in and reactions to music belong among the private mysteries of his life. A bit of evidence of his admiration for the music of Wagner exists in the form of this excerpt from a letter written by Theo van Gogh in 1888: "before [Vincent] left, I went out with him several times to hear a Wagner concert; we both liked it very palatably in a contemporary way." Franck was an organist by training and received the order of the Legion of Honor in 1885 for his work as a professor of organ at the Paris Conservatoire. His affinity for that instrument is demonstrated by the massed orchestral sounds in the D Minor Symphony that create an imposing organ effect, against which the strings, brass, and woodwinds are pitted alternately.

Written during Franck's sixty-fifth year, the Symphony in D Minor (his only one) was greeted with resentment and disaffection when first performed on February 17, 1889 at the Paris Conservatoire. The famous French composer Charles Gounod (1818-1893) remarked: "[The symphony is] the affirmation of incompetence pushed to dogmatic lengths." Franck, on the other hand, was not to be intimidated, and when asked his opinion on hearing the first performance merely smiled and replied, "Oh, it sounded well; just as I thought it would!"

The symphony has an innovative cyclical form. Within this form Franck arranges the traditional four movements in favor of three, each of which shares melodic relationships to the main theme. The theme makes its initial appearance in the introspective Lento, presented by the basses and celli. The Lento is followed by the Allegro non troppo, which utilizes the same melodic theme via double diminution, an unusual practice in nineteenth-century France. The second movement, Allegretto, plays a dual role in the symphony, as both a slow movement and a scherzo. In addition, the use of the English horn as a solo instrument and the harp as an orchestral instrument were groundbreaking for the time. The finale, Allegro non troppo, seems to "push the envelope" even further for Franck. Harmonic innovations that startled his contemporaries, particularly the free modulations bridging unrelated keys, were extended to the use of some parallel progressions of dominant-seventh chords. The cyclic element manifests itself completely in this movement, as themes heard in the first two movements reappear and form a crystallization that is immediate and gratifying.

Conductor, composer, and pianist George Manos has been director of music at the National Gallery of Art and conductor of the National Gallery Orchestra since 1985. He is also artistic director of the American Music Festival and of the Gallery's resident vocal and chamber ensembles, which he founded. A native of Washington, George Manos organized and conducted the Hellenic, Washington, and National Oratorio Societies and the American Composers and Conductors Chamber Orchestra. Manos directed the efforts of this last ensemble toward the presentation of new works by American composers.