

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

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| 11 | Anthony Goldstone and
Caroline Clemmow,
<i>duo pianists</i> | Music for piano, four hands by
Mozart, Schubert, and
Rimsky-Korsakov |
| 18 | Francine Kay, <i>pianist</i> | Schumann: <i>Nocturne</i>
<i>Fantasiestücke</i>
Satie: <i>Trois valse</i>
Debussy: <i>Préludes</i>
<i>Lisle joyeuse</i> |
| 25 | The Alcan String Quartet | Debussy: <i>String Quartet</i>
Kelly-Marie: <i>This Is My</i>
Murphy: <i>Voice</i>
Grieg: <i>String Quartet</i> |

November

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| 1 | National Gallery Orchestra
George Manos, <i>conductor</i>
Kathryn Hearden, <i>soprano</i> | Beethoven: <i>Coriolanus</i>
<i>Overture</i>
<i>Scene: "Ah,
perfidio!"</i>
<i>Symphony No. 7</i> |
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| 8 | Mark Rush, <i>violinist</i>
Tannis Gibson, <i>pianist</i> | Beethoven: <i>Sonata in G,
Op. 30/3</i>
Nicholas Maw: <i>Sonata for Solo
Violin</i>
Prokofiev: <i>Sonata, Op. 94a</i> |
| 15 | Kirill Gliadkovsky, <i>pianist</i> | Clementi: <i>Sonata, Op.24/2</i>
Beethoven: <i>"Moonlight"
Sonata</i>
Prokofiev: <i>Sonata No. 3</i>
Schumann: <i>"Bunte Blätter"
Symphonic
Etudes</i> |
| 22 | National Gallery Orchestra
George Manos, <i>conductor</i>
Claudia Chudacoff, <i>violinist</i>
Marcio Botelho, <i>cellist</i> | Mozart: <i>Don Giovanni</i>
<i>Overture</i>
<i>Symphony No. 35</i>
Brahms: <i>Concerto for
Violin,
Cello, and
Orchestra</i> |
| 29 | João Carlos Martins, <i>pianist</i> | J. S. Bach: <i>Ten Preludes
and Fugues
from "The
Well-tempered
Clavier"</i>
Mozart: <i>Sonata, K. 309</i>
<i>Sonata, K. 330</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 p.m.*

The Fifty-seventh Season of

THE WILLIAM NELSON CROMWELL and
F. LAMMOT BELIN CONCERTS

National Gallery of Art



2279th Concert

NATIONAL GALLERY ORCHESTRA

GEORGE MANOS, conductor

Sunday Evening, October 4, 1998
at Seven O'Clock
West Building, West Garden Court

Admission Free

Presented in honor of the Exhibition: Van Gogh's Van Goghs:
Masterpieces from the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam

PROGRAM

Richard Wagner
(1813–1883) Prelude to “Die Meistersinger
von Nürnberg” (1861–1867)

Gabriel Fauré
(1845–1924) Masques et bergamasques,
from “Comédie musicale”
Opus 112 (1919)

Ouverture
Ménuet
Gavotte
Pastorale

INTERMISSION

César Franck
(1822–1890) Symphony in D Minor
(1886–1888)

Lento; allegro non troppo
Allegretto
Allegro non troppo

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 much....” Van Gogh's choice of Paris as the venue in which to live and work between 1886 and 1888 placed him in the center of avant-garde creativity, both in the visual arts and in music. Paris was also the chosen home of many musicians from other countries, including the parents of Belgian-born César Franck, who moved there in 1835 for the sake of the career of their son. By 1886, when Van Gogh arrived in Paris, Franck was counted as a lion of the city's musical world, as was Gabriel Fauré. Nevertheless, most of their compositions suffered the same fate as

Van Gogh's paintings. They were appreciated by only a few colleagues and were frequently scorned by critics and the public.

Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg, Richard Wagner's only comic opera, begins with a prelude that has become one of the world's most popular orchestral excerpts. As an introduction to the opera, it presents a musical summary of the forthcoming action, beginning with a majestic and brawny melody that will later be sung by the mastersingers. Several independent melodies follow that are adroitly combined to give the prelude the role of a raconteur. Among the many relationships that occur in the opera, love is the most prominent, prompting Wagner to write: “The melodies of the mastersingers give rise to a love song; pedantry and poetry are reconciled.” At the conclusion of the prelude, several themes are fused in a contrapuntal passage, signaling a victorious end.

Masques et bergamasques was commissioned by the librettist René Fauchois for a new opera to be performed at the *Opéra-Comique*. The pieces functioned as incidental music between scenes of spoken dialogue in the comic opera. For the original performance, a choral *Pavane* and an orchestral version of Fauré's piano piece, *Clair de lune*, were added to the four movements on this program. The atmosphere surrounding the music reflects the ambience of an era long past. However, musicologist Edward Cole contends that the music is looking both backward and forward: “[Fauré is] invoking elegant dance and song forms of the past and tinting them with just enough modern color to spice them palatably in a contemporary way.”

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 abandons 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 intro-

ductory *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. Franck's loyal disciple and biographer Vincent D'Indy (1851–1931) wrote of the work: “from this moment, cyclical form, the basis of modern symphonic art, was created and consecrated...”

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. Franck died before he could know the enormous impact this work was to have on future composers; however, he undoubtedly would have enjoyed the notion that his only symphony has taken its place among the greatest symphonic masterpieces ever composed.

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.