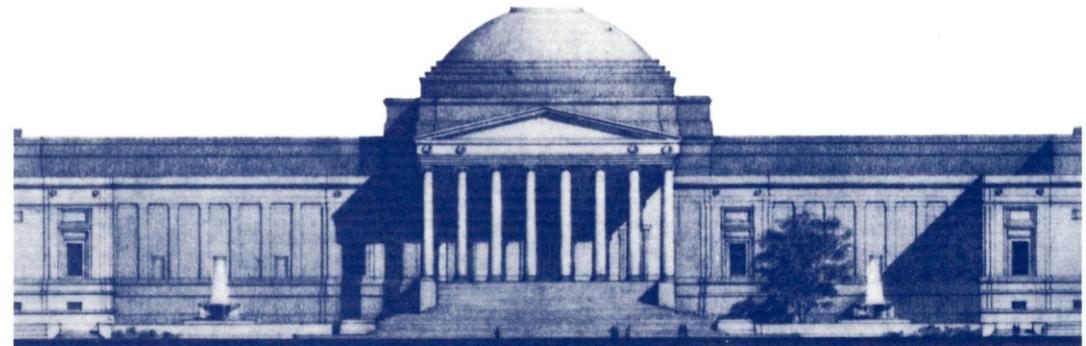


The Fifty-eighth Season of

THE WILLIAM NELSON CROMWELL and
F. LAMMOT BELIN CONCERTS

National Gallery of Art



2318th Concert

JEROME ROSE, *pianist*

Sunday Evening, 10 October 1999
Seven O'clock
West Building, West Garden Court

Admission free

Beethoven withdrew from this sonata and published separately. The finale (*Rondo: Allegretto moderato*), with its lyrical opening theme, brings the sonata to a rapturous conclusion.

Published in 1839, Schumann's *Sonata No. 2 in G Minor* took five years to complete and is one of only three sonatas he wrote in this genre (four, if his *Fantasy in C Major, Op. 17*, with its formalized structure and inherent musical characteristics, could be so labeled). Although the most successful of the three sonatas, this work caused Schumann quite a bit of anxiety, owing to his depression over his relationship with Clara Wieck and their impending marriage, and a fear of being unable to commit his emotions to this pre-existing musical structure. The first movement (*So rasch wie möglich*) expresses this highly emotional state with breathless speed and agitation. The speed changes twice after the first burst of energy (*prestissimo*) with the directions to get faster (*più mosso*) and even faster (*più mosso ancora*) toward the end of the movement. The second movement (*Andantino*), rooted in an adolescent song of Schumann entitled *Im Herbst*, is a personification of his mellifluous inspirations. The third movement (*Scherzo: Allegro molto*) with its "snap, crackle, and pop" rhythmic drive, provides a sharp contrast to the fourth movement (*Rondo: Presto*). Here, the rhythmic drive, not unlike that of its first movement counterpart, is ebullient and impetuous. Apparently Schumann's inspiration stems from Florestan and Eusebius, two characters of his imagination whose opposite natures are expressed in the movement's first and second themes.

Liszt's *Transcendental Etudes*, originally planned to contain forty-eight studies modeled after Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier*, came to only twelve, all of which were written when Liszt was fifteen years old. Berlioz, whom Liszt admired and respected, wrote: "Unfortunately, one cannot hope to hear music of this kind too often; Liszt created it for himself, and no one else in the world could flatter himself that he could approach being able to perform it." After retiring from the concert stage, Liszt simplified some of his most difficult piano works, among them this set of etudes. Even in the modern edition of these works, however, their inherent technical problems hold terror for the most skillful artists. The influence of Chopin appears to have been looming over the first and third of these Liszt etudes, given the long ornamental lines that are so reminiscent of Chopin's *Nocturnes*. Yet, regardless of their real or imaginary sources, these studies are distinctly of Liszt, by Liszt, and for Liszt. Quoting Humphrey Searle: "[Liszt was] able to draw new and almost orchestral effects from the piano, which incomparably widened its range of expression—and all subsequent composers for the piano are grateful to him."

-Program notes by Elmer Booze

