

with African influences. The *Impressoes seresteiras* from the *Brazilian Cycle* is essentially a popular composition similar to a lover's serenade, a theme with variations marked in the tempo of a waltz. The piece contains a synthesis of Brazilian popular song and polyrhythms, with salon-style cadenzas. *Danso do indio branco* combines modes of Brazilian, Indian, and popular music. The polyrhythms and instrumental virtuosity are trademarks of Villa-Lobos at the peak of his creativity. Powerful and savage, the dance calls to mind one of his credos, "I study the history, geography, speech, and custom that are the whole background of our people. That's what I've always done, deriving my art from those sources, spiritual as well as technical."

Astor Piazzolla wrote *Adios Nonino (Good-bye, Grandpa)*, a tango-rhapsody, in memory of his father. It is a deeply personal, intimate, and declamatory work. *Adios Nonino* has become a classic of the modern tango. Jeni Slotchiver creates her own introduction and improvises freely within her performances of this tango, in homage to the great improvisational style of Piazzolla's quintet, *Quinteto nuevo tango*.

Ginastera's *Danzas argentinas* are composed of elements that are decidedly Argentine. The three movements paint a magical portrait of the pampas (the Argentine flatlands similar to the American "Wild West"). The first dance is lively and steady in 6/8. The second has the feel of a *Zamba*, an Argentine folk dance originally played on the violin with strummed guitar accompaniment. There is a broad romantic lyricism here, a frequent trait in nationalistic folk music of the 1930s. The third dance stars the virtuoso cowboy of the pampas. The form of the dance is the *malambo*, with its characteristic rhythmic energy. This dance is often performed with whips, stamping boots, and vividly dyed *banderos*.

*Program notes by Jeni Slotchiver,
adapted and edited by Elmer Booze*

*For the convenience of concertgoers
the Garden Café remains open until 6:30 p.m.*

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

The Fifty-eighth Season of

THE WILLIAM NELSON CROMWELL and
F. LAMMOT BELIN CONCERTS

National Gallery of Art



2329th Concert

JENI SLOTCHIVER, pianist

Sunday Evening, 26 December 1999
Seven O'clock
West Building, West Garden Court

Admission free

PROGRAM

- Johann Sebastian Bach Chaconne
(Transcribed by Ferruccio Busoni)
from *Partita in D Minor for Solo Violin*
- Busoni Intermezzo: Turandot's Frauengemach
(1866–1924) (The Boudoir of Turandot)
from *Seven Elegies* (1907)
- Busoni Sonatina No. 6
(Chamber-fantasy on Bizet's *Carmen*)
(1920)
- Charles Gounod Faust Waltz
(1818–1893)
(arranged by Franz Liszt, with the cadenza
by Busoni "nach Gounod")

INTERMISSION

- Heitor Villa-Lobos Two Pieces from *Ciclo brasileiro*
(1887–1959) (1936)
1. Impresses seresteiras (Minstrel Impressions)
 2. Danso do indio branco (Dance of the White Indian)
- Astor Piazzolla Adios Nonino (Good-bye, Grandpa)
(b. 1921) (A Tango Rhapsody, arr. by Slotchiver)
- Alberto Ginastera Danzas argentinas
(1916–1983) (1937)
1. Danza del viejo boyero (Dance of the Old Ox-herder)
 2. Danza de la moza donosa (Dance of the Beautiful Girl)
 3. Danza del gaucho matrero (Dance of the Cunning Gaucho)

American pianist Jeni Slotchiver began her musical studies at an early age and won the first of her numerous honors and awards at the age of thirteen. A recipient of several scholarships, she received her bachelor and master of music degrees (with honors) and a teaching fellowship from Indiana University. Having studied extensively the life and works of the Italian pianist and composer Ferruccio Busoni, and having worked with two of his disciples, Grete Sultan and Joseph Bloch, Slotchiver has become one of the leading scholars and lecturers on Busoni. Her performances have been described as "electrifying" and "full of emotional depth." She has just completed recording *The Complete Works of Ferruccio Busoni, Volume One: Busoni, the Visionary* on the Centaur label. Jeni Slotchiver is currently on the faculty of New York's Greenwich House Music School and appears at the National Gallery by arrangement with Creative Alliance of New York City.

Busoni honed his skill in the art of transcription through careful study of Bach's transcriptions of his own works and those of other baroque composers. The *Chaconne* was probably transcribed while the composer was in Boston in 1892. A tour de force, the *Chaconne* is wonderfully effective on the piano, while remaining faithful to the spirit of the original work for solo violin. About his *Seven Elegies*, Busoni wrote: "In the *Elegies* I put down my entire personal vision at last and for the first time." Although not so famous as Puccini's *Turandot*, Busoni's setting of the same story predates Puccini's work by fifteen years. *The Boudoir of Turandot* is one of the interludes from Busoni's *Turandot*, a latter-day *commedia dell'arte* consisting of a mix of spoken dialogue, singing, and instrumental interludes.

The *Carmen* fantasy is the last of six late sonatinas that Busoni conceived for solo piano. It assumes the character of a creative artist commenting on an opera he has just seen, with the result that familiar themes take on strange and unexpected guises. In this case, Busoni focuses on the tragic essence of *Carmen*, in contrast to Bizet's own piano fantasy and orchestral suites, which emphasize the dances and the more playful arias from the opera.

As a Liszt player, Busoni was magnificent. The outpouring floods of tone in his renditions of the *Faust Waltz* have become legendary. Busoni's cadenza is his own vision of Faust's love, Gretchen, utilizing themes from Act I of Gounod's *Faust*. Busoni used his cadenza as a study, illustrating the difficulty of extended trill passages. Although it derives ample coloring from Brazilian folk elements, Villa-Lobos' music is also richly imbued