

Alfred Schnittke's *Sonata for Cello and Piano* is a three-movement work played without pause. Although the two instruments often seem to be playing completely different music, together they achieve a striking unity. When the piano embroiders a melody, the cello may rest on a prolonged pedal point. In an unusual formal gambit, the fast movement comes between the two slow ones and contrasts strongly with them. Chords and obstinately repeated motifs, glissandi, harmonics, and a strongly advancing liveliness characterize the music, which is sometimes in unison and at other times almost on a collision course. There are legato and staccato fights, whereby the entire register of both instruments is used. With the cello as protagonist, the music becomes condensed near the end, and closes with a beautiful and penetrating passage.

Beethoven, who apparently had reservations about the moral tone of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, seems to have taken to *The Magic Flute*. Without hesitation, he extracted themes from it to use in his two later sets of variations for cello and piano, *Mädchen oder Weibchen*, Op.66 and *Bei Männern, welche Liebe fühlen*, WoO 46. The latter variations are typical middle-period Beethoven with their virtuoso features. There is little *Sturm und Drang* (storm and stress) in this music. As with his other sets of variations, the piano states the theme against the cello's counterpoint, after which both instrumentalists are given the opportunity to deploy their skills and characters with great gusto.

The *Sonata No. 3 in A Major for Cello and Piano*, Op. 69, which came into being at the same time as Beethoven's great *Fifth Symphony*, exhibits advance hints of his *Sixth Symphony*. The first movement (*Allegro ma non tanto*) starts with the unaccompanied cello playing the first theme and the piano following suit. The theme is then repeated, with the two roles reversed. A forceful transitional passage leads to the second subject. This theme is stated twice in much the same way as the first subject. The second movement (*Scherzo: Allegro molto*) unfolds swiftly and briskly in the key of A minor. The tunes are slender and syncopated. The third movement (*Adagio cantabile*) is short and amiable. It acts as a prelude to the fourth movement (*Allegro vivace*), which reveals the sonata-allegro form.

Program notes by Annlynn Miller and Ulrich Schmid
Adapted and edited by Elmer Booze

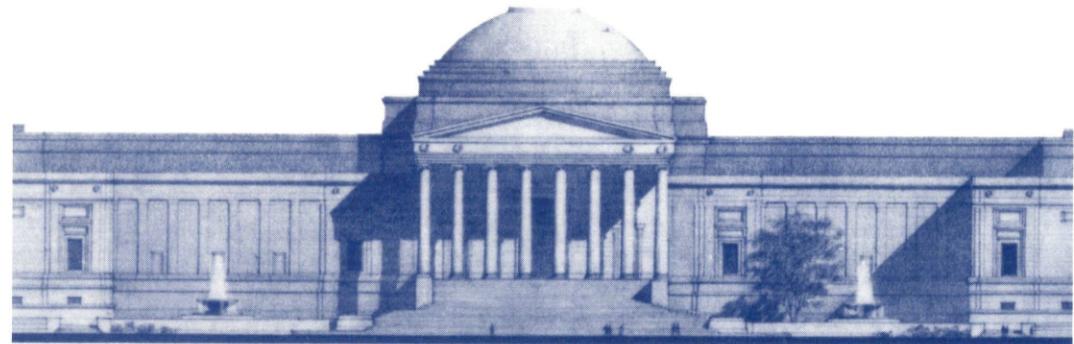
*The use of cameras or recording equipment
during the performance is not allowed.*

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

The Fifty-eighth Season of

THE WILLIAM NELSON CROMWELL and
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National Gallery of Art



2332d Concert

THE MILLER-SCHMID DUO

ANNLYNN MILLER, *pianist*

ULRICH SCHMID, *cellist*

Sunday Evening, 16 January 2000
Seven O'clock
West Building, West Garden Court

Admission free

