

Strauss' *Four Last Songs* bathe in an autumnal spirit of sentimentality. Long enamored with music for voice and orchestra, Strauss wrote his first song cycle with orchestra (*Lieder aus letzte Blätter, Op. 10*) at age twenty and returned to this genre for the last time at age eighty-four, a year before his death. For this cycle Strauss chose three poems by the German novelist Hermann Hesse (1877–1962): *Frühling, September*, and *Beim Schlafegehn*, and one by Joseph von Eichendorff (1788–1857): *Im Abendrot*. About the first three songs, critic Heinz Becker stated: "All the tonal magic of his life's creative achievements once again came into its own," and about the fourth, "It [afforded] a crowning conclusion to this cycle [in] song."

Because of his genuine love of children and their uniquely personal world, Elgar was inspired to compose a series of compositions dealing with this subject matter, one of which was *The Wand of Youth Suite, Op. 1b*. The story is told that Elgar's teenage children wrote a play depicting a faultless world free of meddlesome adults, who were excluded. Allowed in, however, were the likes of wild bears, moths, butterflies, fairies and giants. Adults were admitted only if they could repent their adult behavior, while at the same time begging for forgiveness, which would have to be on a judgmental basis. The first of the two suites inspired by this story (*Op. 1a*) was presented to the public in 1907. It was so successful that Elgar immediately composed a second suite and presented it the next year.

Program notes 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.*

*Selections from concerts at the Gallery
can be heard on the second Sunday of each month
at 9:00 p.m. on WGMS, 103.5 FM.*

The Fifty-ninth Season of

THE WILLIAM NELSON CROMWELL and
F. LAMMOT BELIN CONCERTS

National Gallery of Art



2362d Concert

NATIONAL GALLERY ORCHESTRA

GEORGE MANOS, *conductor*

ALESSANDRA MARC, *soprano, guest artist*

Sunday Evening, 19 November 2000
Seven O'clock
West Building, West Garden Court

Admission free

PROGRAM

Antonín Dvořák
(1841–1904)

Czech Suite in D Major
Op. 39 (1879)

1. Preludium: Allegro moderato
2. Polka: Allegretto grazioso
3. Minuetto: Allegro giusto
4. Romanza: Andante con moto
5. Furiant: Presto

Richard Strauss
(1864–1949)

Vier letzte Lieder (Four Last Songs)
(1948)

1. Beim Schlafengehen
2. September
3. Frühling
4. Im Abendrot

INTERMISSION

Sir Edward Elgar
(1857–1934)

The Wand of Youth, Suite No. 2
Op. 1b (1908)

1. March
2. The Little bells
3. Moths and Butterflies
4. Fountain Dance
5. The Tame Bear
6. The Wild Bears

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 the National Gallery vocal and chamber ensembles, which he founded. Manos' career as a performing pianist and teacher has included several years on the faculty of The Catholic University of America in Washington, DC, where he taught piano, conducting, and chamber music. In addition, he held the directorship of the Wilmington, Delaware School of Music, presenting an annual jazz festival and clinic. Maestro Manos founded and directed for ten years the renowned Kilarney Bach Festival in the Republic of Ireland and was the music director of the 1992 Scandinavian Music Festival in Kolding, Denmark.

“Une étoile est née (A Star is Born),” headlined *Le Figaro* (Paris). *The New Yorker* proclaimed: “...an instrument of unsurpassed beauty and impact and perhaps the richest, fullest, most beautiful big soprano voice around.” Such accolades have been and continue to be a staple in the career of the outstanding American soprano **Alessandra Marc**. Frequent guest appearances in the most prestigious opera houses and concert halls throughout the world have brought her into collaboration with the most eminent conductors of our time, including Giuseppe Sinopoli, Daniel Barenboim, Sir George Solti, Zubin Mehta, Michael Tilson Thomas, and Lorin Maazel. Miss Marc’s discography is likewise impressive. Delos Records issued her first aria recital recording, *American Diva*, and her newest releases include four on the Teldec label: Schoenberg’s *Erwartung*, Berg’s *Altenberg Lieder* and *Lulu Suite*, with Sinopoli and the Dresden Staatskapelle, and the final scene of Richard Strauss’ *Salomé* with the North German Radio Orchestra.

In his *Czech Suite*, Op. 39, Dvořák set five indigenous Czech folk dances for orchestra. He originally intended to write a triptych from a series of his orchestral serenades, but abandoned the idea and instead wrote five dance pieces to form a suite. The full title *Czech Suite* was incorporated for the premiere performance, held in 1879 at the Academy of the Association of Czech Journalists at the New Prague Theater and conducted by Adolf Čechs.

Texts and Translations

Richard Strauss: Four Last Songs

(The songs will be sung in the order in which the texts appear.)

Im Abendrot (von Eichendorff)

Wir sind durch Not und Freude
Gegangen Hand in Hand:
Vom Wandern ruhen wir beide
Nun überm stillen Land.

Rings sich die Täler neigen,
Es dunkelt schon die Luft,
Zwei Lerchen nur noch steigen
Nachträumend in den Duft.

Tritt her und lass sie schwirren,
Bald ist es Schlafenzzeit,
Daß wir uns nicht verirren
In dieser Einsamkeit.

O weiter, stiller Friede!
So tief im Abendrot,
Wie sind wir wandermüde –
Ist dies etwa der Tod?

In the Glow of the Sunset

Through troubles and joys
we have gone, hand in hand.
Now both of us rest from our
wanderings, high above the
still countryside.

All around us, the valleys
descend; the sky grows dark;
Only two larks, remembering a
dream, rise into the haze.

Come here, and let them fly
(soon it will be time to sleep),
lest we lose our way in this
loneliness.

O, wide, still peace!
So deep in the glow of the sunset;
How weary we are with
wandering—
Can this, then, be death?

Frühling (Hesse)

In dämmrigen Grüften
Träumte ich lang
Von deinen Bäumen und blauen
Lüften,
Von deinem Duft und
Vogelgesang.

Nun liegst du erschlossen
In Gleiß und Zier,
Von licht übergossen
Wie ein Wunder vor mir.

Du kennst mich wieder
Du lockest mich zart,
Es zittert durch all meine Glieder
Deine selige Gegenwart!

Spring

In twilit valleys
I have long dreamt
of your trees and
blue skies,
your perfumes and your
bird-song.

Now you lie before me, revealed
in glistening splendor,
flooded with light,
like a miracle.

You know me again;
You lure me gently;
All my limbs tremble
with your blessed presence!

September (Hesse)

Der Garten trauert,
kühl sinkt in die Blumen der
Regen.

Der Sommer schauert
still seinem Ende entgegen.

Golden tropft Blatt um Blatt nie-
der vom hohen Akazienbaum.
Sommer lächelt erstaunt und matt
in den sterbenden
Gartentraum.

Lange noch bei den rosen
bleibt er stehn,
sehnt sich nach Ruh.
Langsam tut er die Müd-
gewordnen Augen zu.

September

The garden mourns;
The cool rain sinks into the
flowers;
The summer shudders
silently toward its end.

Leaf after golden leaf
drops from the tall acacia.
The summer smiles, astonished
and weary, into the garden's
dying dream.

He remains standing among the
roses for a long time,
yearning for rest.
Slowly he closes his eyes, heavy
with fatigue.

Beim Schlafengehen (Hesse)

Nun der Tag mich müd gemacht,
Soll mein sehnliches Verlangen
Freundlich die gestirnte Nacht
Wie ein müdes Kind empfangen.

Hände, laßt von allem Tun,
Stirn, vergiß du alles Denken,
Alle meine Sinne nun
Wollen sich in Schlummer
senken.

Und die Seele unbewacht,
Will in freien Flügen schweben,
Um im Zauberkreis der Nacht
Tief und tausendfach zu leben.

Going to Sleep

Now the day has tired me;
May my passionate longing
receive the starry night like a
sleepy child.

Hands, leave your doing;
Brain, leave your thinking;
All my senses would now sink
into slumber.

And the unwatched soul wants to
soar up freely; to live, in the
magic circle of the night, a
thousand times more
intensely.