

*Fifty-ninth Concert Season at the National Gallery of Art
2000-2001*

Under the Direction of George Manos

Sundays at 7:00 p.m. in the West Building, West Garden Court

PERFORMERS

January

28 Penderecki String Quartet

February

4 Juliana Osinchuk, *pianist*

11 Razumovsky String Quartet

18 Leila Josefowicz, *violinist*
John Novacek, *pianist*

25 The Chamber Music Society
of Lincoln Center
David Shifrin, *artistic director*

PROGRAMS

Mozart: *Quartet, K. 387*
Xenakis: *Tetras*
Brahms: *Quartet, Op. 51/2*

Clementi: *Sonata, Op. 47/2*
Philip Mungér: *Fragile Vessel*
Fauré: *Impromptus*
Poulenc: *Impromptu*
Saint-Saëns: *Allegro
appassionato*

Shostakovich: *Quartet in F
Major, Op. 73 (1946)*
Tchaikovsky: *Quartet in D
Major, Op. 11*

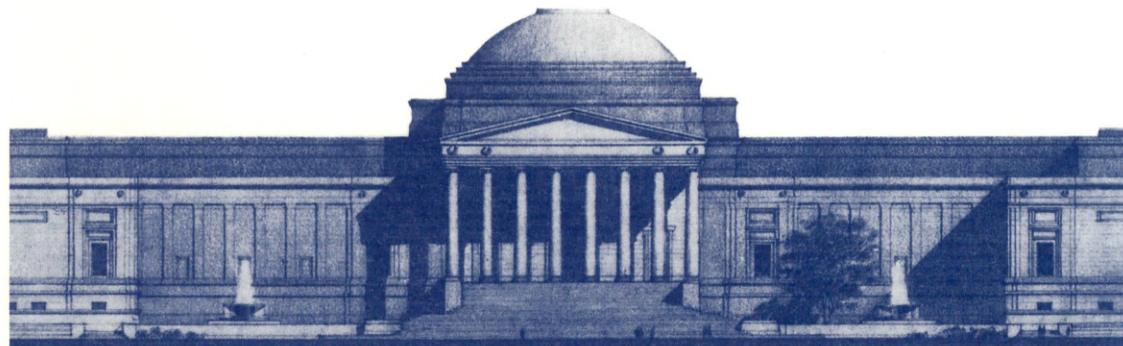
Falla: *Suite populaire espagnole*
Shostakovich: *Sonata, Op. 134*
Gershwin: *Porgy and Bess Suite*
Novacek: *Four Rags*
Vieuxtemps: *Souvenir
d'Amérique*

Rorem: *Autumn Music*
Chausson: *Concerto for Violin,
Strings, and Piano in D Major*
Mendelssohn: *String Quartet
No. 2, Op. 87*

The Fifty-ninth Season of

THE WILLIAM NELSON CROMWELL and
F. LAMMOT BELIN CONCERTS

National Gallery of Art



2369th Concert

CECILE LICAD, *pianist*

Sunday Evening, 21 January 2001
Seven O'clock
West Building, West Garden Court

Admission free

PROGRAM

Music of Frédéric Chopin (1810–1849)

Three Mazurkas, Op. 56 (1843)

No. 1 in B Major

No. 2 in C Major

No. 3 in C Minor

Three Waltzes, Op. 64 (1846–1847)

No. 1 in D-flat Major (“Minute”)

No. 2 in C-sharp Minor

No. 3 in A-flat Major

Scherzo in B-flat Minor, Op. 31 (1837)

Berceuse in D-flat Major, Op. 57 (1843–1844)

Ballade in G Minor, Op. 23 (1831–1835)

INTERMISSION

Twelve Etudes, Op. 25 (1832–1836)

No. 1 in A-flat Major

No. 2 in F Minor

No. 3 in F Major

No. 4 in A Minor

No. 5 in E Minor

No. 6 in G-sharp Minor

No. 7 in C-sharp Minor

No. 8 in D-flat Major

No. 9 in G-flat Major

No. 10 in B Minor

No. 11 in A Minor

No. 12 in C Minor

Cecile Licad began piano studies at age three with her mother in her native Philippines and continued with the highly respected Philippine teacher, Rosario Picazo. Her natural talent was further honed at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia by three of the greatest performer-pedagogues of the twentieth century: Rudolph Serkin, Seymour Lipkin, and Mieczyslaw Munz. As one of the youngest musicians to receive the prestigious Leventritt Gold Medal in 1981, Licad won immediate international recognition. A debut performance in Luxembourg, followed by recitals in Paris, New York, and other American cities, featured a series of all-Chopin programs. After residing in Europe for many years, she returned to America and now lives with her young son in New York City.

A typical critical reaction to Cecile Licad's performance was expressed in the *Chicago Sun-Times*: “She appears to have total command of the instrument, but with the kind of dedication that always puts technique at the service of music. The sound is powerful, richly colored, and, even in the quietest passages, it projects like a searchlight....The nicest thing about a concert like this is the expectation, the thought of all the marvelous things this artist is going to [bring to] you in the future.” Cecile Licad appears at the National Gallery by arrangement with Columbia Artists Management, Incorporated, of New York City.

Chopin's travels in 1830 were intended to include a recital tour of Russia. Upon hearing of Russia's siege of Poland, however, Chopin adamantly refused to perform there. Deeply resenting the siege and in great sorrow over the loss of family, friends, and his beloved homeland, Chopin showered his compositions with heartfelt emotion. He left Poland at the age of twenty, never to return, and died in Paris at the age of thirty-nine. The most compelling examples of his nationalist works are his mazurkas and polonaises, in which the harmonies visit a bold new world of sounds. These harmonies were unimaginable before Chopin's time and left his listeners astonished and mystified.

Chopin preferred the smaller musical forms (waltzes, etudes, nocturnes, and preludes) as his medium of expression, and within that cosmos he created “a legion of masterpieces against which pales the magnificence of many a symphony” (Tadeusz Andrzej Zielinsky, Polish musicologist and author). The English Chopin scholar Arthur Hedley (1905–1969) wrote: “He [Chopin] does not rank highest in the hierarchy of musicians—nobody would claim that—yet he enjoys what only few have: he is one and high above any level, raised in his own closed domain.” Cecile Licad’s program samples the genius of Chopin as an innovator and originator whose music is as revelatory to its listeners today as it was a century ago. The late author and past president of the Greater New York Council of the Chopin Foundation, Jan Gorbaty (1915–1999), wrote: “Ageless and filled with romantic longing, Chopin’s music will no doubt always strike a profound chord within the ‘secret chambers of the soul....’ His music is universal. In everyone’s soul there must be a sensitive string that, if touched, will vibrate.”

Upon hearing the word mazurka, one immediately thinks of Chopin, as did Schumann when he wrote about the subject in his newspaper, the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*: “Chopin has elevated the mazurka to a small art form. He has written many, yet few among them resemble each other. Almost every one contains some poetic trait, something new in form and expression.” Schumann could have cited a perfect example in the three mazurkas of *Op. 56*, particularly *No. 3 in C minor*, which contains some of the most remarkable harmonic changes expressed by Chopin. They foreshadow the harmonies employed a generation later by Richard Wagner.

Having published only eight waltzes during his lifetime, among them *Op. 64, Nos. 1-3*, Chopin indicated an emphatic desire to have all of the rest destroyed completely. His wish was not carried out, however, and seventeen waltzes survived, five of which published posthumously. The waltzes exemplify Chopin’s total mastery of a quintessential miniature form. The famous “Minute” Waltz, *Op. 64, No. 1 in D-flat Major*, is reputed to have been inspired by a comment of George Sand

(1804-1876). One day, when her dog was chasing its tail, she allegedly asked Chopin to “set the tail to music.” Chopin acquiesced by completing this waltz, which he introduced to a Parisian audience in 1848. That recital, one of his most daring, was also his last. The *Waltz in C-sharp Minor, Op. 64, No. 2* (dedicated to Mme. Nathaniel de Rothschild) “is the most poetic of all...a species of veiled melancholy,” according to James Huneker (1857–1921), the American critic, essayist, and author of *Chopin: The Man and His Music*. Dedicated to the Countess Catherine de Branicka, the *Waltz in A-flat Major, Op. 64, No. 3*, is a masterpiece of “song form” (ABA), with a disposition that is wrapped in refinement and sagacity. In the words of writer Donal Handman, “The impression of variety which it produces is the result of daring modulations, and [it is] that illumination, incessantly renewed, [that] suffuses [its] two main subjects.”

Of Chopin’s six scherzos, *No. 2 in B-flat Minor, Op. 31*, is by far the most familiar and the most often played. Written when Chopin was twenty-seven years old, *Op. 31* is a work of enduring grandeur that makes especially effective use of silence as a dramatic device. Music critic Irving Kolodin, in his essay on this work, stated: “It is...a much harder piece to play than the mere notes suggest, for it takes as much talent [as it does] concentration to ‘play’ the silences that are so urgent a part of its total effect.” Featuring a trio section that unveils a song of unsurpassed beauty, this scherzo concludes with a dynamic coda of resounding brilliance that gleams with emotional drama.

From the pedagogical aspect of Chopin’s short but fecund career came a number of compositions written to develop technique or correct technical problems of his pupils. Among these compositions are his preludes, etudes, nocturnes, and the *Berceuse, Op. 57*, a lullaby in which the melody is spun out in an arabesque configuration over an artful but transparent reticulation. With an unchanging bass line in a lilting 6/8 rhythmic pattern and using primarily tonic and dominant harmonies, the *Berceuse* delights the listener as would a diamond glittering upon exposure to light, or the fluttering, changing images in a kaleidoscope.

Chopin is the creator of the ballade as a genre for piano solo. His inspiration for his four ballades was the poetry of his compatriot Adam Mickiewicz (1798–1855). The *G Minor Ballade*, an expansive, bold, and fervid composition, “is the odyssey of Chopin’s soul. In it are the surge and thunder of the poet,” says Huneker in his introductory remarks to the Rafael Joseffy (1852–1915) edition of the *Four Ballades*. It begins with a passage that could well be reciting the typical fairy tale opening, “Once upon a time, long ago....” Marked *Largo* and in 4/4 time, this seven-bar introduction gives way to the unfolding tale as the tempo changes to *moderato* and the meter to 6/4. The deep passion expressed in the ensuing measures seems to emanate from a pain of great longing, possibly for the composer’s homeland. A brief reprieve, marked *meno mosso, sotto voce*, changes the mood and is followed by a short, capricious waltz. A return of the opening statement leads to a coda of ferocious scales and octaves that brilliantly closes the work.

In a letter to his friend and alleged lover, the Countess Delfina Potocka, Chopin wrote: “In writing my etudes I tried to put not only science into them, but also art. Since a virtuoso must practice for a long time, he should be given exercises in which he will find proper food for his ears and his soul lest he be bored to death....My etudes are a new method of exercise, and [they] can be treacherous and dangerous for the uninitiated.” Chopin’s second set of etudes, *Op. 25*, complements the first set, *Op. 10*. The studies in *Op. 10* follow a theoretical pattern: the key relationships are similar to those in his Bach-inspired *Preludes, Op. 28*. In *Op. 25*, the technical difficulties are progressively more numerous and unrelenting. There are few pianists who feel comfortable performing, for example, the double thirds of *Etude No. 6*, the double sixths of *No. 8*, or the legato octave study for both hands, *No. 10*. Given the challenges presented by these etudes, concert audiences do not often have the opportunity to hear all twelve at one sitting. Cecile Licad’s presentation of this repertoire provides a rare encounter with Chopin’s great creative gift and demonstrates her outstanding pianistic prowess and intellect.

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-FM, 103.5.

During the month of January, recent performances by the National Gallery Orchestra can be heard Wednesday evenings at 9:00 p.m. on “Music from Washington,” WETA-FM, 90.9.