

New York University, he supplemented his income by playing in loud jazz bands, under circumstances where the piano had to be pounded in order to be heard. Gould composed the *Boogie Woogie Etude* in the blues style as it was realized by those bands in the 1930s, and his only direction to the player is to use a “steely and hard” technique throughout the performance. The composer’s classical training as a pianist is evident in the enormous digital difficulties and pitiless rhythmic propulsion of the work. *Rag-Blues-Rag* also emulates an established jazz genre. It is a stylized version of the American popular music known as ragtime that flourished between 1890 and 1920, fused with the 1930s blues. The pairing of these two unlikely musical mates takes place through the employment of the classical song format (ABA). The performance of this work calls for a formidable technique as well as a complete understanding of and appreciation for two of America’s popular art forms.

About *The Fragile Vessel (Images at an Installation)*, composer Philip Munger writes: “The work’s style pays homage to Dr. Osinchuk’s teacher, Nadia Boulanger, and to Boulanger’s teacher, Gabriel Fauré, in addition to being an intended show piece for Juliana’s strengths as a performer. The music evokes [a work of art by] Karen Stahlecker in a very personal way. Regarding her installation, *The Fragile Vessel*, Karen has said: ‘Our world is fragile. We must let wisdom and concern replace greed and myopic view. As we destroy the earth, we destroy ourselves.’ My [own] path has left the bodies of hundreds of marine mammals and millions of sea creatures behind. Having worked long at sea as a commercial fisherman, in various aspects of heavy industry, and on projects which have developed wildernesses into basic tourist venues, I see darker hues in the pigments of Karen’s globe than do many others. Where Karen has approached her environmentalism through deep and constant respect, I got mine only after tiring of stomping on nature. The triumphal ending of the piece is the first such coda I have placed on an environmentalist statement. It calls on the listener to have a positive vision of the outcome for humankind’s part in the future of our fragile vessel.”

“The piano music of Gabriel Fauré is a country from which no soul returns unmoved, particularly if one is allowed to savor the vicarious and sensuous warmth of his *Nocturnes*” (Heuwell Tircuit, in program notes for the CD, *Fourteen Nocturnes*). Although Fauré was an admirer of Chopin, his nocturnes only marginally resemble those by which Chopin defined this genre. Absent are the bewitching moonlit nights and their effect on the romantic soul. In their place, Fauré speaks poetically, making each nocturne “a truly intimate poem, expressing his most profound secrets and passions” (Evelyne Crochet). The *Nocturne in B Minor, Op. 97*, is a perfect example of Fauré’s poetry in music. An opening theme of great lyrical charm gives way to a contrasting section in the key of B major that is prefaced by “a phrase of exquisite purity...[that] bursts into a resonant chorale” (Crochet).

If the title *Song*, or *Lied*, could be applied to any of the five impromptus of Fauré, it would be the *Impromptu No. 3 in A-flat Major, Op. 34*. It is truly a song without words. A simple yet effective melody, played by the right hand, is the mainstay of this delightful gem. It is followed by passage in a slower tempo, marked *molto meno mosso*, giving heightened lyricism to one of Fauré’s unique compositions.

Francis Poulenc’s harmonic scheme, while touching on those of such composers as Chabrier, Stravinsky, and Prokofiev, remains distinctly his own. According to musicologist Geoffrey Bush, the influence of Chopin can be heard in the “blurred, almost Chopinesque figuration of the *Intermezzo in A-flat Major*.”

Saint-Saëns wrote his *Allegro appassionato, Op. 70*, for the piano competitions held at the Paris Conservatoire. In the spirit of a competition, it is a technically brilliant composition that makes great demands on the performer, but is by no means a perfunctory contest etude. Although Saint-Saëns arranged this work with an orchestral accompaniment, the solo version lacks nothing in the way of wit, vitality, or iridescence.

Program notes by Elmer Booze

Notes on the works by Kosenko and Munger by Juliana Osinchuk and Philip Munger, adapted and edited by Elmer Booze

The Fifty-ninth Season of

THE WILLIAM NELSON CROMWELL and
F. LAMMOT BELIN CONCERTS

National Gallery of Art



2371st Concert

JULIANA OSINCHUK, pianist

Sunday Evening, 4 February 2001
Seven O'clock
West Building, West Garden Court

Admission free

PROGRAM

Muzio Clementi
(1752–1832) Sonata in B-flat Major, Op. 24, No. 2
(Originally published as Op. 41, No. 2)

Allegro con brio
Andante; quasi allegretto
Rondo: Allegro assai

Viktor Kosenko
(1896–1938) Sonata No. 3 in B Minor, Op. 15
Washington premiere performance

Morton Gould
(1913–1996) Rag-Blues-Rag
Boogie Woogie Etude

INTERMISSION

Philip Munger
(b. 1946) The Fragile Vessel, Op. 36
(Images at an Installation) (1993)
Washington premiere performance

Gabriel Fauré
(1845–1924) Nocturne No. 9 in B Minor
Op. 97 (1908)
Impromptu No. 3 in A-flat Major
Op. 34 (1883)

Francis Poulenc
(1899–1963) Intermezzo in A-flat Major
(1943)

Camille Saint-Saëns
(1835–1921) Allegro appassionato in C-sharp Minor
(1874)

Pianist **Juliana Osinchuk**, who has been described by *The New York Times* as having “superior technique, discipline, and talent,” began her piano studies at age four with her mother. At age eleven, after making her formal debut, she became a pupil of Nadia Boulanger in Paris. She continued her studies at the Conservatoire de Musique in Paris, at Tanglewood, and at the Juilliard School of Music, where she received the bachelor and master of music degrees and the doctorate in musical arts. Her teachers have included Rosina Lhevinne, Nadia Reisenberg, Louis Talma, Daniel Pollack, Herbert Rogers, and Alexander Eydelman. Her formal professional debut took place at Lincoln Center’s Alice Tully Hall. She was subsequently profiled in the magazine *Musical America* as a “young artist to watch.”

Juliana Osinchuk has performed nationally and internationally in the major concert halls of New York, Washington, London, Amsterdam, and Salzburg. She records for the Chaconne Records label and has just completed a CD entitled *Tchaikovsky: Piano Music*. Three additional compact discs are being planned, one of which will include world premiere recordings of the piano music of Viktor Kosenko. Having served on the faculty of Hunter College of New York City and as associate professor at the State University of New York at Purchase, Juliana Osinchuk currently resides in Anchorage, Alaska, where she concertizes and teaches privately.

Clementi’s *Sonata in B-flat Major* appears in Stephen Storce’s (1762–1796) *Collection of Harpsichord Music (1788–1790)* as *Op. 41, No. 2*. Mozart, who heard the premiere of this work, was harshly critical of Clementi’s performance, which took place before Emperor Joseph II of Austria in 1781. The occasion was the famed contest between the two composer-pianists. In a letter to his father following the contest, Mozart mercilessly wrote that Clementi was a “charlatan” and “mechanical.” Writer Lorenzo Bianconi, however, in his article on Mozart (translated from the French by Helen Baker), maintains that Mozart had more to say after hearing the Clementi sonata: “There is a pleasant banality in the *Andante*, and certain flowery qualities in the first and last movements.” More favorable listeners might note that the sonata has a decidedly symphonic, even orchestral sonority, and that the initial theme appears to have been appropriated by Mozart for the overture to *The Magic Flute*, composed in 1791, some ten years after the competition.

Because of his heavy concert schedule, Viktor Kosenko took three years to complete his *Piano Sonata No. 3 in B Minor, Op. 15*, a single-movement work marked *Allegro moderato*. Kosenko’s works of the 1920s, which include this sonata, are highly refined, optimistic, and, above all, full of romanticism. He uses many major tonalities, modes, and long melodic lines. In addition, the influence of the harmonies and melodic writing of Alexander Scriabin (1872–1915) is evident. The work follows the sonata-allegro form and begins with a short motif in the bass line before the melancholic first theme is introduced. A second theme, a short melody, is transformed into a brief cadenza, which is followed by a repeat of the first theme. A full-bodied climax introduces the development section. Here, the haunting second theme that was presented in the opening section (exposition) is freely treated, followed by a return of the principal theme (recapitulation). A coda based upon the principal theme closes the work.

Having begun his career as a child prodigy pianist, Morton Gould went on to become an exceptionally skillful and adaptable composer as well as a conductor. While attending the composition class of Vincent Jones at