

Concerts at the National Gallery of Art

May and June 2002

May (The 59th American Music Festival)

- 5 Ramsey Lewis Trio** Jazz concert
- 12 Mallarmé Chamber Players** Works by Peter Schickele, Lou Harrison, Scott Joplin, and Penka Kouneva
- 19 National Gallery Vocal Arts Ensemble** Works for solo vocal quartet by eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century American composers
Presented in honor of the exhibition *An American Vision: Henry Francis du Pont's Winterthur Museum*
- 26 No concert**

June

- 2 National Gallery Orchestra** Beethoven: "Coriolanus" Overture
George Manos, conductor Bach-Stokowski: *Passacaglia and Fugue in C Minor*
Brahms: *Symphony No. 4*

(Concerts continue until 30 June, 2002.)

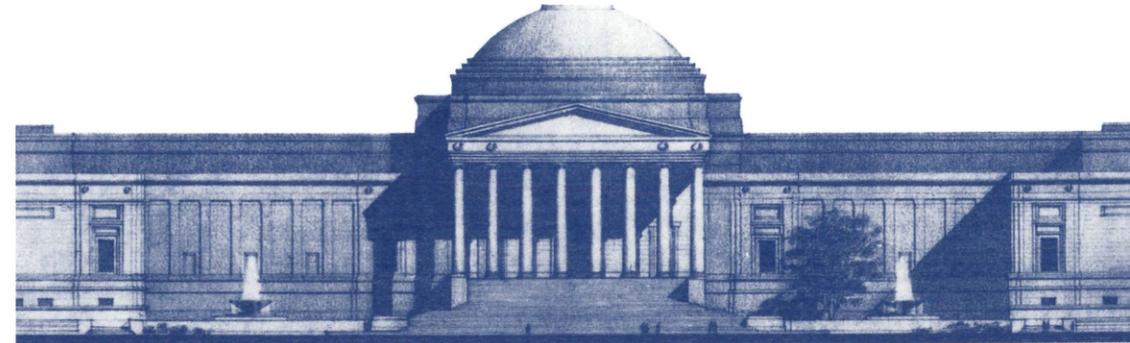
*For the convenience of concertgoers,
the Garden Café remains open until 6:30 p.m.*

*The use of cameras or recording equipment during
the performance is not allowed. Please be sure that cell
phones, pagers, and other electronic devices are turned off.*

The Sixtieth Season of

THE WILLIAM NELSON CROMWELL and
F. LAMMOT BELIN CONCERTS

National Gallery of Art



2419th Concert

THE ZURICH STRING TRIO

BORIS LIVSCHITZ, violin
ZVI LIVSCHITZ, viola
ALEXANDER KAGANOVSKY, cello

Sunday Evening, 28 April 2002
Seven O'clock
West Building, West Garden Court

Admission free

PROGRAM

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770–1827)

Serenade in D Major
Op. 8 (1796–1797)

Marcia: allegro
Adagio
Minuetto: allegretto
Adagio; Scherzo: Allegro molto
Allegretto alla polacca
Andante quasi allegretto (Tema con variazioni)
Marcia: Allegretto

Alfred Schnittke
(1934–1998)

String Trio
(1985)

Moderato
Adagio

INTERMISSION

Ernst von Dohnanyi
(1877–1960)

Serenade in C Major, Op. 10
(1902)

Allegro
Adagio non tanto, quasi andante
Scherzo: vivace
Tema con variazioni
Rondo: Allegro vivace

Founded in 1977 and now considered one of the world's finest string ensembles, the **Zurich String Trio** has performed extensively on many continents, including North and South America, Europe, and Asia. The trio's reputation has grown steadily through its profound interpretation of both classical and contemporary string chamber music. Its technical perfection and natural musicality are derivative of the unique styles of the individual members, brought together in one seamless unit. The trio's performances represent a combination of traditional romantic virtuosity and classical authentic musicianship. "[This is] full-blooded, musical chamber music playing, a genuine product of equal partners" (*Financial Times*, London).

Violinist **Boris Livschitz**, who was born in Vilnius, Lithuania, studied at the Lithuanian State College of Music, where he won the Lithuanian National Music Competition. He also studied at the Tel Aviv Music Academy with Yair Kless and was a member of the Israel Chamber Orchestra. Since 1975 Livschitz has been a principal player in the Zurich Opera Orchestra. In addition to teaching master classes in the Near and Far East, North and South America, and Europe, he concertizes extensively. Boris Livschitz plays on a violin made in 1699 by Giuseppe Guaragnini.

A native of Samara, Russia, violist **Zvi Livschitz** studied at the Lithuanian State College of Music with Saulius Sondeckis. Until 1971 he led the viola section of the Lithuanian Philharmonic and was a member of the string quartet formed by that orchestra. From 1971 to 1975 he held the first chair in the viola section of the Israel Chamber Orchestra and was a member of the Daniel String Quartet. Subsequently he was for three years a principal player in the Zurich Opera Orchestra. Since 1974 he has been working as a freelance musician and teacher, appearing throughout the Near and Far East, North and South America, and Europe. Giuseppe Guaragnini was also the builder of Zvi Livschitz' viola, which was made in 1798.

Ukrainian cellist **Alexander Kaganovsky** was born in the city of Kiev. He began studying music at the age of five, and at the age of sixteen he won the Ukraine Cello Competition. Following his immigration to Israel, Kaganovsky studied at the Tel Aviv Rubin Academy of Music with Uzi

Wiesel. In 1985 he won first prize in the Israel Broadcasting Authority Competition, and that same year he became a member of the Israel String Quartet. Kaganovsky currently lives in Switzerland and since 1998 has been a member of the Zurich String Trio. He plays on a cello that was built in 1726 by Carlo Testore.

A serenade may be written as a vocal or an instrumental composition. During the eighteenth century the instrumental version was more common. Such a work was often commissioned for a specific occasion and meant for casual listening rather than a concert setting. Mozart's *Serenade, K. 185*, for example, was the first of six commissioned *Salzburg Serenades* that proved to be quite popular. The impetus for Beethoven's *Serenade in D Major, Op. 8*, on the other hand, is unclear, particularly since no evidence of an attributable commission has been documented. Of prime importance is the fact that it remains today one of his most beloved compositions. The work is in the trio genre, in this case three stringed instruments. Beethoven wrote five string trios, but he gave the title *Serenade* only to *Op. 8*. As a genre piece, the eighteenth-century instrumental serenade was basically in a tripartite format [ABA]. Like many other eighteenth-century composers, Beethoven inserted additional movements, such as a *Minuet* and a *Scherzo*. Later he used these forms and titles for the third movement of his first, second, third, and eighth symphonies.

The *Serenade* embodies no classical form, such as the sonata allegro form or the rondo, but the opening and closing *Adagio* movements can be seen as a unifying element for the work. Following one another without connection (other than a limited key relationship) or development, the movements present various dance forms, among them minuet, polka, and march. Beethoven cleverly introduces a short theme with four variations in the fifth movement without losing the overall feeling of casual elegance. Taken as a whole, the *Serenade* carries a capriciousness of mood that lies somewhere between the lightness of open-air music and the seriousness of chamber music.

Alfred Schnittke's *String Trio*, commissioned by the Alban Berg Foundation, celebrates the centenary of Berg's birthday as well as the fiftieth anniversary of his death. First performed in the Moscow

Conservatory on 2 June 1985, the trio had a second performance a month later in Lockenhaus, Vienna. It is a two-movement work, marked *Moderato* and *Adagio*, that incorporates a number of Berg's unique compositional techniques. Among them are the variation principle as a formal precept, the use of aphoristic brevity rather than discursive formal exposition, and a strong polyphonic element in the part-writing. In addition, Schnittke, like Beethoven, found that the trio medium has a sound persona all its own. Exploring it with contemporary music colors and textures enabled Schnittke to allow each voice to retain its unique tonal prism and brought some revelatory results. Music critic Michael Oliver was both intrigued and inspired after hearing a performance of the work and wrote: "The *String Trio* is a fascinating piece. It is a most ingenious expression or [a] redefinition of [the] sonata form. There is much poignancy and anxiety in the piece and some Shostakovich-like fury and despair, [with] the melody eerily rising above the drama. It is a passionate, at times anguished piece, and a strangely moving one."

Now one hundred years old, Dohnányi's *Serenade in C Major, Op. 10*, continues to maintain its high popularity among the devotees and practitioners of chamber music. At the time of its publication (1904), Dohnányi was twenty-six years old, a first-rate pianist, and enamored with the creative style and compositional technique of Brahms, who was his hero. The music of Dohnányi, like that of Brahms, is marked by imaginative tints and concentrated utterances that are the hallmark of the romantic movement. Firmly entrenched in the classical mode, however, both composers used the traditional harmonies and fundamental forms from earlier periods. The *Serenade* borrows an eighteenth-century form in which three diverse inner movements are preceded and followed by marches, making a total of five movements.

Program notes by Elmer Booze

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