

pays homage to the classical tradition as well as to Beethoven, whose cello sonatas were Brahms' model. The sonata closes successfully with unrelenting drive at the coda, which is marked *piú presto*.

Programs notes by Elmer Booze

Concerts at the National Gallery of Art
Under the direction of George Manos
January 2003

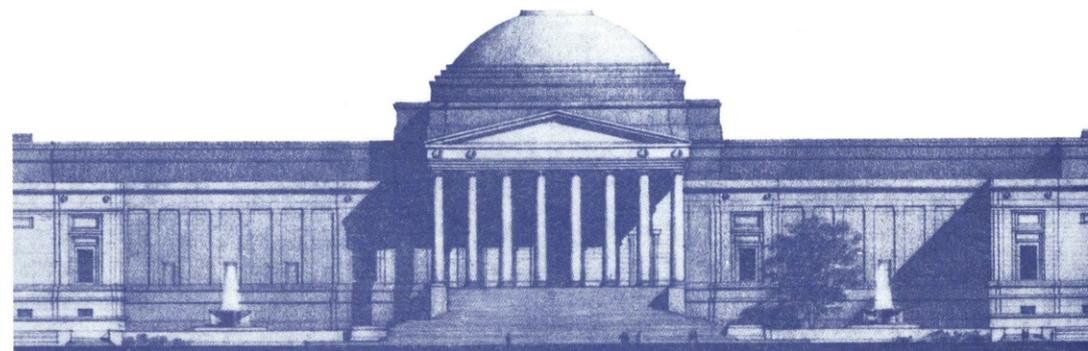
January

- 5 **National Gallery Orchestra** Gala Viennese New Year Concert
George Manos, conductor
- 12 **Gary Graffman, pianist** Reinicke: *Sonata, Opus 179*
Von Sauer: *Waldandacht*
Chopin/Godowsky: *Etudes*
J. S. Bach/Brahms: *Chaconne in D Minor*
Reger: *Four Etudes*
Blumenfeld: *Etude, Opus 36*
- 19 **The Verdehr Trio** Mozart: *Trio, K. 358*
Walter Verdehr, violin Fanny Mendelssohn: *Romance*
Elsa Ludwig Verdehr, clarinet Armand Russell: *Romance*
Sylvia Roederer, piano Tchaikovsky: *Entr'acte* from *Sleeping Beauty*
Joan Tower: *Rainwaves*
Bright Sheng: *Reflections, Tibetan Dance*
- 26 **The Thomas Zehetmair Quartet** Schumann: *String Quartet No. 1*
Cage: *String Quartet in Four Parts*
Bartok: *String Quartet No. 5*

The Sixty-first Season of

THE WILLIAM NELSON CROMWELL and
F. LAMMOT BELIN CONCERTS

National Gallery of Art



2440th Concert

LUIGI PIOVANO, cellist

LUISA PRAYER, pianist

Sunday Evening, 29 December 2002
Seven O'clock
West Building, West Garden Court

Admission free

Program

Camille Saint-Saëns
(1835–1921)

Sonata No. 1 in C Minor
Op. 32 (1872)

Allegro
Andante tranquillo sostenuto
Allegro moderato

Robert Schumann
(1810–1856)

Adagio and Allegro in A-flat Major
Op. 70 (1849)

Intermission

Guiseppe Martucci
(1856–1909)

Two Romances for Cello and Piano
Op. 72 (1891)

No. 1 in A Minor
No. 2 in A Major

Johannes Brahms
(1833–1897)

Sonata No. 1 in E Minor
Op. 38 (1862–1865)

Allegro non troppo
Allegretto quasi minuetto
Allegro

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.

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

Musicians

Born in 1969 in Pescara, Italy, **Luigi Piovano** began piano studies at age five under the guidance of his father. He turned to the cello a few years later, and in his early teens studied under the renowned Romanian cellist Radu Aldulescu. As a scholarship student at the International Menuhin Academy in Gstaad, Switzerland, and as soloist with Yehudi Menuhin's chamber orchestra, Camerata Lysy, Piovano concertized internationally between 1989 and 1992. Since 1999 he has participated in the Menuhin Festival in Gstaad and the Newport Festival in Rhode Island. Piovano is a member of the Quartetto Michelangelo, which won first prize at the Concours Internationale de Musique de Chambre at Illzach, France. At the invitation of Maurizio Pollini, he participated in the Progetto Pollini, undertaken in 2002 in both New York and Salzburg, Austria. Among the internationally known musicians with whom Luigi Piovano has performed are Wolfgang Sawallisch, Myung Wha Chung, and Katia and Marielle Lebeque. Luigi Piovano records for the Vermeer, EMI, Nuova Era, and Opus 111 labels. He is first cello soloist of the Orchestra of the National Academy of Santa Cecilia. He performs alternately on two historic cellos, a Guiseppe Scarbi, dated 1868, and an Arturo Fracassi, dated 1935.

Pianist **Luisa Prayer** is one of Italy's most sought-after chamber musicians. A professor of chamber music at the Conservatory of L'Aquila, she founded and administers the international music festival, Pietre Che Cantano, in Ocre, Italy. A native of Rome, she studied at the Santa Cecilia Conservatory under Sergio Cafaro, graduating in 1982. In 1984 she won an Austrian state scholarship, allowing her to attend the Mozarteum in Salzburg, from which she received the master diploma under the tutelage of Gilbert Schuchter. Prayer has also attended Reccardo Brengola's chamber music master classes, both at the Accademia Chigiana in Siena and at the National Academy of Santa Cecilia, where she earned the diploma with highest honors. She has performed at music festivals in Kerkrade, Holland; Sermoneta and Portogruaro, Italy; and Okinawa, Japan. She has made recordings and participated in broadcasts in Italy, Germany, Austria, and Taiwan.

Program Notes

Camille Saint-Saëns' *Sonata No. 1 in C Minor for Cello and Piano, Op. 32*, presents contrasting textures and kaleidoscopic moods that are not usually associated with his music. His works are generally characterized as overtly delicate, capricious, sophisticated, technically demanding, and possessing a charismatic line and insightful transparency. This sonata, however, was written during the time of the Franco-Prussian War (1870–1871), when Saint-Saëns lost several intimate friends who had either died as prisoners of war or had been outright casualties. He also lost a beloved aunt. The experience took a toll on him both physically and emotionally.

While both of the outer movements are shrouded in heroic ambience, the inner movement is a much needed respite, especially after the turmoil of the explosive opening segment of the sonata. Following the format of the sonata-allegro form, the first movement (*Allegro*) begins forcefully, with the cello and piano playing in unison. When the first and second themes make their appearance, they begin with fierce and incisive elements of a foreboding nature that could be construed as symbols of military conscription. The themes are moderated with passages of introspective tranquility. In opposition to the dramatic turbulence of the first movement, the second (*Andante tranquillo sostenuto*) is shorter in length, non-agitated, and much more tuneful, settling on a moment of reflective yearning and divine inspiration. The third movement (*Allegro moderato*) commences with a broad echoing dialogue between piano and cello that is followed by an unexpected palpating, rhythmic motif of meteoric drive. Pushed to its limits, the underlining figure develops into a romantic canvas of emotion that continues to the end of the movement, where a brilliant coda closes the work triumphantly.

Schumann wrote his *Adagio and Allegro, Op. 70*, initially for horn and piano, while at the same time providing an alternate part for violin or cello. The work is filled with a great romantic sweep that loses very little in transcription. Spread out in three epigrammatic movements,

the work epitomizes the sum and substance of the romantic era. The opening *Adagio* plays forth with a honeyed, liquid melody. A thespian march section follows. After a brief interlude, the work concludes with an effervescent *Allegro*.

The *Due Romanze (Two Romances)* of Giuseppe Martucci are his last compositions for this genre. In their short delivery, these two pieces personify Martucci's highly imaginative and lyrical nature. The first *Romance* is in the key of A minor and is likened by some writers to the compositional style of Schubert, particularly in the effortlessness of its delivery. The second, in the key of A major, has a melodious line, spiced with a cameo expression of sadness that remains unchanged, even when it moves through moments of heated passion.

Brahms intended his first cello sonata to be a work in four movements, but between its beginning (1862 in Münster) and its completion (1865 in Lichtental), he had completely reworked it and expunged the third movement (*Adagio*). Dedicated to his close friend Josef Gansbacher (1829–1911), a cellist and teacher of singing, the sonata had its premiere in 1874 at the hands of the Austro-Czechoslovakian cellist and composer David Popper (1843–1913) and the Viennese pianist Anton Door (1833–1919). Even at the age of twenty-nine, Brahms demonstrated his penchant for writing in a richly dark and somber manner, maintaining an elegiac sentiment throughout its three movements and using the full range of colors provided by the lower range of both the cello and the piano.

Demonstrating his commitment to the classical format for this sonata, Brahms begins with a contemplative theme that soon gives way to some dramatic impulses before relinquishing its drive to the second theme. The latter brightens the darkened atmosphere, but only briefly. There is a rigorous developmental workout of the two themes with the obligatory return of the opening section (recapitulation) to end the movement. The second movement (*Allegretto quasi minuetto*) is a kind of enhanced minuet with a trio, the theme of which is derived from the first movement's opening section (exposition). The finale (*Allegro*) is an elaborate three-themed fugue in a form known as strict triple fugue. It