

About *Tibetan Dance*, composer Bright Sheng comments: “The work is anchored on the last movement, the longest of the three. The first two movements are reminiscent, as if one is hearing songs from a distant memory, [while] the music [itself] becomes real in the last movement. Its material is based on the rhythm and melodic motive of a Tibetan folk dance from Qinghai, a Chinese province by the border of Tibet, where I lived during my teenage years.” Sheng has lived in the United States since 1982. Among the composers with whom he studied are Leonard Bernstein, Chou Wen-chung, Mario Davidovsky, George Perle, and Hugo Weisgall. He has enjoyed status as composer-in-residence with several American institutions, including the Seattle Symphony and the Lyric Opera of Chicago. His dramatic musical portrait of the Chinese Cultural Revolution, *H’un (Lacerations): In Memoriam 1966–1976*, has been performed by the New York Philharmonic, the Cleveland Orchestra, the Tokyo Philharmonic, and the symphony orchestras of Baltimore, San Francisco, Honolulu, Milwaukee, and Kansas City. His work has been recognized by awards from the National Endowment for the Arts, the American Academy of the Arts, the Naumburg Foundation, and the MacArthur Foundation.

Program notes by the Verdehr Trio
Edited and adapted by Elmer Booze

*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 Sixty-first Season of

THE WILLIAM NELSON CROMWELL and
F. LAMMOT BELIN CONCERTS

National Gallery of Art



2443d Concert

THE VERDEHR TRIO

WALTER VERDEHR, violin
ELSA LUDEWIG-VERDEHR, clarinet
SILVIA ROEDERER, piano

Sunday Evening, 19 January 2003
Seven O'clock
West Building, West Garden Court

Admission free

Program

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756–1791) Sonata in B-flat Major, K. 358
Arranged for violin, clarinet, and piano
by James Niblock

Allegro
Adagio
Molto presto

Fanny Mendelssohn
(1805–1847) Two Romances
from “Three Pieces for Piano Four Hands”
Arranged for violin, clarinet, and piano
by Armand Russell

Allegro
Allegro molto

Joan Tower
(b. 1938) *Rainwaves
(1997)

Intermission

Pyotr Ilich Tchaikovsky
(1840–1893) Entr’acte from “Sleeping Beauty”
(1889)
Arranged for violin, clarinet, and piano
by Armand Russell

Gernot Wolfgang
(b. 1957) *Reflections for Violin, Clarinet, and Piano
(1999)

Bright Sheng
(b. 1955)

Prelude
Song
Tibetan Dance

*Tibetan Dance
(2000)

**Commissioned by the Verdehr Trio and Michigan State University*

Musicians

An acknowledged leader in the field of new music, the **Verdehr Trio** has thirty years’ experience in molding and defining the personality of the violin-clarinet-piano trio. A handful of trios by Bartók, Stravinsky, Milhaud, Khachaturian, Berg, and Ives formed the early repertoire for this grouping of instruments. Thanks to the commissioning activity of the Verdehr Trio, there are now more than 150 works in this genre. The violin-clarinet-piano trio has become a viable chamber music medium, joining the ranks of the piano trio, woodwind and brass quintets, and the piano quartet. In completing its repertoire of classical and romantic works, the Verdehr Trio has rediscovered and transcribed several eighteenth- and nineteenth-century pieces for inclusion in its concert programs.

The Verdehr Trio has performed throughout the country and the world, including sixteen European nations, the former Soviet Union, North, South, and Central America, Asia, and Australia. Among the major venues where the trio has appeared are the Kennedy Center, Lincoln Center, the Library of Congress, the Brahmsaal in Vienna, the Dvorák Hall in Prague, the IRCAM Centre in Paris, the Sydney Opera House, and London’s Wigmore Hall. The trio has participated in the Spoleto Festival, the Prague Spring Festival, the Vienna Spring Festival, and the Grand Teton Music Festival. The Verdehr Trio is in residence at Michigan State University in East Lansing, Michigan.

Violinist Walter Verdehr was born in Gottschee, Yugoslavia, and received his first violin instruction at the Conservatory of Music in Graz, Austria. As a student at the Juilliard School of Music, he was the first violinist to receive its doctor of music degree. Further studies took him to the Vienna Academy of Music as a Fulbright Scholar. He was a member of the International Congress of Strings faculty for several summers and chairman of the string department at Michigan State University, where he is currently a professor of music.

Clarinetist **Elsa Ludewig-Verdehr** studied at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music and at the Eastman School, from which she received a performer's certificate and the doctor of musical arts degree. She has performed at the White House, lectured and given master classes at numerous national and international clarinet congresses, and participated in the Marlboro Music Festivals and their touring groups. As a member of the Richards Wind Quintet, she has played in many cities in the United States and Canada. Recently, she was awarded a distinguished faculty professorship at Michigan State University.

Although she was born in Argentina, pianist **Silvia Roederer** began her musical training in the United States. Upon completing her undergraduate degree with honors at the Eastman School of Music, she continued her studies at the University of Southern California under John Perry, where she completed her doctorate. A winner of several important competitions, including the Joanna Hodges International Piano Competition, she has appeared as soloist with the Denver Symphony Orchestra and the Santa Monica Symphony. A professor of music at Western Michigan University, she lives in Kalamazoo with her husband and three children.

Program Notes

The first work on this program is a transcription by James Niblock of Mozart's *Piano in Sonata B-flat Major, K. 358*, originally for piano four hands. The sonata dates from 1774 and is one of four that Mozart wrote for duet performance by himself and his sister, Maria Anna (Nannerl). The orchestral characteristics of the sonata are immediately apparent in

the unison octaves of the opening movement (*Allegro*), while the delicate beauty and refinement of the second movement (*Adagio*) mimic the slow movement of a concerto. The sparkling finale (*Molto presto*) is full of rapidly moving "string" figures for the clarinet and violin, solo piano melodies, and other elements that can easily be imagined as coming from a concerto for piano and orchestra.

Joan Tower has been composing since the early 1960s and her works have been winning prizes since 1974, among them National Endowment for the Arts, MacDowell Colony, and Guggenheim Fellowships, the Grawemeyer Award, and commissions from the St. Louis and Kansas City Symphonies, Absolut Vodka, and Carnegie Hall. Regarding *Rainwaves*, which she wrote for and dedicated to the Verdehr Trio, Joan Tower explains: "[It] explores the motion of a waveform. Starting with a pointillistic 'rain-type' pattern, the notes float upwards and downwards in increasing intensities. In the less [staccato] and more flowing sections, there is a sense of a 'wind' pushing the notes into longer and wider arched patterns, perhaps like the undulating sheets of rain created in a light southern tropical rainfall."

Gernot Wolfgang's *Reflections for Violin, Clarinet, and Piano* was commissioned by the Verdehr Trio, as were the works by Joan Tower and Bright Sheng. Born in Austria, Wolfgang is a graduate of Berklee College of Music in Boston and the University of Southern California and has studied and taught at the University of Music in Graz, Austria. He is active in the fields of jazz and music for film and television. He writes: "Without any actions there would be nothing to reflect on. One could say that *Reflections* is an evolutionary piece, a piece about how we develop as human beings. The violin is doing the 'acting' and the clarinet is constantly developing individual, and ultimately joint, statements, while the piano periodically 'reflects' on these statements, evaluates [them, and] brings them in order before the next 'actor' comes into the picture.... [This] is a twelve-minute piece in one movement, which stylistically—like all my other chamber music pieces—contains a good measure of jazz spirit, paired with harmonic and structural elements of twentieth-century concert music."