

- 27 **Zuill Bailey, cellist**
j. y. song, pianist
Mendelssohn: *Variations concertantes*
Beethoven: *Cello Sonata No. 4*
Crumb: *Sonata for Solo Cello*
Prokofiev: *Sonata, Op. 119*
- May
4 **Julius Berger and Hyun-Jung Berger, cellists**
Presented in honor of the exhibition *Houdon: Sculptor of the Enlightenment*
Barrière: *Sonata in G Major*
Mozart: *O Isis and Osiris*
Haydn: *Duet in G Major*
Boccherini: *Adagio and Allegro*
- 11 **The Aulos Ensemble**
Presented in honor of the exhibition *Houdon: Sculptor of the Enlightenment*
Rameau: Suites from *Les Fêtes d'Hébé* and *Les Indes galantes*
Works by Jacques Duphy and Jean Jacques Rousseau
- 18 **Livia Sohn, violinist**
Works by Jonathan Berger and Jenő Hubay
J.S. Bach, *Sonata, BWV 1016*
Grieg; *Sonata No. 2*
- 25 **Klaus Hellwig, pianist**
Beethoven: *Sonata, Op. 14/2*
Schumann: *Davidsbündlertänze, Op. 6*

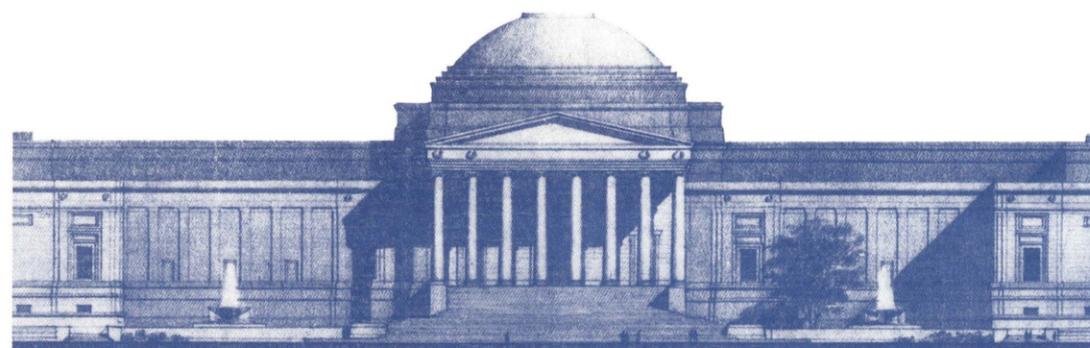
The use of cameras or recording equipment during the performance is not allowed. Please be sure that cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices are turned off.

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

The Sixty-first Season of

THE WILLIAM NELSON CROMWELL and
F. LAMMOT BELIN CONCERTS

National Gallery of Art



2453d Concert

RALPH VOTAPEK, pianist

Sunday Evening, 30 March 2003
Seven O'clock
West Building, West Garden Court

Admission free

Ralph Votapek has recorded for the RCA, London, Cambridge, CRI, Music and Arts, Mace, Grenadilla, Concert Disc, EDUL, and Audio Arts labels. He was the soloist on Arthur Fiedler's last Boston Pops recording, a Gershwin program re-released on CD by Pickwick. His most recent CD for Ivory Classics features the music of Ginastera, Szymanowski, Poulenc, and Piazzolla.

Presently serving as artist-in-residence at Michigan State University in East Lansing, Ralph Votapek appears at the National Gallery by arrangement with Parsons Artists Management of Highland Park, Illinois.

Program Notes

Book I

1. *Danseuses de Delphes (Delphic Dancers)*: As the title implies, is a religious dance of the sort performed during rites in the Temple of Apollo at Delphi [in Greece]. The music is slow, stately, and tranquil with harmonies evocative of mystery. 2. *Voiles*: This title may be translated either as "veils" or "sails," but Debussy probably had in mind a seascape. With the exception of six bars of pentatonic harmony, the prelude is based on the whole-tone scale. 3. *Le vent dans la plaine (The Wind in the Plain)*: The music suggests a strong breeze, rather than a mighty wind. The listener may visualize tall grass dancing about on the plain. 4. *Les sons et les parfums tournent dans l'air du soir (Sounds and Perfumes Swirl in the Evening Air)*: This title is a quotation from a poem in Baudelaire's *Les fleurs du mal*. The poet speaks of the senses drinking in the sounds and odors of evening. Debussy's harmonies evoke the perfumes of the night.

5. *Les collines d'Anacapri (The Hills of Anacapri)*: Anacapri is one of the two villages on the island of Capri in the Bay of Naples. From a distance, one hears cowbells and the strains of a tarantella. The dance tune becomes more prominent and soon we hear a Neapolitan-style

melody. A second folklike theme is introduced in the middle section. A reminiscence of the opening dance leads to a brilliant ending. 6. *Des pas sur la neige (Footprints in the Snow)*: Footprints in the snow are clues to a mysterious and seemingly endless journey. A persistent figure in the accompaniment creates an impression of weariness. According to the composer, the dominant rhythm "should have the sonorous value of a melancholy ice-bound landscape." The mood here is one of extreme solitude. One feels a spiritual numbness. 7. *Ce qu'a vu le vent d'ouest (What the West Wind Saw)* is a musical picture of a storm at sea, or perhaps a storm coming off the sea, in this case, of course, the Atlantic.

8. *La fille aux cheveux de lin (The Girl with the Flaxen Hair)*: The title of this well-known piece is that of a poem by Leconte de Lisle [from his collection of poems, *Chansons ecossaises*]. *The Girl with the Flaxen Hair* displays a simple lyricism that recalls an earlier stage in the composer's career. De Lisle's poem is the song of a young Scottish girl singing in the morning sunshine. 9. *La sérénade interrompue (The Interrupted Serenade)* is a Spanish-style serenade with a guitarlike accompaniment. The timid serenader is twice interrupted, once by a slammed window and again by the sound of distant merrymaking. The second interruption sparks a display of rage. The singer finishes his song sadly and departs indifferently. 10. *La cathédrale engloutie (The Sunken Cathedral)* is a musical picture of the submerged cathedral of Ys, which, according to legend, sank off the coast of Brittany as punishment for the sins of the populace. It rises to the surface occasionally as a warning symbol. The piece begins calmly as submerged bells become louder, and we hear the sound of plainchant and the boom of the organ pedal. Gradually, the cathedral disappears from view and the ghostly sounds grow fainter. 11. *Dance de Puck (Puck's Dance)*: Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* inspired this whimsical piece. Puck leaps about gleefully, then stops at the sound of an elfin horn. At the end he vanishes in a puff of smoke. 12. *Minstrels*: In this hilarious piece, Debussy recalls the music hall acts that were popular early in the twentieth century. There are passing references to dance routines and

comical stunts. Instrumental effects include those of a banjo, a drum, and an out-of-tune cornet.

Book II

1. *Brouillards (Mists)*: The effect of mist is produced by one hand playing exclusively on the white keys while the other controls the black keys. 2. *Feuilles mortes (Dead Leaves)*: The impression here is autumnal [and tinged with] melancholy, yet beautiful with Debussy's chords of the ninth and eleventh. 3. *La Puerta del Vino (The Wine Gate)* can be politely translated as the *Gateway to the Vineyard*. However, the music is more suggestive of a gateway to drunkenness. Actually, the title is the name of a café in Spain that Debussy saw on a postcard. The rhythm is that of an incessant Habanera. 4. *Les fées sont d'exquises danseuses (Fairies are Exquisite Dancers)*: This piece is light and airy, but one doesn't have to wait long for unexpected harmonic and tempo changes.

5. *Bruyères (Heather or Heaths)* bears some similarity in form and mood to *The Girl with the Flaxen Hair*. Its pastoral quality reminds of a Scottish landscape. 6. *General Lavine—Eccentric*: This personage was an old American soldier, a real character in Parisian vaudeville, whose act consisted solely of marching stiffly around the stage with his rifle. He was billed as one who had soldiered all his life. 7. *La terrasse des audiences du clair de lune (The Terrace for Audiences of the Moonlight)* evokes mysterious India, as one imagines a vast crowd hypnotized by the moon. 8. *Ondine*: Debussy's water sprite is not as brilliant or as serious as Ravel's, but it nevertheless playfully splashes about.

9. *Hommage à S. Pickwick, Esq., P.P.M.P.C.*: After a blatant quote of *God Save the Queen*, Debussy gently pokes fun at this proper English gentleman. Toward the end he goes off whistling a happy tune. 10. *Canope*: Quiet parallel chords evoke the distant star, Canopus.

11. *Les tierces alternées (Alternating Thirds)* is certainly the most abstract of the *Twenty-four Preludes*. In the consistent pursuit of its technical aim, [this work] could easily have been included in the set of études that Debussy was to write a few years later. 12. *Feux d'artifice*

(*Fireworks*): Debussy's fireworks at first only pop and fizzle, but soon there are much more brilliant displays, culminating in a furious double glissando. However, the end is quiet with a snatch of the *Marseillaise*.

Program notes by Ralph Votapek,
edited and adapted by Elmer Booze

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

Concerts in April and May 2003

April

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| 6 | Louis Lortie, pianist
Presented in honor of
the exhibition <i>Frederic
Remington: The Color
of Night</i> | Schumann: <i>Frühlingsnacht
Phantasiestücke, Op. 111</i>
Liszt: <i>Transcendental Etudes
Nos. 5 and 6</i>
<i>Hungarian Rhapsody No. 9</i>
<i>Carnaval de Pest</i>
Elliott Carter: <i>Night Fantasies</i>
Ravel: <i>Gaspard de la nuit</i> |
| 13 | Valerie Tryon, pianist
Presented in honor of
the exhibition <i>Frederic
Remington: The Color
of Night</i> | Chopin: <i>Two Nocturnes</i>
Liszt: <i>Harmonies du soir</i>
Granados: <i>The Lover and the
Nightingale</i>
Poulenc: <i>Three Nocturnes</i> |
| 20 | No concert | |