

writing is idiomatic and makes rich use of full-sounding double stops and chords, without ever straining the limits of the instrument.” The third movement, *Andante*, unfolds with a charming melody that is accompanied ingeniously on an incessant staccato note, giving the effect of a duo partnership. The effect is stunning but demands virtuosity of the highest caliber. The final *Allegro* features arpeggiated chords in a “question and answer” sequence that results in a simulated two-voice dialogue between *forte* and *piano*, which, again quoting Schwarz, “[is a] kind of *terraced dynamics* [that] stems from the two keyboards of the harpsichord.” Its effect is immediate and dramatic.

Partita No. 3 in E Major, BWV 1006, opens with an invigorating *Preludio*, often heard by itself in violin recitals as an encore. The *Loure* that follows is a French regional dance from Normandy with a contemplative bucolic disposition. The *Gavotte en rondeau*, on the other hand, is vivacious and earthy, and like the *Preludio* is popular as an encore piece. The delightful *Menuets I and II* offer a contrast between straightforwardness in the first and sensitivity in the second. Between the *Bourrée* and the *Gigue* there is a contrast of rhythm, but both convey a bright and joyful mood that brings the partita to a successful conclusion.

Programs notes by Elmer Booze

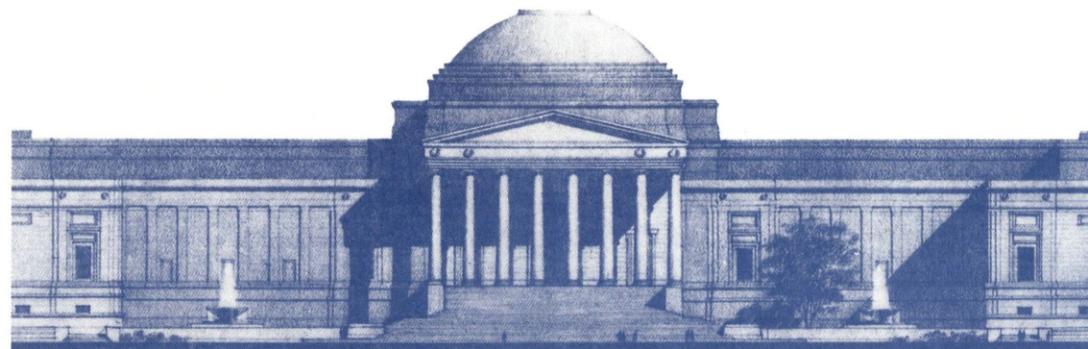
The use of cameras or recording equipment during the performance is not allowed. Please be sure that cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices are turned off.

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



2462d Concert

ILYA GRINGOLTS, violinist

Sunday Evening, 8 June 2003
Seven O'clock
West Building, West Garden Court

Admission free

Program

Music for Solo Violin by Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685–1750)

Partita No. 1 in B Minor
BWV 1002 (1720)

Allemande	Sarabande
Double	Double
Courante	Tempo di Bourrée
Double: Presto	Double

Sonata No. 2 in A Minor
BWV 1003 (1720)

Grave, Fuga, Andante, Allegro

Intermission

Partita No. 3 in E Major
BWV 1006 (1720)

Preludio	Gavotte en rondeau
Loure	Menuet I
Gavotte en rondeau	Menuet II
Loure	Bourrée
	Gigue

The Musician

“**Ilya Gringolts** sings out the soul of this music even within the introduction, fusing the fine intensity of the miniaturist with the exuberance of the showman. This is the sort of playing you don’t just admire and wonder at, but...find yourself wanting to be entertained by all evening” (Hilary Finch, *The Times*). At age twenty Gringolts has already established himself as an exciting new artist with invitations from leading orchestras and recital series throughout the world and an exclusive recording contract with Deutsche Grammophon. In 1998 Gringolts won first prize at the International Paganini Violin Competition as well as a special prize for the best interpretation of Paganini’s *Capriccio*. He was also a prizewinner in the 1995 Yehudi Menuhin International Violin Competition. His success in the Paganini competition led to a recording contract with BIS and the production of three CDs. The first, entitled *Paganini*, was released in March 1999 and included the unaccompanied tour de force, *Introduction and Variations on Nel cor più non mi sento*, a selection of sonatas, and Paganini’s *Concerto No. 1* with Osmo Vänskä conducting the Lahti Symphony Orchestra. The second CD is a violin duo recorded with Alexander Bullov, and the third is works for unaccompanied violin by Hindemith, Ysaÿe, and Schnittke as well as one of Gringolts’ own compositions.

Gringolts made his North American debut in July 1999, performing with the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa, conducted by Pinchas Zukerman. He has also performed with the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl, the Philadelphia Orchestra at the Mann Music center, the National Symphony Orchestra, and the Detroit, Minnesota, Atlanta, and Phoenix Symphony Orchestras. In Europe he has appeared with the Saint Petersburg Philharmonic, the Moscow Symphony, and the Zurich and English Chamber Orchestras, among others.

Born in Saint Petersburg, Russia, in 1982, Ilya Gringolts studied violin and composition at the Saint Petersburg Special Music School with Tatiana Liberova and Jeanna Metallidi. A recent graduate of the Juilliard School of Music in New York City, Gringolts has also

participated in the Perlman Music Program on Long Island and a number of master classes with Itzhak Perlman and Miroslav Rusin. Gringolts plays the ex-Kiesewetter Stradivarius, Cremona, c. 1723, which is on extended loan from Clement Arrison through the generous efforts of the Stradivarius Society of Chicago. (The Stradivarius Society is a unique organization that supports the very highest level of string playing by assisting patrons who own the most precious antique Italian instruments and make them available to artists of exceptional talent and ability.) Ilya Gringolts appears at the National Gallery by arrangement with IMG Artists of New York City.

Program Notes

As his partitas and sonatas for solo violin constantly reveal, Bach's genius as an improviser was remarkable. Highly skilled at both the organ and the harpsichord, Bach also played the violin; however, it was his prowess at the keyboard that laid the foundation of his musical style. The resulting highly polyphonic textures present special challenges to players of the violin and other sustaining instruments, on which it is difficult if not impossible to play the music exactly as Bach put it on the page.

In his essay on Bach's partitas and sonatas, the distinguished Russian-born American violinist, teacher, and musicologist Boris Schwarz (1906–1983) wrote: "With due respect to Bach's predecessors, they are all dwarfed by Bach's accomplishments. With infinite inventiveness, he explores the possibilities of the unaccompanied violin. Bach deals with a melody instrument; yet he is able to create the illusion of two, three, and even four voices moving contrapuntally. He creates the illusion of a melody accompanied by a bass [as well as] the illusion of harmony embedded in a single horizontal line. How to transform these 'illusions' into audible reality is one of the most challenging tasks for the violinist."

The intrinsic musical value of Bach's solo violin works was not recognized or appreciated by subsequent generations of string players. Although they were used as a pedagogical aid by violin teachers, the partitas and sonatas were not brought to the concert stage until the end of

the nineteenth century, when the great Hungarian-born violinist Joseph Joachim began to play them on his programs.

The *Partita No. 1 in B Minor, BWV 1002*, uses four dance movements that were characteristic of the suite format prevalent during the eighteenth century. Each of the four movements is paired with a *double* variation that is expressed in half the time value of the original. The robust dotted rhythmic figures and chords of the *Allemande* are the ruling forces within the movement; at the same time the high and low registers of the violin are effectively contrasted. The *Double* that follows the *Allemande* reiterates the concept with harmonic embellishment. In $\frac{3}{4}$ time, the homophonic *Courante* moves in a moderately fast tempo. The vivacity of its *Double* is enhanced by the rapidly executed sixteenth notes that produce a virtuoso flair. The majestic *Sarabande*, set in $\frac{3}{4}$ meter, has a lovely melody that is supported by a harmonic base; its *Double* liquefies the chords, changing them into more expressive melodic lines. The *Bourrée* has attained a "favorite son" status among violinists who play Bach's works as well as listeners who love his music. Schwarz, in his summation of this movement, concludes by saying: "There is irresistible rhythmic propulsion in the punctuation of heavy chords on strong beats, alternating with light and graceful staccato notes. This movement, as well as [its] ensuing *Double*, reveals Bach's intimate knowledge of violin technique."

Sonata No. 2 in A Minor, BWV 1003, is also cast in a four-movement arrangement, but this format has no *doubles* and recalls the *sonata da chiesa* (church sonata) of the seventeenth century. The number of movements may reach as many as seven, but Bach chose to use four, with the alternating tempo pattern slow-fast-slow-fast. *Sonata No. 2* opens with a movement marked *Grave* that features an elongated, soulful, and highly ornamented melody with a sparse chordal accompaniment defining its harmonic composition. The second movement in all three Bach solo sonatas is a fugue. The fugue in this sonata is sanguine and effervescent, but its overall effect is somewhat overshadowed by the mood of disquietude that settles in during the intrusion of poignant chromaticisms. Schwarz finds this "the most 'violinistic' [of the three sonatas' fugal second movements]. The string