

difficult keyboard works—one that requires physical stamina in addition to digital virtuosity of the highest caliber. After hearing it, Aaron Copland (1900–1990) wrote: “Nothing could be more characteristically Bartók than this sonata with its Hungarian folk tunes, its incisive rhythms [and] its hard, unsentimental quality.” These elements are manifested through his percussive handling of the piano and his judicious placing of acrimonious harmonies, including music written in several keys at once (polytonality). The rhythms Bartók uses are not only incisive but also complex, as two time signatures (one in each hand) are sometimes performed simultaneously (polyrhythm).

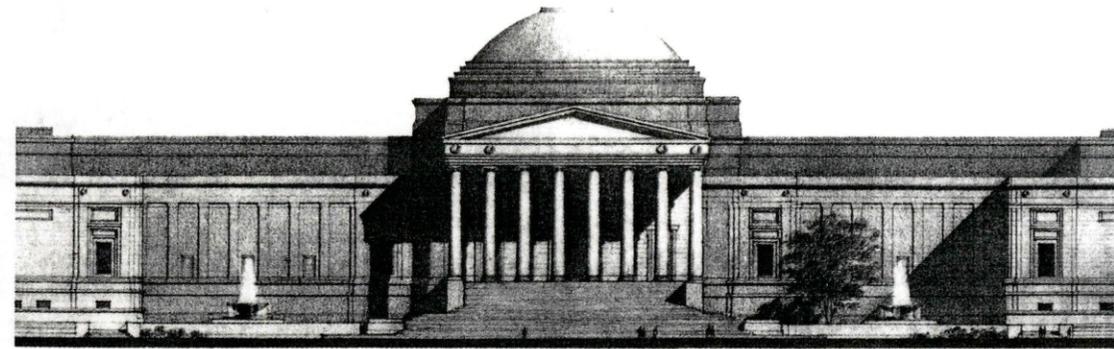
Although it seems at first hearing to be a renegade work unrelated to its musical progenitors, *Sonata (1926)* holds steadfast to the classical sonata format. Throughout the work, themes from Hungarian folk music are present; Bartók manipulated them expressively to create his highly original melodic lines and harmonies. Assessing the significance of the work after its premiere performance in 1926, the American music critic Lawrence Gilman (1878–1939) stated in the *New York Times*: “We feel in Bartók’s music a quality that William James [1842–1910, exponent of pragmatism] would have called ‘tough-minded’....It has logic, coherence, intellectual clarity, and vigor. It has sinews as well as gray matter.”

Program notes by Elmer Booze

The Sixty-second Season of

THE WILLIAM NELSON CROMWELL and
F. LAMMOT BELIN CONCERTS

National Gallery of Art



2474th Concert

JORGE FEDERICO OSORIO, *pianist*

Presented in honor of the 25th anniversary of the East Building
of the National Gallery of Art

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

Admission free

Program

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770–1827)

Variations in F Major
Op. 34

Robert Schumann
(1810–1856)

Fantasy in C Major
Op. 17

Intermission

Manuel de Falla
(1876–1946)

Aragonesa
Cubana
Montañesa
Andaluza

Pièces espagnoles
(1902–1908)

Béla Bartók
(1881–1945)

Allegro moderato
Sostenuto e pesante
Allegro molto

Sonata (1926)

*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 Musician

Mexican pianist **Jorge Federico Osorio** has received international acclaim for his superb musicianship and absolute command of the instrument. He has performed with many of the world's leading orchestras, including the Chicago, Dallas, Detroit, and Seattle Symphony Orchestras, the Concertgebouw Orchestra, and the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra. Osorio has performed under many distinguished conductors, among them Lorin Maazel, Bernard Haitink, Klaus Tennstedt, Eduardo Mata, Jorge Mester, and Lukas Foss. Osorio's concert tours have taken him to Europe, Asia, and North, Central, and South America. After Osorio's 1977 Tully Hall recital at New York City's Lincoln Center, Peter G. Davis of *the New York Magazine* wrote: "His first concert hereabouts in some time was a richly satisfying one. I wonder how many other pianists around today can so completely immerse themselves in such different musical worlds [as those of Haydn and Prokofiev] and depict them all with comparable skill and commitment."

Osorio has made numerous radio recordings for Japan's NKH, Belgian Radio, and the BBC. His discography is extensive: he has recorded a wide variety of repertoire for the EMI, CBS, Artek, IMP, and ASV labels. In addition, he recorded an all-Brahms program that the British magazine *Gramophone* proclaimed "one of the most distinguished discs of Brahms' piano music in recent years." An arts administrator as well as a pianist, Osorio is artistic director of the Brahms Music Festival in Mexico. As a chamber musician, he has performed with the late Henryk Szeryng, the Moscow Quartet, the Tel Aviv Quartet, violinist Mayumi, and cellist Richard Markson.

A former pupil of his mother, Luz María Puente, Bernard Flavigny, Monique Haas, Jacob Milstein, Nadia Reisenberg, and Wilhelm Kempff, Osorio studied at the conservatories of Mexico City, Paris, and Moscow. Winner of the Rhode Island International Master Piano Competition and a recipient of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra's Gina Bachauer Award, Jorge Federico Osorio appears at the National Gallery by arrangement with Performing Arts Consultants of Highland Park, Illinois.

Program Notes

Beethoven's *Six Variations in F Major*, op. 34, stems from the genre that was his first compositional vehicle for self-expression and that revealed his genius as a keyboard improviser. As stated by Beethoven scholar Hans Schmidt in *Beethoven: Variations for Piano* (translated into English by Frederick A. Bishop): "The piano was the instrument of his imagination, [and] the variation [form] was the welcome receptacle, the mould." Although Beethoven expanded and improved the larger forms in music, such as the symphony and the sonata, it is to the variation form that he made his greatest contribution. His handling of the form changed its character and complexion exponentially. According to another Beethoven scholar, Pierre Hugh, "In [Beethoven's model], we witness a revolution in the relations between melody, rhythm, harmony and coloring. The manifold combinations of these elements yield a tonal structure in perpetual transformation."

After presenting the original theme (Adagio) in F major, Beethoven creates six variations, each with a separate character and a new key. The key progression from variation to variation is downward by thirds. The sequence is D minor (Allegro), B-flat major (Allegro ma non troppo), G major (Allegretto), E-flat major (Tempo di menuetto), C minor (Marcia: Allegretto), and F major (Adagio).

Dedicated to Franz Liszt, the monumental *Fantasy in C Major*, op. 17, contains some of Schumann's most powerful and vivid music. Upon completing the opening movement, Schumann wrote to Clara Wieck (whom he was impatiently waiting to marry): "The first movement of the work is perhaps the most passionate of all I have ever composed—a deep yearning for you." At the conclusion of that movement, one can hear strains reminiscent of Beethoven's song cycle *An die ferne Geliebte (To the Loved One Who Is Far Away)*. The second movement is a march that is well known to pianists for the treacherous leaps in its coda. The finale is a slow movement of divine and poetic beauty.

Manuel de Falla's *Pièces espagnoles* is a collection of four dance pieces that paint musical pictures of Spanish culture as it existed in the mind of the composer. The four pieces exude an atmosphere that is highly poetic, sensuous, and full of sentiments. Falla started composing *Pièces espagnoles* in Spain, but left his homeland in 1907 to live in France, where the work was completed and dedicated to Isaac Albéniz (1860–1909). Although he considered Paris his second home, Falla left the French capital in 1915 to return to Spain, after having gained considerable knowledge about composing and music in general from Debussy and Ravel.

Falla wanted to remain true to his musical roots, made deeper by the influence of his Spanish teacher, Felipe Pedrell (1841–1922). He embarked on a project that would create a "nationalism made universal" movement through the employment of folk and traditional Spanish music. *Pièces espagnoles* illuminates his commitment to this end. His gallant effort earned him the distinction of being the first composer of Spanish descent to gain international fame.

The first dance, "Aragonesa," contains a *jota*, a song-and-dance genre that is indigenous to Spain's northern city of Aragon. The second dance, "Cubana," with its cross rhythms (3/4 and 6/8) and vocal colorations, emulates a bucolic song style of Cuba known as *guajira*. The folksonglike quality of the third dance, "Montañesa," endorses its subtitle, "Landscape," a reflection of the Montaña, a province sandwiched between the Basque country and the Asturias. The fourth and final dance, "Andaluza," has strong rhythmic accents much like those that are highlighted in the songs and dances of southern Spain. Coupled with these accents are guitarlike sounds imitating the art of foot stamping, the colorful *zapateado*, an added attraction that makes "Andaluza" the most popular of the four dances.

Written when he was forty-five years old, Bartók's *Sonata (1926)* is the last of his five sonatas for solo piano and is without an opus number. The first four sonatas represent his earlier efforts (juvenilia) in this genre. According to *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, the third and fourth sonatas have been lost. *Sonata (1926)* is Bartók's lengthiest composition for solo piano, as well as one of his most