

*The Sixty-second Season of*

THE WILLIAM NELSON CROMWELL and  
F. LAMMOT BELIN CONCERTS

**National Gallery of Art**

*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.*



*2476th Concert*

**ANGELA HEWITT, *pianist***

Sunday Evening, 14 December 2003  
Seven O'clock  
West Building, West Garden Court

*Admission free*

### *Program*

Ludwig van Beethoven  
(1770–1827)

Sonata No. 12 in A-flat Major  
Op. 26 (1800–1801)

Andante con variazioni  
Scherzo: Allegro  
Marcia funebre sulla morte d'un eroe  
Allegro

### *Intermission*

Johann Sebastian Bach  
(1685–1750)

Aria with Thirty Variations, BWV 988  
("Goldberg Variations") (1741–1742)

#### Aria

- |                                    |                               |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Duet                            | 16. Ouverture                 |
| 2. Trio                            | 17. Sonata                    |
| 3. Canone all' unisono             | 18. Canone alla sesta         |
| 4. Quartet                         | 19. Trio                      |
| 5. Sonata                          | 20. Sonata                    |
| 6. Canone alla seconda             | 21. Canone alla settima       |
| 7. Al tempo di giga                | 22. Alla breve                |
| 8. Sonata                          | 23. Sonata                    |
| 9. Canone alla terza               | 24. Canone all'ottava         |
| 10. Fughetta                       | 25. Adagio                    |
| 11. Sonata                         | 26. Sonata                    |
| 12. Canone alla quarta             | 27. Canone alla nona          |
| 13. Adagio                         | 28. Sonata                    |
| 14. Sonata                         | 29. Sonata                    |
| 15. Canone alla quinta:<br>Andante | 30. Quodlibet<br>Aria da capo |

### *The Musician*

Pianist **Angela Hewitt** first performed at the National Gallery in 1978, having won Washington's own Johann Sebastian Bach International Competition in 1975, and she continues to captivate and charm audiences around the world with her musicianship and virtuosity. Since her triumph in the 1985 Toronto International Bach Piano Competition, she has been hailed as "the pre-eminent Bach pianist of our time" (*The Guardian*, London, 2001), and "nothing less than the pianist who will define Bach performance on the piano for years to come" (*Stereophile*, 1998). In 1994 she embarked on a ten-year project to record all of the major keyboard works by Bach for the Hyperion label, a series that has been called "one of the recorded glories of our age" by London's *Sunday Times*. The music magazine *Gramophone* praised Hewitt's performance as "effortlessly eclipsing all competitors." Her recording of Johann Sebastian Bach's *Six English Suites* was released last September. Her CD of Bach arrangements won the 2001 Juno Award in Canada for the best entry in the instrumental and chamber music categories. Her discography also includes CDs of works by Enrique Granados, Olivier Messiaen, and, most recently, the complete works of Maurice Ravel. During the concert season 2000–2001, she gave complete performances of Bach's *Forty-eight Preludes and Fugues* in Canada, the United States, England, and Germany.

Born into a musical family (her father was the organist of the Anglican Cathedral in Ottawa, Canada), Angela Hewitt began her piano studies at age three, performing in public at age four and winning her first scholarship at age five. In her formative years, she also studied violin, recorder, singing, and classical ballet. At age nine she gave her first recital at Toronto's Royal Conservatory of Music, where she studied from 1964 to 1973. She continued her piano studies with Jean-Paul Sévilla at the University of Ottawa, from which she earned the bachelor of music degree at age eighteen. Angela Hewitt currently resides in London, England, where she has been living since 1985, but she also has homes in Canada and Umbria, Italy. She appears at the National Gallery by arrangement with Cramer/Marder Artists of Lafayette, California.

### *Program Notes*

Beethoven's *Sonata No. 12 in A-flat Major*, op. 26, is an anomaly among his works for the piano. Dedicated to Prince Carl von Lichnowsky, it is Beethoven's only sonata to include a designated "funeral march" as well as a set of variations used as the opening movement. Organically, the sonata appears to be disjointed. As writer Samuel Chotzinoff puts it: "structurally loose, like a package of assorted good things not overtly related....A sonata, like a novel, can conceivably accommodate the most disparate elements." The first movement (*Andante con variazioni*) opens with a simple yet elegant theme, followed by a set of rhythmic variations that is uniquely Beethoven. The second movement (*Scherzo: Allegro molto*) is charismatic and represents a marked contrast to the shifting rhythmic patterns of the preceding movement. It is interrupted by a genteel intermediary section. The third movement "*Marcia funèbre sulla morte d'un eroe*" [A Funeral March on the Death of a Hero] is recognized even by listeners who know little of Beethoven's music. Beethoven gave no hint as to who the hero was. The *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*, in reviewing a performance of the work, called this movement "great, sombre and splendid...because here all difficulties and artistry serve the expressive purpose of the music, and are therefore essential." The fourth movement (*Allegro*) is a *perpetuum mobile* that Chotzinoff calls "a mystical delight." Beethoven purportedly modeled this movement after the *Three Piano Sonatas*, op. 23, of Johann Baptist Cramer (1771–1858).

Johann Sebastian Bach's *Goldberg Variations*, BWV 988, were originally published as Part IV of his *Clavier-Übung*, a collection of the keyboard works he deemed to be his best. The aria that provides the theme for the variations is a sarabande from Bach's second *Clavierbüchlein for Anna Magdalena Bach*, published in 1725. It is at once serene and vivacious. The work carries the name of a Bach pupil, Johann Gottlieb Goldberg (1727–1756), who was a harpsichordist in the service of Count Hermann Karl von Kayserlingk, the Russian ambassador to the electoral court at Dresden in the 1740s. According to Johann Nikolaus Forkel (1749–1818), the first Bach biographer, Count von Kayserlingk was afflicted with nervous attacks and sleepless nights.

One of the duties of the count's harpsichordist was to play in an adjoining room until his patron was able to fall asleep. The count, knowing Bach's reputation, commissioned him to write a composition of considerable length and enthralling diversity, so that Goldberg would have plenty of material with which to fulfill his nocturnal duties. Having received the score, the count wrote a letter to Goldberg requesting that he "come and play my variations for me." Goldberg reportedly acceded to this request many times, with the result that posterity knows the variations by his name and not that of his master.

Forkel does not tell us whether the count was cured or even relieved of his insomnia by this music, and the accuracy of detail in his report has been called into question by *Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians*, Eighth Edition. There is little question, however, that these variations are Bach's magnum opus for the two-manual harpsichord and rank with the "*Diabelli*" *Variations* of Beethoven as one of the greatest keyboard works in theme and variation form.

The variations make calculated use of a musical device known as canon, in which the theme is presented in imitation of itself. The imitation begins before the first presentation of the theme is finished, resulting in a duet. The canons occur at nos. 3, 6, 9, and so forth, and are labeled by Bach with the Italian name for the interval between the two voices that appear in canon. Bach utilizes all of the intervals in order, starting with the unison and moving through to the ninth. The other variations are in free style and highly virtuosic. The final variation is a *quodlibet*, a composition in which well-known melodies or texts are presented simultaneously or successively, with results that are intriguing and often humorous. After the *quodlibet* there is silence, which is broken by the reappearance of the aria—aristocratic, somber, and contented, as it was at the beginning—bringing this mighty work to a quiet close.

Program notes by Elmer Booze