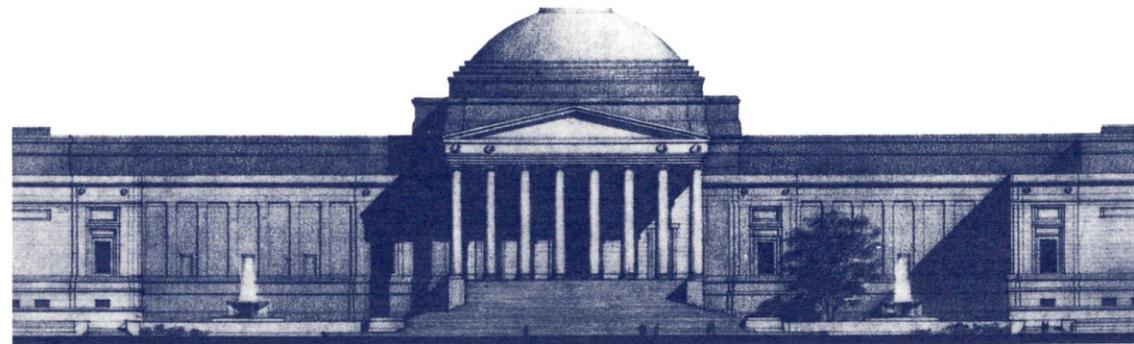


The Sixty-second Season of

THE WILLIAM NELSON CROMWELL and
F. LAMMOT BELIN CONCERTS

National Gallery of Art



2482d Concert

INGRID FLITER, *pianist*

Sunday Evening, 25 January 2004
Seven O'clock
West Building, West Garden Court

Admission free

Program

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770–1827)

Sonata No. 18 in E-flat Major
op. 31, no. 3 (1802)

Allegro
Scherzo: Allegro vivace
Menuetto: Moderato e grazioso
Presto con fuoco

Sonata No. 7 in D Major
op. 10, no. 3 (1797–1798)

Presto
Largo e mesto
Menuetto: Allegro
Rondo: Allegro

Intermission

Frédéric Chopin
(1810–1849)

Six Preludes from op. 28
(1836–1839)

1. No. 13 in B Major
2. No. 14 in G-sharp Minor
3. No. 15 in F-sharp Major
4. No. 16 in E Major
5. No. 17 in D-flat Major
6. No. 18 in B-flat Minor

Nocturne in C-sharp Minor
op. 27, no. 1 (1835)

Chopin

Four Waltzes

op. 64, no. 1, in D-flat Major (“Minute”) (1846–1847)
op. 64, no. 2, in A-flat Major (1846–1847)
op. 70, no. 1, in G-flat Major (1833)
op. 42 in A-flat Major (1840)

Scherzo No. 2 in B-flat Major
(1837)

The Musician

Born in Buenos Aires in 1973, pianist **Ingrid Fliter** was a pupil of Elizabeth Westerkamp. In 1991 she participated in the Aspen Summer Festival, where she studied with Aube Tcherko. The following year she continued her studies with Vitalj Margulis in the Hochschule für Musik in Freiburg, Germany. Further studies took place in 1994 in Rome with Carlo Bruno and in 1996 in the academy *Incontri col Maestro* in Imola, Italy, under the leadership of Franco Scala and Boris Petrushansky. Fliter’s flourishing career has not diminished her desire to continue her studies. She is currently pursuing a course in the art of fortepiano playing with the Italian master Stefano Fiuzzi.

Ingrid Fliter is the recipient of numerous competition awards, among them the first prize in the Argentinean National Competition for Piano and Orchestra, which gave her the opportunity to debut at the age of sixteen in Buenos Aires’ Colon Theatre. In 1994 she won first prize in two categories (classic and romantic) and the special prize in the international competition Citta di Cantu. In 1998 she was a prizewinner in the Ferruccio Busoni Competition in Bolzano, Italy. International recognition came her way in October 2000 when she won second prize in the Frédéric Chopin International Piano Competition in Warsaw, Poland.

Program Notes

Acknowledged as the most classically aligned of the three sonatas in op. 31, Beethoven's *Sonata No. 18 in E-flat Major* began its existence at the beginning of Beethoven's middle period (1802–1812). The classical connection manifests itself in the sonata's opening movement (Allegro). As pianist and Beethoven scholar Alfred Brendel points out, there is a Mozartian first theme with a question-and-answer phrase, and pronounced rhythmic contours are followed by a second, more melodious theme that ends in the dominant key. Both devices are typical of Mozart, Haydn, and the other great masters of the classical period. The second movement (Scherzo) is unusual in that its name suggests an ABA format but it instead features a fully developed sonata-allegro form. The tempo is ebullient and frisky, with the rhythm in duple rather than the customary triple time. For the third movement (Menuetto), Beethoven eschewed the customary slow movement in favor of a minuet. The trio of this movement provided Camille Saint-Saëns (1835–1921) with the basis for his *Variations on a Theme of Beethoven for Two Pianos*, op. 35. The fourth movement (Presto con fuoco) was commonly referred to in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as "La chasse." It is also in the sonata-allegro format and explodes into a kind of *moto perpetuo*, which appears to be a prognostication of the last movement of Beethoven's *Symphony No. 3 ("Eroica")*, which he composed the following year.

The three sonatas in Beethoven's op. 10 came into existence during the latter part of his first, "Viennese" period (1793–1802). The *Sonata in D Major*, op. 10, no. 3, was dedicated to the wife of a Russian nobleman, Countess von Braun, in whose house Beethoven was warmly welcomed. The opening movement (Presto) follows the sonata-allegro format. The main theme is introduced by the first four descending notes of the first measure. According to the preeminent English writer on music, Eric Blom (1888–1959), these notes are not a melody per se, but function in the manner of a Wagnerian *Leitmotiv*. The second theme is also derived from these core notes. Beethoven uses the minor form of the tonic (D minor) to move to the key of B-flat major for the development section, the principal interest of which lies in the foreign key ranges it

explores before returning to the tonic (D major) for the recapitulation. Here the material from the exposition is reintroduced with the necessary key changes and brought to an end with a lengthy coda that is centered on a tonic (D) pedal point.

The second movement (Largo e mesto) is a haunting evocation of inner despair set in the lugubrious key of D minor. Such emotional profundity prompted pianist Wilhelm Kempff to remark: "The doors leading into the light-filled palaces of Vienna are locked and barred. Beethoven is 'alone and cut off from all joy.' We are profoundly moved by this self-revelation of a man in the depths of despair." The shortest of the four movements, the Menuetto, lasts a little longer than two and a half minutes. It is a model of simplicity, with a tuneful theme that is light and affable. The fourth movement (Rondo: Allegro) arises from an upward-moving three-note triplet figure in the opening measure. This figure is treated with jocularly and inventiveness, giving the Rondo a splendid disposition. However, the movement closes with an imposing coda in which the final measures present "muttering allusions in the bass" (Blom).

Frédéric Chopin found complete satisfaction in composing works for solo piano, excelling in the shorter musical forms (preludes, études, waltzes, scherzos, and ballades). Modeled after the *Well-Tempered Clavier* of Johann Sebastian Bach, whom Chopin idolized, the *Préludes*, op. 28, cover all major and minor keys. They are, as John Gillespie says in *Five Centuries of Keyboard Music*, "very much like Bach's preludes, not in technical style but in attitude and basic concept. The *Préludes*...faithfully reflect the soul of the romantic musician....Before displaying his collection, a jeweler will polish his stones to perfection. The musical jeweler Chopin polished his *Préludes* to the highest state of flawlessness that is humanly possible. Again quoting Gillespie: "[when] played as a set, [the *Préludes*] provide a tonal mosaic, a prism of different hues. Heard singly, each emerges as a delectable inspiration born of concentrated emotion."

Some of Chopin's compositions garnered poetic or literary nicknames, such as the "Raindrop" *Prélude*, the "Revolutionary" *Étude*, and the "Winter Wind" *Étude*. None of his nocturnes bear such

inscriptions, yet they are every bit as effective and impressive as the preludes and etudes. A perfect example is the *Nocturne No. 1 in C-sharp Minor*, op. 27. Dedicated to the Countess d'Apponyi, it is a work of sublime lyricism. James Huneker (1857–1921), the perspicacious American writer on music, wrote in his prefatory notes to the Joseffy edition of Chopin's *Complete Works for the Pianoforte*: "Nocturne, op. 27, no. 1, brings us to a masterpiece....In the somber key of C-sharp minor, it is a great essay in the form." Henry T. Finck (1854–1926), an eminent American music critic and editor, maintained that "it [op. 27, no. 1] embodies a greater variety of emotion and more genuine dramatic spirit on four pages than many operas on four hundred."

Although they do not represent the "big guns" in his arsenal of works, Chopin's waltzes embody the charm and sophistication inherent in his musical expression. About the waltzes, Huneker says: "They [run] the gamut [from] the Warsaw Chopin to the Chopin of Paris. And they all dance. They are a veritable 'Dance of the Nerves.'" The waltzes take the ABA format that is common to Chopin's mazurkas, etudes, nocturnes, and polonaises. In addition, they exemplify his total mastery of a quintessential miniature form.

The famous *Minute Waltz*, op. 64, no. 1, is reputed to have been inspired by a comment of George Sand (1804–1876). One day when her dog was chasing its tail, she allegedly asked Chopin to "set the tail to music." Chopin acquiesced by completing this waltz, which he introduced to a Parisian audience in 1848. That recital, one of his most daring, was also his last.

The *Waltz in C-sharp Minor*, op. 64, is dedicated to Mme. Nathaniel de Rothschild and "is the most poetic of all...a species of veiled melancholy," according to Huneker. The *Waltz*, op. 70, no. 1, in G-flat Major was made famous by its inclusion in the one-act ballet *Les Sylphides*, by Michel Fokine. The final waltz, op. 42 in A-flat major, is considered one of Chopin's finest and is sometimes referred to as the "two-four waltz" because a melody in double time is played against the basic waltz rhythm of three-four time.

The *Scherzo No. 2 in B-flat Minor*, op. 31, is one of six that Chopin wrote. Two are included in his piano sonatas, and four were published separately. Heard frequently in concerts, *Scherzo No. 2* has been passed from generation to generation by teachers, students, and the general public. Written by Chopin at age thirty-one, it is a work of enduring grandeur. Schumann spoke of it as "so tender, so bold, [and] as full of love as of scorn." The opening segment (A) features an extravagant array of thematic material, brimming with ideas of striking originality. Particularly noteworthy is the use of silence as a dramatic device. The trio section (B) unveils a song of unsurpassed beauty, one of Chopin's most sensuous melodies. The opening material (A) returns and leads to a dynamic coda of resounding brilliance.

Program 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.