



The Sixty-second Season of
The William Nelson Cromwell and F. Lammot Belin
Concerts

National Gallery of Art
2,501st Concert

National Gallery Chamber Players
Wind Quintet

Sara Nichols, *flute*

Ronald L. Sipes, *oboe*

James Bryla, *clarinet*

Philip C. Munds, *French horn*

Danny K. Phipps, *bassoon*

with Jeffrey Chappell, *piano*

20 June 2004

Sunday Evening, 7:00 pm

West Building, West Garden Court

Admission free

Music Department
National Gallery of Art
Sixth Street and Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC

Mailing address

2000B South Club Drive
Landover, MD 20785

www.nga.gov

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 pm.

2,501st Concert
20 June 2004, 7:00 pm

Franz Danzi (1763–1826)

Quintet No. 1 in B-flat Major, Op. 56

Allegretto

Andante con moto

Minuetto: Allegretto

Allegro

Darius Milhaud (1892–1974)

Suite: La cheminée du Roi René
(1939)

Cortège

Aubade

Jongleurs

La Maousinglade

Joutes sur l'Arc

Chasse à Valabre

Madrigal-Nocturne

Albert Roussel (1869–1937)

Divertissement for Winds and Piano
(1906)

Intermission

William Grant Still (1895–1978)

Summerland (1936)

Arranged for wind quintet by
Adam Les Lesnick (1995)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

Prelude No. 22 in B-flat Minor,
BWV 891, from The Well-Tempered
Clavier

Arranged for wind quintet by Mark Popkin

Fugue in G Minor, BWV 578

Arranged for wind quintet by
Mordecai Rechtman

Francis Poulenc (1899–1963)

Sextet for Wind Quintet and Piano
(1930–1932, revised 1939)

Allegro vivace

Divertissement: Andantino

Finale: Prestissimo

The Musicians

NATIONAL GALLERY CHAMBER PLAYERS WIND QUINTET

Since the enthusiastic public reception of its first concert in 1995, the National Gallery Chamber Players Wind Quintet has become a regular feature of the Gallery's popular Sunday evening concerts. Founded by former music director George Manos, the ensemble explores and presents masterpieces of chamber music that are not often heard, as well as the standard classics for wind quintet.

SARA NICHOLS

Sara Nichols is the principal flutist of the Baltimore Opera and is currently appearing with the Opera Theater of Saint Louis and the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra. In addition to frequent appearances with the National Gallery Orchestra, she performs at Wolf Trap, most recently in the premiere of Joseph Musto's *Volpone*. She was acting assistant principal flutist of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra for two seasons. Nichols is a member of Quintigre, the wind quintet at Towson University in Towson, Maryland, which took first prize at the 2004 Montpelier Recital Competition. She is a member of the music faculty of the Baltimore School of the Arts.

RONALD L. SIPES

Oboist Ronald L. Sipes studied with Marc Lifschey and received the bachelor and master of music degrees from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. He has played principal oboe in the Orquesta Sinfonica de Castille y León (Valladolid, Spain), the New World Symphony, and the Orquesta del Estado de Mexico. Since moving to the Northern Virginia area in 1994, Sipes has played with numerous orchestras and ensembles, including the National Gallery Orchestra, the Washington Opera, and the Theater Chamber Players.

JAMES BRYLA

Clarinetist James Bryla, a former pupil of Sidney Forrest, received the bachelor and master of music degrees from the Catholic University of America, where he also served on the faculty. He made his solo debut with the National Symphony Orchestra at age twenty-one as the winner of the 1987 Young Soloist Competition. In addition, he has won numerous other awards, including the Milton W. King Memorial Certificate, the Presser Scholar Award, and the International Clarinetist Competition (both in 1986 and 1987). Bryla is currently the principal clarinetist of the National Gallery Orchestra, the Alexandria Symphony, and the East Wind Consort.

PHILIP C. MUNDS

Philip C. Munds occupies the chair of assistant principal French horn in the Baltimore Symphony. A native of Napa, California, and a graduate of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, he performed with the San Francisco Symphony and as principal hornist of the Santa Cruz, Modesto, and Berkeley, California, symphony orchestras. From 1989 to 1997 he was associate principal horn of the United States Air Force Band. He has also played with the National Gallery Orchestra, the Richmond Symphony, and the Alexandria Symphony.

DANNY K. PHIPPS

Retired Senior Master Sergeant Danny K. Phipps was the principal bassoonist with the United States Air Force Concert Band at Bolling Air Force Base for twenty years. A graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, Phipps received the master of music and doctor of musical arts degrees from the Catholic University of America. Currently an active performer and teacher in the Baltimore/Washington area, he is the principal bassoonist with the National Gallery Orchestra and the National Gallery Chamber Players as well as the Annapolis Chamber Orchestra. He is the instrumental division chairman and professor of bassoon and bassoon literature at Shenandoah University, where he has been a faculty member since 1987.

JEFFREY CHAPPELL

Pianist Jeffrey Chappell has performed throughout the United States, Europe, Asia, and Latin America in recital, as a chamber musician, and as a soloist with major symphony orchestras. He attended the Curtis Institute and the Peabody Conservatory of Music and is currently on the faculties of Goucher College and the Levine School of Music. Chappell appears at the National Gallery by arrangement with CHL Artists of Beverly Hills, California.

Program Notes

All three quintets of Franz Danzi's *Op. 56* reveal his effectiveness in blending the unusual sound of five woodwind instruments in a composition that is spiced with judicious harmonic hues. Intrinsic to the works are such notable qualities as craftsmanship, pleasant idiomatic melodies, and a conservative formulaic approach to the quintet genre. Danzi's harmonic language was mildly adventurous at the outset of his career, with unexpected cross-relations and diminished sonorities resulting from chromatic part-writing and a fondness for starting movements away from the tonic key. This combination of harmonic adventurousness with a rigid, classical approach to traditional forms was a hallmark of the emerging romantic style, to which Danzi made a modest contribution at the outset of the nineteenth century. The *Quintet, Op. 56, No. 1*, is dedicated to Danzi's colleague, Anton Reicha (1770–1836), a teacher of both Berlioz and Liszt, who also composed numerous wind quintets between the years 1810 and 1820.

Darius Milhaud's *La cheminée du Roi René* (*The Chimney of King René*) was originally intended to be incidental music to a film entitled *Cavalcade d'amour*. The film was a failure and never reached production, but fortunately Milhaud withdrew the score and rewrote it as a suite of seven movements for woodwind quintet. Milhaud's intimate knowledge of medieval songs and dances enabled him to pay appropriate homage to his birthplace, Aix-en-Provence, a medieval town in the South of France and the seat of King René (1409–1480), a popular and much revered monarch. The title of the work is derived from the nickname of the king's favorite resting place in the town, a spot called "the king's chimney" that was known for its warmth. Milhaud chose the title for each movement with equal care and subtlety: *Cortège* (Retinue or Procession): the steady beat is meant to call to mind the king's soldiers

as they march; *Aubade* (Morning Serenade); *Jongleurs* (Jugglers): a common sight in medieval towns, especially when the king and his court were present; *La Maousinglade*: the section of Provence where Milhaud's home was located—the name literally means “badly arranged”; *Joutes sur l'Arc* (Jousts on the Arc): the Arc, a tiny river close to Aix-en-Provence and the site of Cézanne's famous *Baigneuses*. Jousts were nautical tourneys that took place on the river in medieval times; *Chasse à Valabre* (Hunting at Valabre): Valabre is a small castle near Aix-en-Provence where King René usually attended hunting parties; and *Madrigal-Nocturne*: a poetic reverie combining the seemingly contradictory characteristics of a madrigal and a nocturne.

Albert Roussel wrote *Divertissement, Op. 6*, during his tenure as a professor of counterpoint at the Schola Cantorum in Paris (1902–1914). It is one of a number of Roussel's works that were influenced by the music of his teacher, Vincent d'Indy, who had founded the Schola in 1894. A man ahead of his time, Roussel employed exotic rhythms and unconventional combinations of instruments. An example is the addition of the piano to the established wind quintet in his *Divertissement*. Melodically and harmonically, this early work was too modern and unsettling for the Schola Cantorum, but it did provide a window of future expectation for French music. Edward Hoornaert, in *The Music of Albert Roussel*, writes: “This music [*Divertissement*] is generally cheerful, rhythmic in a cocky sort of way, transparently scored, and above all unpretentious. [These are] traits that defined much of his chamber music in the years to come.”

Summerland, by William Grant Still, is the second of three pieces in a suite for piano entitled *Three Visions*. The title *Summerland*, according to Still's wife, Verna Arvey, comes from the name for the peaceful heaven of the spiritualists. It is a work of serene beauty, suggesting the quality of life presumed to be found in the hereafter. The composer

arranged *Summerland* for both small and full orchestra. Since his death, the work has also been arranged for violin, flute, viola, cello, and harp, and most recently by Adam Les Lesnick for wind quintet.

The keyboard works of Johann Sebastian Bach have invited transcription almost from the moment they were published, since they present so many contrasting textures. Among the most famous transcriptions are those of Bach himself. Other composers who could not resist the impulse to transcribe Bach's keyboard works include Franz Liszt, Ferruccio Busoni, Leopold Stokowski, Arnold Schoenberg, and Ward Swingle, founder of the Swingle Singers. In every case, the transcriber and the performers face a number of challenges. Bach regularly exploited the full range of the keyboard instruments of his time, a range much larger than that of any other single instrument. As a result, a single line of counterpoint is often passed from one instrument to another, or even to a third, before it comes to rest. Some phrases from the keyboard works are so long that they exceed the breath capacity of a wind player, necessitating further adjustments. Nevertheless, the result of a knowledgeable transcription coupled with a skillful performance is always satisfying, since Bach was one of the great masters of “absolute” music—music that transcends the medium for which it was originally written. In the case of the preludes and fugues of *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, that original instrument is presumed to have been the clavi-chord; in the case of the *Fugue in G Minor, BWV 578*, it is the organ. The fugue bears the nickname “Little” to distinguish it from a longer Bach organ fugue in the same key.

Poulenc's *Sextet* for wind quintet and piano is one of his most popular chamber works. Poulenc was initially unsatisfied with the sextet, which occupied him off and on between 1930 and 1932. The urge to improve the quality of the work led him to rewrite it seven years later. The 1939 version proved to be a revelation, particularly for the wind instruments, as it reflects his penchant for tonal grandeur. According to Poulenc's biographer, Henri Hell, "This sextet is marvelously written for the wind instruments it uses. Each of them plays its part with airy perfection in its most favorable register, where its voice is most comfortable, most effective, and most expressive. From the point of view of technique alone, the Sextet is a success of rare quality." In addition, the idiomatic piano part highlights the keyboard mastery of the composer, who was known to be a skillful pianist. A three-movement work, the Sextet has two robust outer movements (*Allegro vivace* and *Finale: Prestissimo*). The bewitching center movement (*Divertissement: Andantino*) is tinged with a hint of Mozart.

Program notes by Elmer Booze