



The Sixty-third Season of
The William Nelson Cromwell and F. Lamot Belin
Concerts

National Gallery of Art
2,503rd Concert

National Gallery Orchestra
Angel Gil-Ordóñez, guest conductor

October 3, 2004
Sunday Evening, 6:30 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

For the convenience of concertgoers
the Garden Café remains open until 6:00 pm.

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.

Please note that concerts now begin at 6:30 pm.
Late entry or reentry after 6:30 pm is not permitted.

2,503rd Concert
October 3, 2004, 6:30 pm

Franz Schubert (1797–1828)
Overture in B-flat Major, D. 470 (1816)

Antonin Dvořák (1841–1904)
Serenade for Strings in E Major, Op. 22 (1875)

Moderato
Tempo di valse
Scherzo
Larghetto
Finale

Intermission

Dvořák
Czech Suite, Op. 39 (1879)
Preludium (Pastorale)
Polka
Minuetto
Romance
Finale (Furiant)

The Musicians

NATIONAL GALLERY ORCHESTRA

The National Gallery Orchestra was founded in 1943 and initially consisted of approximately twenty-five players who were also members of the National Symphony. Gradually growing in numbers, it eventually reached the size and status of a symphony orchestra. The ensemble undertakes the full range of chamber and symphonic repertoire and has frequently presented first performances of works by American composers, most notably the 1953 premiere of Charles Ives' *First Symphony* under the direction of Richard Bales.

ANGEL GIL-ORDÓÑEZ

Angel Gil-Ordóñez has attained an outstanding reputation among Spain's new generation of conductors as he carries on the tradition of his teacher and mentor, Sergiu Celibadache. The *Washington Post* has praised his conducting, calling it "mesmerizing" and "as colorfully textured as a fauvist painting." Born in Madrid, Gil-Ordóñez is the former associate conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra of Spain and has conducted symphonic music, opera, and ballet throughout Europe, the United States, and Latin America. He has appeared with the American Composers Orchestra, Opera Colorado, the Pacific Symphony, the Hartford Symphony, and the Brooklyn Philharmonic at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. Outside the United States, he has been heard with the Munich Philharmonic, the Solistes de Berne, and at the Bellas Artes National Theatre in Mexico City. In 2000 he toured the major music festivals of Spain with the Valencia Symphony Orchestra in the Spanish premiere of Leonard Bernstein's *Mass*.

A specialist in the Spanish repertoire, Gil-Ordóñez has recorded four CDs devoted to Spanish composers with the Radio and Television Symphony Orchestra of Spain, the Madrid Symphony Orchestra, the Galicia Symphony Orchestra, and the Camara XXI Chamber Orchestra. He worked closely with Sergiu Celibadache for more than six years in Germany and studied with Pierre Boulez and Iannis Xenakis in France. Currently the music director of the Post-Classical Ensemble in Washington, D.C., Angel Gil-Ordóñez also holds the position of director of orchestral studies at Wesleyan University in Connecticut and that of music director of the Wesleyan Ensemble of the Americas.

Program Notes

On May 1, 2004, the musical world noted the centennial of the death of Antonin Dvořák. No study of this composer's music would be complete without reference to the music of Franz Schubert, which Dvořák held in special esteem. In fact, Dvořák considered himself Schubert's musical successor in the ranks of European composers. Maestro Gil-Ordóñez has chosen to begin this concert, otherwise devoted to the works of Dvořák, with an overture of Schubert that shows the composer at his sophisticated best, even though it was written in 1816, before he had reached the age of twenty. 1816 was the year in which one of Schubert's friends and patrons, Josef Witteczek, began presenting concerts on a regular basis in his home, where Schubert had taken up temporary lodgings. A favorite medium for performance at these events was the cantata for solo voices and small orchestra, and Witteczek had commissioned cantatas from Schubert on several occasions. The *Overture, D. 470*, is thought to be the opening movement from one of those cantatas, for which the rest of the music was either never written or subsequently lost. The popularity of Witteczek's house concerts, and the fact that he relied heavily on Schubert to provide the music for them, resulted in the coining of a new word in the parlance of Viennese music lovers: *Schubertiade*.

Antonin Dvořák was born into a working-class family, and his life was marked by financial struggle well into his thirties. He was thirty-three years old when he wrote the *Serenade for Strings, Op. 22*. It was accepted for publication by Bote and Bock in Berlin, but because Dvořák was still relatively unknown, the fees he received from his publishers were very small. He still relied on private piano and voice instruction and on playing the organ in Saint Adalbert's Church in Prague to make ends meet. A source

of aid to which he turned was a newly formed scholarship program called the Austrian State Stipendium, established to help poor but talented musicians and artists. One of the judges on the panel that reviewed compositions for this program was Johannes Brahms. Much more valuable to Dvořák than the small stipend he received was the praise his work elicited from the great German composer, who came to hold his younger Czech colleague in high esteem and furthered his career in a number of ways.

Dvořák's *Czech Suite, Op. 39*, shows that he learned much about writing symphonic music from Brahms, while also finding a unique voice in the folk song and dance heritage of his homeland. He originally intended to write a triptych from a series of his orchestral serenades, but abandoned the idea and instead wrote five dance pieces to form a suite. The full title, *Czech Suite*, was incorporated for the premiere performance, held in 1879 at the Academy of the Association of Czech Journalists at the New Prague Theater and conducted by Adolf Čech. The dance that inspired the final movement, the *furiant*, is a dance of Bohemian origin that alternates rapidly between $\frac{3}{4}$ and $\frac{2}{4}$ meters. Dvořák used this dance form again in the final movement of his *Symphony No. 6 in D Major, Op. 60*, and in several of his works for solo piano.

Program notes by Stephen Ackert