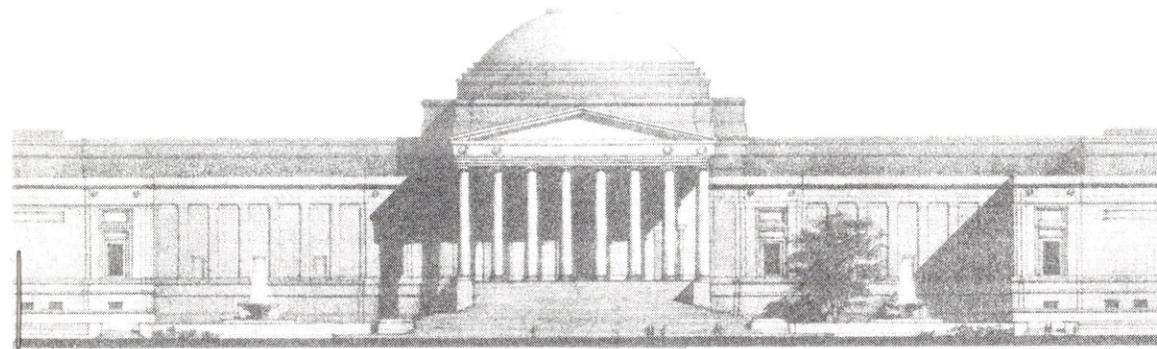


The use of cameras or recording equipment during the performance is not allowed. Please be sure that cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices are turned off.

Please note that late entry or reentry of the West Building after 6:30 pm is not permitted.



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

National Gallery of Art
2,732nd Concert

National Gallery Piano Trio
Luke Wedge, *violin*
Benjamin R. Wensel, *cello*
Danielle DeSwert Hahn, *piano*
with
Vilmos Szabadi, *violin*
Szilvia Kovács, *viola*

June 14, 2009
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

Program

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906–1975)

Trio no. 2 in E Minor for Piano, Violin, and Cello, op. 67 (1944)

Andante; Moderato

Allegro non troppo

Largo

Allegretto

László Weiner (1916–1944)

Duo for Violin and Viola

Moderato

Allegro vivace

Lento

Allegro molto

INTERMISSION

Ernst von Dohnányi (1877–1960)

Piano Quintet no. 1 in C Minor, op. 1 (1895)

Allegro

Scherzo: Allegro vivace

Adagio, quasi andante

Finale: Allegro animato

The Musicians

LUKE WEDGE

Luke Wedge received a master of music degree in violin performance from Northwestern University and a bachelor of music degree in English Literature from the University of Kansas. His principal instructors included David Perry, Gerardo Ribeiro, and Ben Sayevich. Wedge has made solo and recital appearances in Chicago; Lawrence, Kansas; and Washington, DC. He is an experienced orchestral musician and has been engaged by the National Gallery Orchestra, the National Symphony, and the Ravinia Festival, among others. He is a member of the United States Air Force Strings and, since 2003, has been a member of the Covington String Quartet, which was the quartet-in-residence at Gettysburg College in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania from 2003–2006.

BENJAMIN R. WENSEL

Benjamin R. Wensel holds degrees from the Cleveland Institute of Music and Eastman School of Music. He has performed in seminars and master classes for members of the Cleveland, Guarneri, Juilliard, Miami, and Ying quartets; studied chamber music with Peter Salaff and members of the Audubon and Cavani Quartets; and participated in solo master classes with Clemens Michael Hagen, Steven Isserlis, and Michel Strauss.

Wensel has performed with the National Symphony Orchestra, the ProMusica Chamber Orchestra, the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Syracuse Symphony as well as with many fine local ensembles. A founding member of the Tarab Cello Ensemble, Wensel performed in the premieres of more than twenty new works written by established and emerging American composers, and participated in the ensemble's residencies at Princeton University, Stetson University, and the University of South Florida. He taught chamber music and maintained a studio at

the Hochstein School of Music in Rochester, New York, where he was the cellist of the Hochstein String Quartet. Currently a member of the faculty at the Washington Conservatory, Wensel maintains a private studio in Arlington, Virginia, and plays with the newly formed Messaien Quartet as well as the National Gallery Piano Trio. He can be heard on recordings produced by the Bridge, Harmonia Mundi, and Summit record labels.

DANIELLE DESWERT HAHN

Brussels-born pianist Danielle DeSwert Hahn is a freelance collaborative pianist and coach and the music program specialist at the National Gallery of Art. She has worked as a pianist and coach with the Ash Lawn Highland Opera Festival, Chautauqua Opera, Indianapolis Opera, Kentucky Opera, the New Orleans Opera Association, Portland (Oregon) Opera, the San Francisco Opera Center, Sarasota Opera, and the Washington National Opera. From 2004–2006 she was the principal repetiteur with the Baltimore Opera Company and Washington Concert Opera.

She performs regularly in chamber music and voice recitals, including performances at the Arts Club of Washington, the Jewish Community Center of Greater Washington, the Kennedy Center, the Mexican Institute of Culture, the National Gallery, the Russian Embassy, and the White House. She is principal pianist with the Inscape Chamber Music Project. She holds a master of music degree from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, where she studied with Martin Katz, and a bachelor of music degree from the University of California, Santa Barbara. She also studied with Warren Jones and Anne Epperson at the Music Academy of the West and was an apprentice coach with the Washington Opera, working with Plácido Domingo.

VILMOS SZABADI

Award-winning Hungarian violinist Vilmos Szabadi has enjoyed a successful international performing career since 1988, when he was invited by Sir Georg Solti to play Bartók's Second Violin Concerto during a Bartók Festival at Royal Festival Hall in London. The success of that concert led to invitations from the BBC Philharmonic, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, and the RTÉ Concert Orchestra in Dublin. Szabadi was among the musicians invited by Prince Charles to perform at the 1992 Buckingham Palace celebration of Solti's eightieth birthday. Szabadi studied under Ferenc Halász at the Franz Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest, and later continued his studies with Sándor Végh, Ruggiero Ricci, and Loránt Fenyves. In 1982 he won first prize with special mention in the Hungarian Radio Violin Competition and in 1983 he received equivalent honors in the Jenő Hubay competition in Budapest.

Szabadi plays an instrument on loan from the Hungarian state collection—a Laurentius Storioni violin made in Cremona in 1778. In 1995 Szabadi established a chamber music festival in Keszthely, Hungary, which has since been relocated to the baroque palace at Godollo near Budapest. In 1999 he cofounded the Vienna Belvedere Trio with artists from the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra.

SZILVIA KOVÁCS

Born in 1987, violist Szilvia Kovács is the 2008 winner of the National String Competition in Hungary. She has been appointed co-section leader in the Pannon Philharmonic, and has toured Germany, Poland, and Romania as a quartet member with Vilmos Szabadi. She is currently in her final year at Pécs Music Academy.

Program Notes

Dmitri Shostakovich's *Trio no. 2 for Piano, Violin, and Cello*, dedicated to the memory of his great friend and mentor, musicologist Ivan Sollertinsky, is perhaps his most deeply felt composition. Sollertinsky died in February 1944, just a few months after he had given the radio address for Moscow's fiftieth anniversary observation of the death of Tchaikovsky. Composed during a troubled, war-ridden time in Russia, the trio is pervaded by a profound sense of grief, but is still a masterful example of formal invention, making a purely classical form sound distinctly modern.

The trio opens with high cello harmonics, creating a stark, almost eerie landscape. The violin joins in, muted, and is followed by the piano in a dark and mysterious continuation of the canon. The pace increases to *moderato* and the second theme grows out of the first, becoming increasingly more agitated through the development section, and dying out in the end. In the sardonic scherzo and trio of the second movement, we hear heavy dance-like rhythms and a mock waltz, which sound somewhat joyful, but are tinged with dissonances that render the dance more sarcastic than happy. It is in the third movement that the depth of the sadness is most felt, and it is particularly poignant following the slightly wild second movement. The hauntingly tragic melody placed above a series of monochromatic chords is a modern realization of the *passacaglia*, a form used by Shostakovich in his *Symphony no. 8* and again later in his first violin concerto.

There is no break between the third and fourth movements, and in some ways the third acts as an introduction to the scope of the tragedy that is to unfold in the final movement. March-like and relentlessly rhythmic, this movement is Shostakovich's forum for protesting the horrors of World War II. He was deeply affected by the atrocities and persecution committed against Jews during the war, and in this movement he incorporated for the first time traditional Jewish music. In this instance, the choice was inspired by events that occurred at Treblinka concentration camp, and the folk-dance theme he used is his own manifestation of the death-dance the prisoners were forced to do before being executed.

The name of László Weiner (1916–1944) is known to the world primarily due to the efforts of his former wife, the world-famous singer and teacher Vera Rózsa, who settled in Great Britain after World War II and actively promoted her late husband's music. Like many musicians, Weiner showed his talent early in childhood. At age eighteen, he entered Zoltán Kodály's composition class and studied conducting under Jenő Adám and Ernő Unger. He was a splendid pianist, often appearing in concerts, chiefly as an accompanist. He pursued his studies at the Budapest Academy of Music between 1934 and 1940. His career, however, never flourished, since the anti-Jewish laws permitted only restricted appearances, mostly through the actions of OMIKE (the National Hungarian Israelite Cultural Society). Despite his youth and isolation, news of his talent spread, and, surprisingly, the Hungarian Ministry of Religion and Public Education awarded him a prize for his *Sonata for Viola and Piano* in 1942.

Weiner's four-movement *Duo* is dedicated to his good friends Viktor Ajtay (who later became the concertmaster of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra) and Pál Lukács, (a violist who was the source of inspiration for the greater part of Weiner's surviving works). Although the movements do not carry individual titles, they follow the order of classical sonata—an opening *Allegro*; a *Scherzo*; a slow, doleful third movement; and a sparkling finale, brimming with life.

Ernst von Dohnányi (born Ernő, but he used the Germanic spelling for most of his published works) began his musical career, like many nineteenth- and early twentieth-century composers, as a virtuoso pianist. He began his studies with his father, but soon moved on to the Royal Academy of Music in Budapest, studying both piano and composition. His first symphony was performed there in 1897. He toured successfully as a pianist throughout Europe and eventually the United States, taught at the Berlin Academy of Music from 1908–1915, and was for a time the conductor of the Budapest Philharmonic Orchestra. He composed for every genre, including symphonic music, concerti, choral music, and even a few operas, but he was most prolific creating chamber music and works for solo piano.

Despite the fact that his classmates and contemporaries included Bartók and Kodály, two composers who made nationalism their stylistic mission, Dohnányi bypassed the doctrine by and large. Heavily influenced by Brahms—to the point of blatant imitation—Dohnányi was a romantic composer through and through. One does hear the occasional Hungarian melody or folk element emerge, but he intentionally wrote works in the romantic style. His *Quintet no. 1 in C Minor*, op. 1, was endorsed by Brahms, who promoted the work in Vienna. Employing only formal and harmonic devices from the existing romantic style and staying within the standard four-movement sonata form, Dohnányi produced with his first quintet an original and substantive composition. The piano's anguished first theme in the opening movement leads into an emotionally lush second theme, highlighted in the strings. The syncopated *Scherzo* and lilting *Trio* could stand up next to any similar movement written by Brahms, and the slow third movement is a beautiful, uplifting moment. The closing *Allegro animato* is vigorous and varied. Mostly in rhythmically forceful 5/4 time, it is interrupted in the middle by a five-voice fugue, and ends with a second statement of the initial theme of the first movement, bringing the entire work full circle.

Notes on Shostakovich and Dohnányi by Danielle DeSwert Hahn

Notes on Weiner by Vilmos Szabadi

Next week at the National Gallery of Art

Tara Kamangar, *pianist*

Music by Hossein, Khaleghi, Prokofiev, and other composers

June 21, 2009

Sunday Evening, 6:30 pm

West Building, West Garden Court