

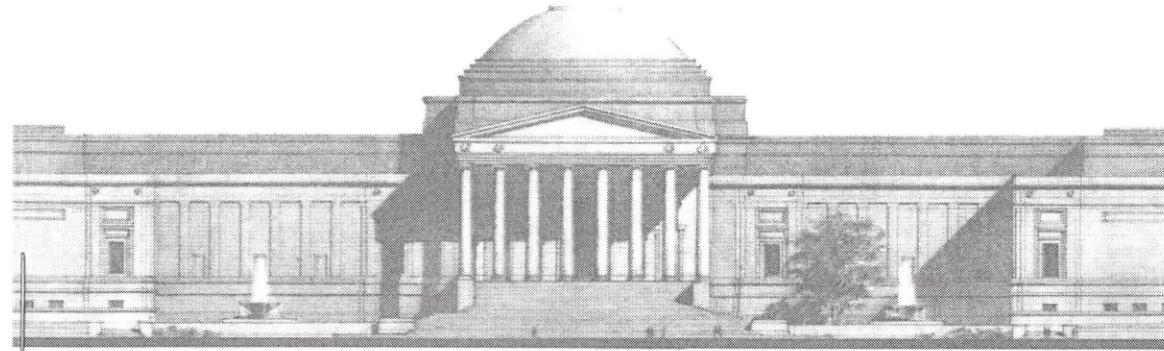
The use of cameras or recording equipment during the performance is not allowed. Please be sure that cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices are turned off.

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

For the convenience of concertgoers, the Garden Café remains open for light refreshments until 6:00 pm on Sundays.

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

www.nga.gov



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

National Gallery of Art
2,824th Concert

Marcus Thompson, viola
Judith Gordon, piano

Presented in honor of African-American History Month

February 13, 2011
Sunday Evening, 6:30 pm
West Building, West Garden Court

Admission free

Program

Performed without intermission

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

Sonata in G Major, BWV 1027 (1720)

Adagio

Allegro ma non tanto

Andante

Allegro moderato

Robert Schumann (1810–1856)

Märchenbilder, op. 113 (1851)

Nicht schnell

Lebhaft

Rasch

Langsam, mit melancholischem Ausdruck

James Lee III (b. 1975)

Sonata for Viola and Piano (2010)

Tranquillo

Cantabile espressivo

Giocoso

Gheorghe Enescu (1881–1955)

Concertpiece (1906)

The Musicians

MARCUS THOMPSON

Since his highly acclaimed New York recital debut in the Young Concert Artists series, violist Marcus Thompson has enjoyed a long and remarkable career and has been hailed for his authentic style, facility, and embellishments. He has appeared as soloist with the Boston Pops, the Chicago Sinfonietta, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Cleveland Orchestra, the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, and the National Symphony Orchestra. As a recitalist, he has performed at Carnegie Hall, the Herbst Theater in San Francisco, the Kennedy Center's Terrace Theater, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and Orchestra Hall in Minneapolis. He performs regularly at chamber music festivals in Amsterdam, Los Angeles, Seattle, and Sitka, and as a guest of the Audubon, Cleveland, Emerson, and Vermeer Quartets. In a recent concert, he performed the complete Bach Sonatas for viola da gamba and harpsichord at Boston's Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum to mark the thirtieth anniversary of his Boston debut recital. A long-standing member of the Boston Chamber Music Society, Thompson was appointed its artistic director in 2008.

Thompson has been heard frequently in broadcasts of *CBS Sunday Morning*, National Public Radio's *Fresh Air*, *Live From Lincoln Center*, and American Public Media's *Performance Today*. He has also recorded Frank Martin's *Sonata da chiesa* for viola d'amore and string orchestra—named by *Stereo Review* as "Recording of Special Merit," concertos by Paul Hindemith and Anthony Newman, and Ernest Bloch's *Suite for Viola and Orchestra*.

Thompson's repertoire includes numerous works created for him as a result of commission grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and other organizations. His performance of the United States premiere of György Ligeti's *LOOP* for solo viola received praise from the composer and critics alike. Thompson has played premieres of works by William Thomas McKinley and Roger Bourland with the New Music Ensemble of Pittsburgh and *Bridge of Light* by noted jazz pianist and composer Keith Jarrett with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. His appearance with the Anchorage Symphony featured Joseph Jongen's rarely heard *Suite for Orchestra and Viola*.

Born and raised in the South Bronx, Thompson studied both viola and viola d'amore at The Juilliard School with Walter Trampler, earning that institution's first doctoral degree in viola performance. Currently making his home just outside Boston, he serves on the viola faculty at New England Conservatory of Music and as professor of music at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he holds the first Robert R. Taylor Chair. Marcus Thompson appears at the National Gallery by arrangement with Joanne Rile Artist Management of Jenkintown, Pennsylvania.

JUDITH GORDON

Pianist Judith Gordon gave her New York recital debut at the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Introductions series. She has been heard as soloist with the Boston Pops, the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, the Civic Symphony of Boston, and the ProArte Chamber Orchestra. Her colleagues in recital and chamber music performances have included violinists Rose Mary Harbison and Andrew Kohji Taylor; violists James Dunham, Cynthia Phelps, and Marcus Thompson; cellists Andres Diaz, Yo-Yo Ma, and Rhonda Rider; vocalists Lorraine Hunt Lieberson, James Maddalena, and Lisa Saffer; the Borromeo and Lydian String Quartets; and members of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Gordon has been featured in concerts and on recordings with Essential Music, Boston Musica Viva, and Collage New Music, and has participated in the Charlottesville, Rockport, Santa Fe, Spoleto, and Token Creek music festivals. A graduate of the New England Conservatory of Music, in 1996 Judith Gordon was named classical musician of the year by *The Boston Globe*.

Program Notes

Johann Sebastian Bach's *Sonata in G Major*, BWV 1027, was the first of three that he wrote for viola da gamba and harpsichord. He later transcribed the work for two flutes and basso continuo (BWV 1039). It features three imitative voices, braided together as a trio sonata, the most common form of chamber music of the late baroque era. The transcription for the modern viola (or viola di braccio) and piano preserves the same three lines, assigning two of them to the piano. Bach's genius is amply demonstrated in this sonata, as he combines beautiful melodies and motifs interchangeably in high, medium, and low registers and presents them in contrapuntal variations such as inversion, augmentation, and diminution.

Originally written for viola and piano, Robert Schumann's *Märchenbilder* (Fairytale Pictures) are among a number of poetic miniatures for various solo instruments and piano that he composed between 1849 and 1851 as *Hausmusik*—music intended to be played at home. Common to these pieces is the sense of literary narrative, the passing of brief ideas between instrument and piano in dialogue, and the building of texture from layers of color. Each of the four *Märchenbilder* evokes a different scene or mood, but they are unified by their close key relationships—D minor, F major, D minor, D major. The faster movements are placed between the two slower movements, allowing the set to open and close in repose.

Commissioned by Marcus Thompson, James Lee's *Sonata for Viola and Piano* was completed in 2010. The first movement is loosely based on the thirteenth chapter of the *Book of Revelation*, in which two beasts arise, one from the sea and the other from the land. The viola opens with a rising figure that is also integrated within the fabric of the piano writing. The music conveys the aggressive nature of the two beasts. The second movement (*Cantabile espressivo*) is an emotionally charged retrospective of the first movement, in which the melodic material continues to develop until it

modulates to the key of C-sharp minor. The last movement (*Giocosò*) is a rhapsodic rondo. Marked by intense rhythmic activity in both instruments, this movement surges forward in perpetual motion to its conclusion.

Gheorghe Enescu composed his *Concertpiece* in 1906 for use in competition at the Paris Conservatory, where he served on the jury. Born in Romania and a life-long champion of Romanian folk traditions, Enescu was hailed as an extraordinarily gifted performer on the violin and piano at an early age. He was known to have had a far-ranging repertoire and expertise in the musical canon from the music of Bach to that of his own time. Among his many students were violinists Yehudi Menuhin and Arthur Grumiaux.

Program notes based on material provided by Joanne Rile Artists Management and James Lee III.

Next Week at the National Gallery of Art

William Chapman Nyaho, pianist

Music of the African Diaspora

Presented in honor of African-American History Month

February 16, 2011

Wednesday, 12:10 pm

East Building Auditorium



Vivaldi Project

Music by Vivaldi and other Venetian composers

Presented in honor of *Venice: Canaletto and His Rivals*

February 20, 2011

Sunday Evening, 6:30 pm

West Building, West Garden Court