

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 East 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

COVER: Aleksandr Mikhailovich Rodchenko, *Untitled* (detail), 1919, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of the Collectors Committee



The Seventieth Season of
The William Nelson Cromwell
and F. Lamot Belin

Concerts

National Gallery of Art
2,848th Concert

National Gallery of Art Orchestra
Saint Petersburg Symphony Orchestra
Alexander Titov, *conductor*
Xiayin Wang, *pianist*

October 9, 2011
Sunday, 6:30 pm
East Building Atrium

Admission free

The National Gallery of Art extends special thanks to
the Washington Conservatory of Music of Bethesda, Maryland,
for in-kind assistance that has made this concert possible.

Program

Leonard Bernstein (1918–1990)
Overture to *Candide* (1956)

Sergey Prokofiev (1891–1953)
Piano Concerto no. 3 in C Major, op. 26 (1913–1921)
Andante; allegro
Tema con variazioni
Allegro, ma non troppo

INTERMISSION

Modest Mussorgsky (1839–1881)
Kartinki s vīstavki (Pictures from an Exhibition) (1874)
Promenade
The Gnome [Gnomus]
Promenade
The Old Castle [Il vecchio castello]
Promenade
Dispute between children at play [Tuileries]
The Ox-Cart [Bydlo]
Promenade
Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks
Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuyle
Promenade
The Market at Limoges [Limoges, le marché]
The Catacombs [Sepulchrum Romanum]
Cum mortuis in lingua mortua
Baba-Yaga [The Hut on Hen's Legs]
The Great Gate of Kiev

The Musicians

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ORCHESTRA

The National Gallery of Art Orchestra was founded in 1943 and initially consisted of approximately twenty-five players drawn from the National Symphony Orchestra. Gradually growing in numbers, the Gallery orchestra eventually reached the size and status of a large chamber orchestra. The ensemble has undertaken 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' *Symphony no. 1* under the direction of Richard Bales; the 1990 premiere of Daniel Pinkham's *Symphony no. 4* under George Manos; and the 2007 premiere of John Musto's *Later the Same Evening: An opera inspired by five paintings of Edward Hopper*, under guest conductor Glen Cortese. Other guest conductors who have appeared with the orchestra in recent years include Bjarte Engeset, Vladimir Lande, George Mester, Otto-Werner Mueller, and José Serebrier.

SAINT PETERSBURG SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Founded in 1967 by three masters of the Leningrad conducting school, the Saint Petersburg State Academic Symphony Orchestra, was dubbed early in its history the "Orchestra of Ancient and Modern Music." The founders—Karl Eliasberg, Edward Grikurov, and Nikolai Rabinovich—departed from the established practice of other Soviet orchestras in that the ensemble specialized in performing seldom-played works, music from various musical styles and nations other than Russia, and music of living composers. In the 1970s, under the baton of conductor Edward Serov, the orchestra traveled to hundreds of cities of the Soviet Union, recorded dozens of LPs for the Melodiya label, participated in prestigious festivals, and firmly took its place as Leningrad's third orchestra, after the city's two famous philharmonic orchestras, the Saint Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra and the Mariinsky Orchestra.

Since 1988 the orchestra has been instrumental in reviving concerts in the Mirror Hall in the famous Princes Beloselsky-Belozersky Palace in the heart of Saint Petersburg, where it now concertizes regularly. Under the baton of Alexander Titov, artistic director and chief conductor since 2007, the Saint Petersburg Symphony Orchestra launched a series of CD recordings of works by Russian composers created during the Great Patriotic War of 1941–1945. In 2008 Vladimir Lande became the orchestra's principal guest conductor.

ALEXANDER TITOV

A prize winner at the 1988 International Conductors' Competition in Tokyo, Alexander Titov holds the title of Honorable Artist of the Russian Federation. In addition to conducting the Saint Petersburg Symphony Orchestra, he is guest conductor of the Mariinsky Theater in Saint Petersburg and conductor of the Bolshoi Theater in Moscow, and guest conductor of the BBC Scotland Orchestra. He has appeared as guest conductor in China, Columbia, Finland, Germany, Holland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States. He has conducted the BBC's London and Scotland orchestras, at La Scala (Milan), La Fenice (Venice), the Metropolitan Opera (New York), Covent Garden (London), and the San Francisco Opera.

Since 1987 Titov has been a teacher of operatic and symphonic conducting at the Saint Petersburg Conservatory. He is the author of numerous publications, including the articles "Piano Music from 1914 to 1927" and "Piano Music of Arthur Lurie" and many annotations for compact discs. For his work as an opera conductor in the theatrical seasons 2000–2001 and 2001–2002, he was awarded the Gold Soffit, St. Petersburg's top theatrical prize, and the Gold Mask prize. A regular participant in the international festivals "Stars of White Nights" and "From Avant-garde to Our Days" as well as the Mariinsky Ballet Festival and the Petersburg Musical Spring, Titov has recorded over eighty compact discs.

XIAYIN WANG

Appearing at the National Gallery fresh from her September 2011 London recital debut at Cadogan Hall, pianist Xiayin Wang has achieved a high level of recognition for her commanding performances. In the 2010–2011 season, she was heard in concert at Lincoln Center’s Alice Tully Hall with the Fine Arts Quartet, earning praise from Allan Kozinn of *The New York Times*, who wrote, “Ms. Wang proved an ideal chamber player. . . . She gave nuanced, spirited, crisply articulated and occasionally assertive readings.” Wang returned to Alice Tully Hall in May 2011 for a solo recital, and in June appeared in Vienna’s Mozart-Saal, performing Richard Danielpour’s *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra No. 4* with the Vienna Chamber Orchestra under the baton of Philippe Entremont.

In 2010 Wang released a recording of the piano music of Earl Wild, including his celebrated Gershwin arrangements, on the Chandos label. The recording was welcomed by journalist Scott Noriega, who wrote: “[Wild’s pieces] require the type of pianistic abilities that he himself possessed. . . . Thankfully, pianist Xiayin Wang brings with her these qualities and then some” (*Fanfare*). Wang’s other CD releases include a disc of Franck and Strauss sonatas with violinist Catherine Manoukian; “*The Enchanted Garden*,” *Preludes Books I and II*, by Richard Danielpour; solo piano works by Bach, Gershwin, Mozart, Ravel, and Scriabin; and a highly praised recording of Brahms’ quartets for piano and strings with the Amity Players. Xiayin Wang appears at the National Gallery courtesy of International Performing Artists.

Program Notes

Leonard Bernstein’s *Candide* is a comic operetta based on the eponymous work by *Voltaire*. Intended as a hybrid between opera and musical theater, *Candide* was a box-office failure when it opened on Broadway in 1956—it closed after only seventy-three performances. In 1959 it made its London premiere, with a few adaptations, and ran for only sixty performances. Beginning in the 1970s, a series of Broadway revivals of *Candide* reached the stage. These adaptations continued to appear intermittently until 2006, when the *Théâtre du Châtelet* in Paris celebrated the operetta’s fiftieth anniversary, with sub-sequent productions in London, Milan, Chicago, and Washington, DC.

Despite lackluster reviews of the operetta’s initial performances, the overture was immediately appreciated and frequently played on the concert stage. Bernstein reorchestrated it and premiered the new version with the *New York Philharmonic Orchestra* in 1957, after which it became an almost instantaneous orchestra and concert band staple. With a feverish excitement that begins with an exuberant fanfare, the work is quick-paced, requiring virtuosic playing from each member of the orchestra.

Of the five piano concertos written by Prokofiev, the third has garnered the most popularity and critical acclaim. The extended process of its composition began in 1913, when the composer wrote a theme with variations for piano and orchestra, which he then set aside. Although he revisited the sketches in 1916 and 1917, he did not fully devote himself to the project until 1921. Prokofiev was the soloist for the premiere on December 16, 1921, with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Frederick Stock. Due to a tepid reception, the concerto had to wait until 1922 to be confirmed in the twentieth-century canon, after Serge Koussevitzky conducted a lavishly praised performance in Paris. The first Soviet performance occurred on March 22, 1925, when Samuel Feinberg played the concerto with the Orchestra of the Theatre of the Revolution under Konstantin Saradzhev.

The concerto radiates a crisp vitality that illustrates Prokofiev's inventive prowess in punctuating lyrical passages with witty dissonances, while maintaining a balanced partnership between the soloist and orchestra. Unlike the examples of piano concertos set by many of Prokofiev's romantic forebears, the orchestra rises above subsidiary accompaniment to collaborate and enter into discourse with the pianist.

The long, lyrical clarinet solo that opens the first movement is a signature feature of the work, as are the difficult passages for the pianist, including a moment halfway through the movement when several lines of octaves, interspersed with close tones either above or below (in a triplet rhythm), move up and down the keyboard, with one hand often on top of the other.

The middle movement is a theme and five variations that presents Prokofiev's slightly sarcastic wit in musical terms. The central idea is stated by the orchestra in a hesitant, piquant gavotte. The first variation is a broad, slow restatement by the piano, beginning with a long trill followed by a glissando-like run up the keyboard. The second variation is presented by the orchestra at a galloping pace, with the piano providing excitement with long runs up and down the keyboard. The third variation is a heavily syncopated deconstruction of the main theme with a lumbering jazzy backbeat. The fourth, possibly the most famous, is a haunting, wandering meditation of the main theme, and the fifth is another allegro romp for soloist and orchestra, starting in a sunny major key but modulating into transitional waters as the main theme is fragmented and thrown into double-time pieces.

The third movement, which Prokofiev referred to as an "argument" between soloist and orchestra, includes the most unabashedly virtuosic section of the concerto, which begins with a restatement of the main theme in the bassoons in C major and repeats the theme against a G-major underpinning in the strings, creating a bitonal effect. The coda explodes into a musical battle between soloist and orchestra, with dazzling piano ornamentation over the orchestra (including famously difficult double-note scales, sometimes approximated by pianists with keyboard glissandos using the knuckles), eventually establishing the ending key of C major and finishing in a flourish with a fortissimo unison C.

Modest Mussorgsky and artist Viktor Hartmann (1834–1873) were introduced to each other sometime around 1870. Devoted to the cause of Russian art, they quickly became close friends. In 1873 Hartmann died suddenly of an aneurism at age thirty-nine. His untimely death devastated Mussorgsky. The following year, art critic Vladimir Stasov arranged a memorial exhibition of Hartmann's work at the Russian Academy of Arts. The paintings that Mussorgsky saw there became the basis for *Kartinki s vystavki*—commonly known in English as *Pictures at an Exhibition*, but more accurately translated *Pictures from an Exhibition*. Touched by the paintings and still mourning the loss of his friend, Mussorgsky completed the entire fifteen-movement suite of musical "pictures" in six weeks. The opening *Promenade* and its recurrences represent the composer meandering through the exhibition from one painting to the next. Sometimes the pace is hurried; at other times it is relaxed and reflective.

Although much material from the 1874 exhibition has been lost, six of the Hartmann works that inspired Mussorgsky still survive. "Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks" refers to a costume sketch that Hartmann created for a ballet titled *Trilby*, which depicts dancers in egg-shaped costumes. Two scenes from Russian Jewish life, *Jew in a Fur Cap*, *Sandomierz* and *Sandomierz Jew* appear to be the source of "Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuyle," and *Paris Catacombs*, a dark, brooding Hartmann painting that includes a silhouette of the artist, has its musical counterpart in "The Catacombs." The movement titled "Baba-Yaga [The Hut on Hen's Legs]" refers to an illustration in the exhibition of a hand-made Russian clock in the shape of a hut on hen's legs, and "The Great Gate of Kiev" refers to Hartmann's architectural drawing for a proposed gate in the walls of that city.

Unpublished until 1886, almost six years after Mussorgsky's death, *Pictures from an Exhibition* was originally written for piano solo; that version has become a showpiece of virtuosity for the concert pianist. It was orchestrated numerous times, most famously in 1922 by Maurice Ravel. In this form it has become a mainstay of orchestral repertoire.

Upcoming Concerts at the National Gallery of Art

From the Top with Host Christopher O'Riley

October 16, 2011
Sunday, 6:30 pm
East Building Auditorium



Hanson-Kong Piano Duo

October 23, 2011
Sunday, 6:30 pm
West Building, West Garden Court