

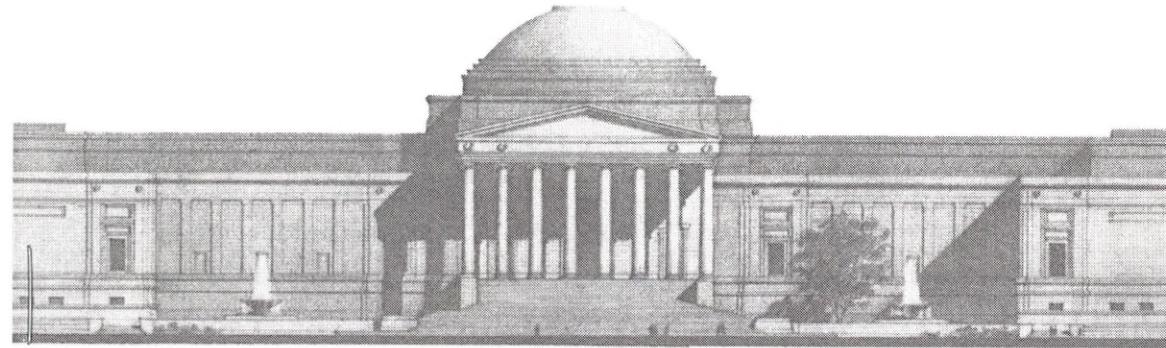
The use of cameras or recording equipment during the performance is not allowed. Please be sure that cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices are turned off.

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

National Gallery of Art
2,851st Concert

Genova and Dimitrov Piano Duo

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

Admission free

Program

Franz Schubert (1797–1828)

Andantino Varié in B Minor, op. 84, no. 1 (1827)

From *Divertissement on French Motives*, D. 823

Anton Arensky (1861–1906)

Suite no. 2, op. 23 (“Silhouettes”) (1892)

Le Savant (The Scholar)

La Coquette (The Coquette)

Polichinelle (The Buffoon)

Le Rêveur (The Dreamer)

La Danseuse (The Dancer)

Franz Liszt (1811–1883)

Symphonic Poem no. 3: Les Préludes (1854)

INTERMISSION

Maurice Ravel (1875–1937)

Rhapsodie espagnole (1907)

Prélude à la nuit

Malagueña

Habanera

Feria

George Gershwin (1898–1937)

Porgy and Bess Fantasy

Arranged for two pianos four hands by Percy Grainger

This concert is made possible by funds provided by the Richard B. and Sarah J. Marsten Charitable Remainder Unitrust.

The Musicians

A prize winner in all the major piano duo competitions, including the ARD Music Competition in Munich, the Bellini Music Competition in Italy, the Dranoff Two Piano Competition in Miami, and the Tokyo Piano Duo Competition, the piano duo Genova and Dimitrov has performed to great public and critical acclaim at major concert halls in Africa, Asia, Europe, and North and South America. Festival appearances include the Al Bustan Music Festival Beirut, Bebersee Music Festival, Brandenburg Summer Festival, Chopin Piano Festival in Duzniki, Gdansk Music Festival, La Roque d'Anthéron Piano Festival, Lower Saxony Music Festival, Music Festival of the Hamptons, Ravello Festival, Sofia Music Weeks, and Woodstock Mozart Festival.

The duo has appeared with the Beijing, New World, Pacific, Savannah, and Stuttgart symphony orchestras, the Cape Town, Durban, Sofia, and Ukrainian National philharmonic orchestras, the Bulgarian National, Bucharest National, Hanover, and Kaiserslautern radio orchestras, and the Polish Chamber Philharmonic Orchestra. Conductors under whose direction the duo has played include Alun Francis, Robin Gritton, Toshiyuki Kamioka, Hannu Lintu, Eiji Oue, Ari Rasilainen, Alexander Rudin, Leoš Svárovský, and Emil Tabakov.

Both pianists were born in Bulgaria of Greek origin, have been playing piano since age five, and made their orchestra debuts at age nine. Since 2008 they have been jointly in charge of the specialized piano duo class at the Hanover State University of Music and Drama. Genova and Dimitrov have released eight CDs, including world premiere recordings of piano duo works by Johann Christian Bach, Robert Casadesus, Muzio Clementi, Dmitri Shostakovich, and the Bulgarian composer Pancho Vladigerov. In 2010 Genova and Dimitrov were appointed artistic directors of the International Dranoff Two Piano Competition in Miami. Genova and Dimitrov appear at the National Gallery by arrangement with Shupp Artists Management, www.shuppartists.com.

Program Notes

Composed in 1827 near the end of his life, Schubert's *Andantino Varié in B Minor* is a set of variations for piano four hands that shows his mastery of the variation form. Marked by its emotional and compositional maturity, the work begins with a simple melody followed by four variations. A final restatement of the original theme completes the work, considered by critics to be one of the composer's best.

Anton Arensky's *Suite no. 2*, subtitled "Silhouettes," is modeled after the baroque harpsichord suites of François Couperin, with each movement assigned a French name. A series of mildly whimsical character pieces with Arensky's own aesthetic stamp, it could hardly be mistaken for baroque music. The first movement, "The Scholar," is modeled on baroque fugues, where a slow, heavy subject is banged out in the bass and then presented canonically. A second lighter and busier theme takes over, but soon the intimidating initial theme intertwines with it in a most "scholarly" style. "The Coquette" is a delicate salon waltz swirling through several light episodes, some of them carefree and some pensive. "The Buffoon," a reference to the bumbling commedia dell' arte character Polichinelle, or Pulcinello, is a mercurial piece in which melody lines dance across dizzying accompaniments. "The Dreamer" is a comparatively serious and unaffected slow movement whose lyricism is interrupted only by a passionate central climax. The rhythmic Spanish bolero of "The Dancer" completes the work with exhibitionistic keyboard figurations.

During his tenure as "grand ducal director of music extraordinary" at Weimar, Franz Liszt composed twelve symphonic tone poems. In each of these works he distilled the essence of a literary source in a single-movement orchestral work. *Les Préludes* is the third and by far the most popular of his tone poems that he later transcribed for two pianos four hands. The title is derived from French poet Alphonse de Lamartine's ode, "Méditations poétiques," which describes the life of a man from youthful love through the harsh realities of work and war and finally to self-acceptance. Liszt's original score includes an excerpt from the poem: "What else is our life than a series

of preludes to an unknown song, whose first and solemn notes are intoned by death?" Though *Les Préludes* was not specifically inspired by Lamartine's text, its final version faithfully reflects the shifting mood sequences of each section of the poem.

First composed as a piano duet in 1907, Ravel's *Rhapsodie espagnole* became one of his first major works for large ensemble when he orchestrated it the following year. With the exception of the "Habanera," which was a note-for-note transcription of the original duet written twelve years earlier, the first performance received only muted applause from the front of the auditorium. However, Ravel's students and friends in the upper gallery made a great ruckus, calling for encores. The piece reflects Ravel's connection with his mother's Basque heritage—one that he would use often in his compositions.

Regarded today as one of the seminal works of the American theater, Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* is often referred to as "The Great American Opera." When it first ran in New York in 1935, however, it was anything but a success. Gershwin was devastated by the failure, having thought that it was the best music he had ever written. His untimely death at age thirty-eight in 1937 prompted a revival that caught the attention of composers who responded with various symphonic suites. During this time Australian composer Percy Grainger took interest in the music. Grainger's excerpts from *Porgy*, arranged for two pianos four hands, make pianistic what was essentially orchestral and vocal, creating a satisfying emotional traversal of the opera in less than thirty minutes. In addition to material from the introduction and the finale, the *Fantasy* includes settings of nine songs, imaginatively knit together in a sequence that differs from Gershwin's: "My Man's Gone Now;" "It Ain't Necessarily So;" "Clara, Don't You Be Down-hearted;" "Strawberry Call;" "Summertime;" "Oh, I Can't Sit Down;" "Bess, You Is My Woman, Now;" "I Got Plenty O'Nuttin;" and "Oh, Lawd, I'm On My Way." The opening and closing sections of the *Fantasy* parallel the beginning and ending of the opera.

Program Notes by Danielle DeSwert Hahn

Next Week at the National Gallery of Art

Monadnock Music Trio

Music by Bogdanović, Gerner, Lindroth, Norman, and Simpson

Presented in honor of *The Gothic Spirit of John Taylor Arms*

November 2, 2011

Wednesday, 12:10 pm

West Building Lecture Hall



Talich String Quartet

Music by Ludwig van Beethoven

November 6, 2011

Sunday, 6:30 pm

West Building, West Garden Court