

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

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B.M.

1895

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

National Gallery of Art
2,878th Concert

Carmen Balthrop, soprano
José Cáceres, pianist

**Presented in honor of
Women's History Month**

March 11, 2012
Sunday, 6:30 pm
West Building, West Garden Court

Admission free

Program

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840–1893)

None But the Lonely Heart, op. 6, no. 6

Amid the Noise of the Ball, op. 38, no. 3

Why?, op. 6, no. 5

Three Traditional Chinese Folk Songs

The Harvest (An Hwei)

A River Runs through It (Yien Nan)

Flower Drum Song of Fung-Yang (An Hwei)

Three Brazilian Songs

Melodia Sentimental (Heitor Villa-Lobos)

Azulão, op. 21 (Jayme Ovalle)

Boi-Bumbá (Arranged by Waldemar Henrique)

From *Forest of the Amazon*

Antonín Dvořák (1841–1904)

Mesicku na nebi hlubokém (Song to the Moon)

From *Rusalka*

INTERMISSION

Robert B. Greenleaf (b. 1949)

A Modern Woman's Life and Love

When First Her Form

Terror Trembling

Round the Table

I Speak, 'Tis Clear

Fourteen Lines on Orange Felines (Living Together with Cats)

Ponies on a Carousel

Some Say

I Felt Your Soul

World Premiere Performance

Fernando Obradors (1897–1945)

From *Canciones clásicas españolas*

¿Corazón, por qué pasais...?

Del cabello más sutil (Dos cantares populares)

Chiquitita la novia (Coplas del curro dulce)

The Musicians

CARMEN BALTHROP

In great demand as a recitalist, operatic soprano, and soloist with orchestras, Carmen Balthrop performs a wide range of repertoire from baroque opera to contemporary song. In the United States Balthrop has appeared with the Dallas, Florentine, Houston, Metropolitan, Miami, San Francisco, and Seattle opera companies. In Europe she has sung in Berlin's Teatro des Westerns, Spoleto's Opera House, and Venice's Teatro La Fenice. Her orchestral appearances include oratorio and concert performances with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra as well as the Boston, Detroit, Houston, National, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Saint Louis symphony orchestras. Her recital engagements have taken her to Carnegie Hall, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and the White House as well as to the Bahamas, China, Italy, Mexico, The Netherlands, and Russia.

Recent engagements include a recital at the American Embassy in Moscow and a concert with the Smolny Church A Capella Chorus in Saint Petersburg; the world premiere of the opera *Free to Sing*, commissioned by Strathmore Hall; and the role of Lillie in the world premiere of Frank Proto's opera *Shadowboxer: An Opera Based on the Life of Joe Louis* at the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center at the University of Maryland.

Committed to performing music by living composers, Balthrop has recorded songs written by Chris Urquiaga and performed Leslie Adams' *Hymn to Freedom* at the African American Art Song Alliance conference in Irvine, California. She collaborates frequently with composer Leslie Burrs, having performed in his operas *Vanqui* and *Transitions: Sung Stories*. In April, Balthrop will perform the world premiere of *Miss Manners*, a song cycle by renowned composer Dominick Argento.

A professor of voice at the University of Maryland School of Music, Carmen Balthrop has been inducted into the university's Alumni Hall of Fame and the Omicron Delta Honor Society and is a recipient of the university president's "Model of Excellence" award. Balthrop's 1999 recital at the National Gallery of Art was aired on National Public Radio on Christmas Day 2000.

JOSÉ CÁCERES

Critically acclaimed as a musician of virtuosity and versatility, pianist José Cáceres has appeared throughout the United States and Central and South America. In addition to two previous appearances at the National Gallery, he has performed recitals in the Concert Hall at the Fine Arts Center in San Juan, Puerto Rico; the Concert Hall, Terrace Theater, and Millennium Stage at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts; the Corcoran Gallery; the Sala Manuel M. Ponce at the Palace of Fine Arts in Mexico City; and the Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall. He has been heard as concerto soloist with the American Youth Philharmonic, Fairfax Symphony, National Symphony, and Puerto Rico Symphony orchestras. With a repertoire that encompasses a wide range of styles, Cáceres has brought to the forefront some of the most ambitious and challenging music of lesser-known contemporary Latin American composers, earning him a Ford Foundation grant administered by the Johns Hopkins University's Latin American Studies Program.

Cáceres received his bachelor and master of music degrees from the University of Maryland, where he was a scholarship student of Thomas Schumacher. While studying at Maryland, he won the Elizabeth Davis, Homer Ulrich, and Theodore Presser Foundation Awards. A major prizewinner in numerous national and international competitions, he has honors from the Young Soloists' Competition of the National Symphony Orchestra, the Teresa Carreño International Piano Competition of Venezuela, and the Kennedy Center's Fellowships of the Americas program.

Frequently asked to collaborate with Carmen Balthrop and other singers in art song recitals, he has also appeared as collaborative pianist with the Washington Chamber Society as well as at the Irving S. Gilmore International Keyboard Festival, the San Antonio Music Festival, and the Marian Anderson International Vocal Arts Competition and Festival.

In conjunction with the National Museum of American History's exhibition *Piano 300: Celebrating Three Hundred Years of People and Piano*, Cáceres was one of four pianists featured in a series of recitals and master classes exploring the Spanish and Latin American repertoire. In 2009 he was chosen by the Smithsonian Institution to participate in the inaugural concerts in honor of President Obama.

Program Notes

Tchaikovsky's first collection of songs, *Six Romances for Voice and Piano*, op. 6, displays considerable skill in vocal writing. The opus includes several of his best-loved pieces, including "None But the Lonely Heart," for which the composer used a Russian translation of the original German text by Goethe—"Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt" (Only He Who Knows Loneliness). One of Mignon's songs from the novel *Wilhelm Meister*, the text inspired Romantic lieder composers—most notably Schubert, Schumann, and Wolf—to compose some of their most memorable songs. The poem's sense of desolate yearning speaks to the very heart of romanticism, where Tchaikovsky was very much at home. "Amid the Noise of the Ball," written in 1878 in the aftermath of his ill-fated marriage and his resignation from his post as a teacher, is one of his most haunting songs. Set to a text by Alexander Tolstoy, it captures the loneliness, alienation, and the longing for affection that are at the heart of Tchaikovsky's best and most characteristic music. "Why?" is a setting of a poem by Heinrich Heine, titled "Why Then Are the Roses So Pale?"

Each Chinese province maintains its own heritage of folk music that reflects the livelihood of the local people and, quite often, the history of the region. Major dynastic migrations as well as the invasion of foreign nomads introduced new elements into the folk song tradition of each province. "The Harvest Song," from the An Hwei Province, describes how farmers sing and relax after harvest. Their basic desires are expressed—good tools to work with and a harvest that is plentiful. The singer is given considerable liberty regarding interpretation and is not bound by strict rhythm. From the Sichuan Province, "A River Runs through It" describes a moonlit scene in which a young girl thinks of her lover and transmits her thoughts through the flowing stream that goes by his house. "Flower-Drum Song of Fung-Yang" is also from the An Hwei Province. "Drum song" is a musical term that refers to a category of folk songs with drum accompaniment. In this particular drum song, the protagonist grieves over how the once prosperous Fung-Yang County suffered from nine years of famine within a decade. The resulting poverty gave families no choice but to sell their sons.

Recognized as the single most significant creative figure in twentieth-century Brazilian art music, Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887–1959) composed for almost every instrument and genre. His music was influenced by both Brazilian folk music and the European classical tradition. In “Melodia Sentimental,” one of his most frequently performed songs, a lover bids his beloved to wake up in order to view the moon. The moon sweeps over the dark night; its silent bright flame warms the lovers’ dreams.

Jayme Ovalle (1894–1955) was a self-taught Brazilian composer and poet. As an officer of Brazil’s Ministério da Fazenda (ministry in charge of plantations), he resided mostly in New York and London. He was one of the “Second Nationalist Generation” of Brazilian composers, along with Oscar Lorenzo Fernandez (1897–1948) and Walter Burle-Marx (1902–1990). His best-known song is “Azulão” (Bluebird), set to a text by Manuel Bandeira. The words speak of a lover who sends the bluebird to his beloved to deliver the message that without her, the *sertao* (an expansive prairie) no longer exists. This song, or *canção*, as it is known in Brazil, has been extensively recorded.

Of northern Brazilian origin, Waldemar Henrique da Costa Pereira (1905–1995) composed more than 120 songs, all of which differ from mainstream Brazilian popular songs. “Boi-Bumbá,” roughly translated “beat the bull,” is a popular comic-dramatic dance, which tells the story of the death and resurrection of an ox. The wife of Francisco, a farm worker, is pregnant and wants desperately to eat the tongue of the farm owner’s favorite bull. She fears her baby will be born with a face looking like a bull’s tongue unless she does this, so Francisco complies with his wife’s wish and kills the prized bull. The farm owner hears about Francisco’s deed and orders some Indians to capture him. Trying to fix his own mistake, Francisco goes to a “Pajé” (magic priest of the Indians) and asks him, through his magical powers, to bring the bull back to life. The “Pajé” complies, and the miracle is celebrated with a grand party.

One of the most successful Czech operas, Antonín Dvořák’s *Rusalka* is based on fairy tales by Karel Jaromír Erben and Božena Němcová, as transformed into a libretto by the Czech poet Jaroslav Kvapil (1868–1950). In Slavic mythology, a *rusalka* is a singing water nymph inhabiting a lake or

river. In this story, Rusalka gives up her voice in order to marry a prince. Her “Song to the Moon” occurs at the beginning of the opera, before she loses her voice. The opera was first performed in Prague on March 31, 1901.

Given its first performance in tonight’s concert, Robert Greenleaf’s *A Modern Woman’s Life and Love* is based on eight poems by Kenneth Walters, a retired philosophy professor who lives in Auburn, Alabama. In this cycle, the poems are a gift for the poet’s wife, who in turn sings them back to him, sometimes teasing him or trying to goad him into action, but always singing with love and sensitivity. The story begins with *When First Her Form*, in which the poet first meets his wife-to-be, an artist. *Terror Trembling* represents his trepidation at asking her out. In *Round the Table*, the drinking song that follows, both the poet and artist find themselves at the same party. “I Speak, ’Tis Clear” is the wife’s teasing response to the poet’s hesitant approach. The fifth song of the cycle, titled *Fourteen Lines on Orange Felines (Living Together with Cats)* is a setting of a charming nonsense poem. *Ponies on a Carousel* represents a magical moment for both adults and their children, while *Some Say* offers a succinct view of aging. Summing up the experience of life and love, *I Felt Your Soul*, culminates the cycle.

Born in Barcelona, Fernando Obradors cultivated a lighthearted style of composition that combines neoclassicism, folksong, and *tonadilla* (short, satirical comic songs from the eighteenth-century Spanish theatrical tradition). Largely self-taught—he studied piano with his mother and taught himself harmony, counterpoint, and composition—Obradors enjoyed a musical career that included conducting the Liceo and Radio Barcelona Orchestras as well as the Philharmonic Orchestra of Gran Canaria. He wrote a number of zarzuelas and symphonic works, but is best known for his *Canciones clásicas españolas* (Classic Spanish Songs), published in four volumes. The three *Canciones* that conclude this program—¿*Corazón, por qué pasais...?*, *Del cabello más sutil*, and *Chiquitita la novia*, describe the sadness, sentimentality, and playfulness of love, respectively. The final song plays with Spanish words of endearment ending in “ita” (tiny).

Program notes on “A Modern Woman’s Life and Love” by Robert Greenleaf;
other notes by Carmen Balthrop

Upcoming concerts at the National Gallery of Art

Cyrus Forough, violinist

Stephen Ackert, pianist

Music by J. S. Bach, Beethoven,
Falla, and Handel

March 18, 2012

Sunday, 6:30 pm

West Building, West Garden Court



Jessica Jones, soprano

Danielle Hahn, pianist

Music by Clara Schumann
and other women composers

Presented in honor of
Women's History Month

March 25, 2012

Sunday, 6:30 pm

West Building, West Garden Court