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

www.nga.gov

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COVER: Paul Signac, *Barges on the Seine at Sarnois*, 1900, watercolor and gouache over black chalk, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Dyke Collection



The Seventy-first Season of
The William Nelson Cromwell and F. Lamot Belin
Concerts

National Gallery of Art
2,941st Concert

Duo Leroy-Moubarak

Presented in honor of *Color, Line, Light:*
French Drawings, Watercolors, and Pastels from Delacroix to Signac

April 24, 2013
Wednesday, 12:10 pm
West Building Lecture Hall

Admission free

Program

Claude Debussy (1862–1918)

Sonata in D Minor for Cello and Piano (1915)

Prologue

Sérénade et finale

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835–1921)

Romance

From *Sonata in F Major for Cello and Piano*, op. 123 (1905)

César Franck (1822–1890)

Sonata in A Minor for Cello and Piano, op. 75 (1886)

Allegretto ben moderato

Allegro

Recitativo-Fantasia: Ben moderato

Allegretto poco mosso

This concert is made possible in part by support from the MCFEU, cultural services of the French Embassy in Washington, DC, and its partner Safran USA.

The Musicians

DUO LEROY-MOUBARAK

Concertizing together as a husband-and-wife team, cellist Anthony Leroy and pianist Sandra Moubarak have moved quickly into the international spotlight. They were recently selected as artists-of-the-year by *Le Monde de la Musique*, an honor that in previous years has been bestowed on Cécilia Bartoli and Evgeni Kissin. Writing about the duo in *Diapason d'Or* magazine, Jérôme Bastianelli said, “In their interpretations, these young musicians manage to combine plastic beauty and assertive temper.” A frequent guest at prestigious festivals in France (Folle Journée de Nantes, Roque d’Anthéron), the duo has also performed at Finland’s Kuhmo and Spain’s Musika festivals. Their recitals have been heard in the Musée D’Orsay, Tokyo’s Century Hall, and principal concert halls in Belgium, Canada, Japan, South America, and the United Kingdom.

Leroy-Moubarak’s recordings have received awards from many of France’s most important review magazines—*Choc du Monde de la Musique*, *Coup de Cœur Piano*, *Diapason d’Or*, *Recommandé Classica*, *Répertoire*, *Sélection Arte*, and *Sélection le Monde*. Its most recent recording, released in 2012, is an exploration of Marcel Proust’s imaginary “Vinteuil Sonata,” created in collaboration with actors Romane Bohringer, Michael Lonsdale, and Didier Sandre; soprano Magali Léger; and violinist Tedi Papavrami.

The duo was the subject of a musical documentary, *Best of Summer Festivals 2000*, and it has been invited to provide the music for an upcoming documentary, *Russian Composers in Exile*, to be produced by Pierre Boulez, Jean-Claude Casadesus, and Manuel Rosenthal. Leroy and Moubarak are the artistic codirectors of the Saint-Riquier-Baie de Somme Festival in Saint Riquier, France.

Program Notes

Drawn from the collection of James T. Dyke, one of the most astute American collectors of nineteenth- and twentieth-century French works on paper, *Color, Line, Light: French Drawings, Watercolors, and Pastels from Delacroix to Signac* includes sheets he and his wife, Helen L. Porter, have given to the National Gallery of Art as well as others acquired by the Gallery with funds they donated. Showcasing the broad development of modern draftsmanship in France, the exhibition includes drawings and watercolors by French artists working from 1830 to 1930—including Delacroix, Monet, Degas, Cézanne, and Signac—and reveals a rich diversity of subjects, styles, and techniques from romanticism and realism through the impressionists, Nabis, and neo-impressionists. For their recital in honor of the exhibition, Anthony Leroy and Sandra Moubarak have selected music from French composers who were important in the full flowering of romanticism in French music—Saint-Saëns and Franck—and Claude Debussy, who was, like all Frenchmen of his time, under the spell of both impressionist and post-impressionist artists.

As he entered his fifties and felt signs of declining health, Claude Debussy made plans to compose sonatas for six different instruments and piano. He lived to complete only three of the six, including the *Sonata in D Minor for Cello and Piano*. The Prologue takes its inspiration from medieval music: a melismatic vox principalis (principal voice) is assigned to the cello, while the piano imitates an accompanying vox organalis (two voices singing in parallel fifths). In some manuscripts, Debussy added a subtitle for the second movement (Sérénade): “Pierrot Angry with the Moon.” The subtitle refers to Pierrot, a character in the Commedia dell’Arte, who is wont to sing forlorn love songs to the moon, accompanying himself on the mandolin. The Finale, which follows without pause, reiterates material from the first two movements. The sonata was a favorite of the great cellist Gregor Piatigorsky (1903–1976), who wrote, near the end of his long career, “I still marvel at its subtle descriptiveness, compactness of form, and translucent beauty.”

One of the most prolific French composers, with more than 300 works to his credit, Camille Saint-Saëns began his compositional career as a child

prodigy, completing his first piece for piano at age four. He had already learned to read and write at age three, and he played his first public concert at age five, accompanying a violinist in a Beethoven sonata. Known throughout his life for his unrelenting energy and productivity, he gained fame as a church and concert organist while writing and publishing poetry and scholarly articles on acoustics, ancient musical instruments, occult sciences, and Roman theater decoration. He was an officer of the Académie des Beaux-Arts and in 1913 received France’s highest honor, the Grand-Croix de la Légion d’Honneur.

Among his rarely played chamber works, Saint-Saëns’ *Sonata in F Major*, op. 123, contains one of the most rhapsodic Romances in the cello repertoire. The French master took great pride in his lyrical movements for cello, including his earlier *Romanza for Cello*, op. 36, and “The Swan” from *Carnival of the Animals* (the only movement from the suite that he released for publication during his lifetime). Knowing that he had taken full advantage of the cello’s potential emotional range in this movement, Saint-Saëns sent the sonata to his publisher, Jacques Durand, with a note: “The Adagio will bring tears to your eyes.”

Belgian-born César Franck spent most of his adult life in Paris, and took a place in the pantheon of French composers even before his untimely death in 1890, due to a carriage accident. His *Sonata in A Minor*, op. 75, originally written for the violin, was transcribed for cello during Franck’s lifetime by cellist Jules Delsart (1844–1900). That version, sanctioned by the composer, has become a staple of the cello repertoire. Franck delivered the completed score for violin and piano to the home of his friend and compatriot, Belgian violinist Eugene Ysaÿe, as a wedding present. The composer no doubt had Ysaÿe’s prodigious skill as well as his own keyboard prowess in mind as he wrote the sonata. To give structural unity to the work, he employed a device that music theorists call cyclic form. All of the main themes in all four movements are derived from three short motifs. By reintroducing the motifs with varying harmonies and tonal ranges, the composer maintains freshness within overall unity.

Program notes on Saint-Saëns by Michael Jacko, music program specialist, National Gallery of Art; other notes by Stephen Ackert, head, music department

Upcoming Concerts at the National Gallery of Art

Katherine Chi, pianist

Music by Bach, Beethoven, Mallia,
Scriabin, and Vonorov

April 28, 2013
Sunday, 6:30 pm
West Building, West Garden Court



Ignacio Prego, harpsichordist

Music by Frescobaldi, Scarlatti,
and Spanish composers

Presented in collaboration with the
Delegation of the European Union to the United States

May 1, 2013
Wednesday, 12:10 pm
West Building Lecture Hall

National Gallery Orchestra
Paul Badura-Skoda, pianist and guest conductor

Music by Mozart

Presented in collaboration with the
Delegation of the European Union to the United States

May 5, 2013
Sunday, 6:30 pm
West Building, West Garden Court



Capella de la Torre

Music from the time of Albrecht Dürer

Presented in honor of *Albrecht Dürer*:
Master Drawings, Watercolors, and Prints from the Albertina

Sponsored by the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany

May 6, 2013
Monday, 12:00, 2:00, and 4:00 pm
East Building, Mezzanine