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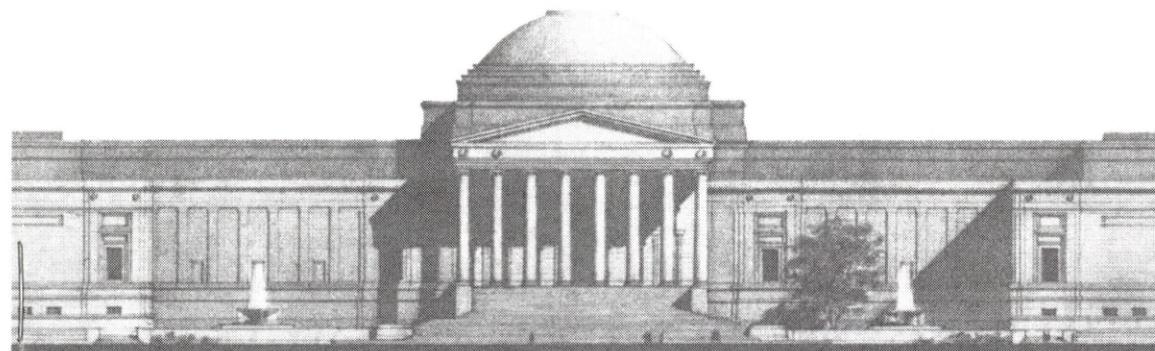
Please note that late entry or reentry of the West Building after 6:30 pm is not permitted.

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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The Seventy-second Season of
The William Nelson Cromwell and F. Lammot Belin
Concerts

National Gallery of Art
2,983rd Concert

Sara Davis Buechner, pianist

March 9, 2014
Sunday, 6:30 pm
West Building, West Garden Court

Admission free

Program

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)

Sonata in E-flat Major, K. 282 (1774)

Adagio

Minuetto I—Minuetto 2

Allegro

Anton Arensky (1861–1906)

Four Salon Pieces

Ionics, op. 28, no. 3 (1893–1894)

Étude in F-sharp Major, op. 41, no. 2 (1896)

Excerpts from *Près de la mer* (By the Sea), op. 52, no. 4 (1901)

No. 4: Allegro moderato

No. 5: Allegro scherzando

Igor Stravinsky (1882–1971)

Trois mouvements de Pétrouchka (1921)

Danse russe (Russian Dance)

Chez Pétrouchka (In Petrushka's Room)

La Semaine grasse (The Shrovetide Fair)

INTERMISSION

Dana Suesse (1909–1987)

Four Pieces for Piano

Jazz Nocturne (1931)

Scherzette: "Whirligig" (1940)

Bacardi, from *The Cocktail Suite* (1942)

Night Sky (1947)

George Gershwin (1898–1937)

Three Foxtrots from Acoustic Recordings and Player Piano Rolls

Do-Do-Do (1926)

Novelette in Fourths (1919)

Kickin' the Clouds Away (1925)

The Musician

A prize-winner at the Reine Elisabeth of Belgium Competition and the piano competitions of Leeds, Salzburg, Sydney, and Vienna, pianist Sara Davis Buechner launched her career by winning the Gold Medal at the 1984 Gina Bachauer International Piano Competition. Praised by the *New York Times* for her “intelligence, integrity, and all-encompassing technical prowess” and the *Washington Post* for her “thoughtful artistry in the full service of music,” she concertizes regularly in Asia, where the *Philippine Star* attested to her “fascinating and astounding virtuosity,” and Japan’s *In Tune* magazine proclaimed, “Buechner has no superior.”

With an active repertoire of more than one hundred piano concertos, Buechner has appeared as soloist with the symphony orchestras of Cleveland, Montreal, New York, Philadelphia, Saint Louis, and San Francisco as well as those of Vancouver and Victoria, British Columbia the Hollywood Bowl, Kennedy Center, Lincoln Center, Kyoto’s Alti Hall, and Prague’s Dvořák Hall. Two of Buechner’s recordings have received acclaim from reviewers in the *New York Times*, who greeted her Koch International CD of piano music by Rudolf Friml as a “revelation” and devoted the front page of the Sunday Arts & Leisure section to her world premiere recording of the Bach-Busoni “Goldberg” Variations. Her Gershwin album was selected as a Record of the Month by *Stereophile* magazine, and her recording of piano concertos by Bernard Herrmann and Franz Waxman won Germany’s *Deutscher Schallplattenpreis*.

An enthusiastic champion of contemporary music, Buechner has commissioned new works and played numerous premieres. Among the composers with whom she has collaborated are Larry Bell, Dorothy Chang, John Corigliano, Richard Danielpour, Miriam Hyde, Jared Miller, Joaquín Nin-Culmell, David Raksin, Miklós Rózsa, and Yukiko Nishimura. A former pupil of Rudolf Firkusny and Byron Janis at the Juilliard School of Music and an associate professor of piano at the University of British Columbia, Sara Davis Buechner appears at the National Gallery by arrangement with Carrie Feiner Enterprises, www.feinerent.com.

Program Notes

A child prodigy and virtuoso, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart composed his first sonatas for the keyboard at age eighteen, by which time he already had completed more than two-hundred compositions. Between December 1774 and January 1775, he traveled to Munich with his father to supervise the premiere of his opera buffa, *La finta giardiniera*. During this period he wrote his first six sonatas, with the successive keys moving through the circle-of-fifths key progression (C, F, B-flat, E-flat, then skipping to the sharp keys for G and D). The fourth of the Munich sonatas, the *Sonata in E-flat Major*, K. 282, opens unconventionally with an Adagio. Throughout this movement, the right hand carries the melody and the left accompanies. Neither of the two Minuets contains a trio, but the second one contains more thematic development and harmonic variety than would be expected in such a short movement. Written in strict sonata-allegro form, the finale contains a short development section and foregoes the customary coda. The primary motive here is the octave leap, a gesture that Mozart restates and develops thoroughly.

As a student, Anton Arensky studied with Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov at the Saint Petersburg Conservatory. In later years, as a professor at the Moscow Conservatory, Arensky influenced rising talents Alexander Scriabin and Sergei Rachmaninoff. Arensky has not received as much attention as many of his Russian contemporaries, chiefly due to his stylistic proximity to Tchaikovsky, whom he revered. In fact, one of his most popular compositions for orchestra is his *Variations on a Theme of Tchaikovsky*.

Having earned substantial praise as a pianist, Arensky felt at home composing chamber and solo piano music. Of the four salon pieces that Sara Davis Buechner has included in tonight’s program, *Ionics* is the third of six *Studies of Forgotten Rhythms*, which Arensky composed between 1893 and 1894. The *Étude in F-sharp Major* is a lively, motoric piece with perpetual-motion sixteenth notes in the right hand, while “Allegro moderato” and “Allegro scherzando” are the fourth and fifth movements from Arensky’s suite *Près*

de la mer (By the Sea). In G-flat major, the Allegro moderato features a lyrical middle section surrounded by running triplets as opening and closing passages. The Allegro scherzando is a “Dumka,” a Slavic genre characterized by sudden changes from melancholy to exuberance.

In 1910, following the overwhelming success of his ballet, *The Firebird*, Igor Stravinsky began to set his sights on *The Rite of Spring* for the Ballets Russes’ 1913 season. However, the company director, Sergei Diaghilev (1872–1929), intervened with plans for a ballet based on the folk tales about *Petrushka*, which he planned to present in 1911. Stravinsky responded with an orchestral piece featuring the piano as a solo instrument. Taking his cue from the stories in which *Petrushka* is an irrepressible prankster, Stravinsky cast the piano as a mischievous puppet, trying the patience of the orchestra with what he termed “diabolical cascades of arpeggios.” Stravinsky enhanced the harmonic mischief by superimposing two major triads offset by a tritone, which in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had come to be known as the “devil’s interval.” In 1921, at the behest of Arthur Rubinstein (1887–1982), Stravinsky adapted the ballet score into a three-movement fantasia for solo piano.

American composer and lyricist Dana Suesse displayed an early talent for adapting themes to music and words. She toured the Midwest in her youth, framing her vaudeville acts around spontaneously adapted ideas from the audience. Her 1931 hit, *Jazz Nocturne*, earned her the nickname “The Girl Gershwin” from the *New Yorker*. A pupil of Nadia Boulanger in Paris in the 1940s, Suesse continued to enjoy artistic and commercial success throughout her lifetime, including a concert at Carnegie Hall in 1974.

Another Boulanger student, George Gershwin blended his classical training and his jazz background into a successful and uniquely American voice. In 1916 he began working for two firms in New York that produced piano rolls—Aeolian Company and Standard Music Rolls. He produced over one hundred piano rolls under his own name and various aliases, among them James Baker, Fred Murtha, Bert Wynn, and George Wynne,

which provided a stable source of income in the early part of his career. Even after his compositions for musical theater began to earn him substantially larger fees, he continued to record his greatest hits on piano rolls throughout the 1920s. “Do-Do-Do” is a song from the musical *Oh, Kay!*, while “Kickin’ the Clouds Away” is from *Tell Me More*. “Novelette in Fourths” is a ragtime piece that Gershwin composed as an early attempt to fuse classical and vernacular musical styles.

Program notes by Michael Jacko, music program assistant, National Gallery of Art