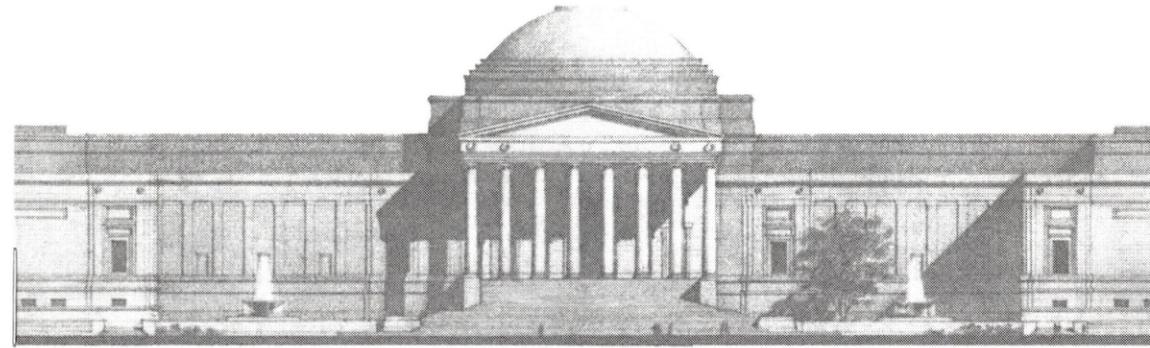


The use of cameras or recording equipment during the performance is not allowed. Please be sure that cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices are turned off.



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

National Gallery of Art
3,018th Concert

National Gallery of Art Piano Trio
Luke Wedge, violin
Benjamin R. Wensel, cello
Danielle DeSwert Hahn, piano

October 19, 2014
Sunday, 3:30 pm
West Building, West Garden Court

Admission free

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

www.nga.gov

Concerts are made possible in part through the generosity of donors to the National Gallery of Art through The Circle. Reserved seating is available in recognition of their support. Please contact the development office at (202) 842-6450 or *circle@nga.gov* for more information.

Program

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897)

Piano Trio no. 1 in B Major, op. 8

Allegro con brio

Scherzo: Allegro molto

Adagio

Allegro

Ástor Piazzolla (1921–1992)

Cuatro Estaciones Porteñas (The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires)

Otoño Porteño (Buenos Aires Autumn)

Invierno Porteño (Buenos Aires Winter)

Primavera Porteña (Buenos Aires Spring)

Verano Porteño (Buenos Aires Summer)

The Musicians

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART PIANO TRIO

Formed as a resident ensemble in 2008, the National Gallery of Art Piano Trio has since played in numerous Gallery concerts as well as other venues, under the name West Garden Trio. In 2009 the Trio performed a special program at the residence of the Belgian ambassador; in 2010 it played a complete program of music by early twentieth-century American composers in honor of the exhibition *American Modernism: The Shein Collection*; and in 2014 it performed lesser-known works by Jewish composers for a Hanukkah concert. It regularly contributes piano trios to the annual concert in memory of Milton M. Gottesman, which features music by Mozart and J. S. Bach.

DANIELLE DESWERT HAHN

Pianist Danielle DeSwert Hahn is an active freelance collaborative pianist. As an opera répétiteur, she has worked with the Ash Lawn Highland Opera Festival, New York Opera Society, and Baltimore, Chautauqua, Indianapolis, Kentucky, North Carolina, Portland, Sarasota, Washington Concert, and Washington National opera companies. Hahn regularly performs in chamber music and voice recitals, partnering with members of the National Symphony Orchestra, the Kennedy Center Opera Orchestra, and vocal soloists.

In addition to numerous appearances at the National Gallery, Hahn has performed at leading venues throughout Washington, DC. She is a principal pianist with Inscape Chamber Music Project and has performed in concert and recorded with the contemporary ensemble New Music Raleigh. She holds a master of music degree from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, and a bachelor of music degree from the University of California, Santa Barbara. Formerly an apprentice coach with the Washington Opera under Plácido Domingo, since 2006 she has held the position of music program specialist at the National Gallery of Art, where she assists in programming and coordinating the concerts and musical programs. In addition to her work with the NGA Piano Trio, she performs with the NGA Chamber Players.

LUKE WEDGE

Originally from Kansas, violinist Luke Wedge is an active chamber musician who frequently serves as concertmaster of orchestras in the Washington metropolitan area. A participant in the Juilliard Quartet seminar, he has given master classes at the Eastern Music Festival and at Gettysburg College. An experienced orchestral musician, he has performed with the Chicago Philharmonic, National Symphony, and Ravinia Festival orchestras. Since 2003 he has been a member of the United States Air Force Strings, performing at the State Department, the Vice President's residence, and the White House. Outside Washington, he has played for the Grand Ole Opry and has been featured on several nationally televised programs and various recordings. Having begun violin studies at age five, he holds degrees from the University of Kansas and Northwestern University.

BENJAMIN R. WENSEL

A native of New York State, Benjamin Wensel earned degrees from the Cleveland Institute of Music and the Eastman School of Music. Equally important to his musical education were performances in seminars and master classes for members of the Cleveland, Guarneri, Juilliard, Miami, and Ying quartets; chamber music studies with Peter Salaff and members of the Audubon and Cavani quartets; and solo master classes with Clemens Michael Hagen, Steven Isserlis, David Soyer, and Michel Strauss.

A member of The United States Army Orchestra, Strolling Strings, and String Quartet since 2003, Wensel regularly appears with many of the local ensembles in the National Capital region. Dedicated to the creation and promotion of new music, he has performed the world premieres of more than twenty works written by established and emerging American composers. In addition to his work with the National Gallery of Art Piano Trio, Wensel is a founding member of the Tarab Cello Ensemble and the New Orchestra of Washington. He is also cellist of the BAR Piano Trio and "Pershing's Own" Contemporary Music Ensemble (POCME).

Program Notes

In late 1853, soon after becoming close friends with Robert and Clara Schumann, twenty-year old Johannes Brahms began to compose his first piano trio. Extremely self-critical, the young composer had drafted and destroyed numerous chamber music works, yet felt inspired by his weeks with the Schumanns to take another stab at the genre. Several months later, in January of 1854, while still working on the trio, he received word that Robert had attempted suicide. Brahms returned to the Schumanns' home in Düsseldorf to comfort Clara and the couple's seven children. During this stay he completed the work. It may be that the tragic circumstances influenced the piece, which begins in a warm and luminous B major but ends in a dark and stormy B minor. The trio was published by Breitkopf & Härtel in February 1854.

Some thirty-five years later, when Brahms's new publisher, Fritz Simrock, purchased the rights to all of the composer's published works, he offered Brahms a chance to revise some of his earliest works. Ever the perfectionist, Brahms took the opportunity to refine this trio, his first published chamber work. In a letter to a friend, he wrote, "Do you still remember the B major trio from our early days, and wouldn't you be curious to hear it now, as I have (instead of placing a wig on it!) taken the hair and combed and ordered it a bit...?" Only the second movement remains the same in both versions. The first movement was reduced in length, and the first, third, and fourth movements underwent significant rewrites in their middle sections. The revised version, performed in today's concert, retains its youthful, romantic passion while incorporating the refinement and wisdom that comes from experience.

Ástor Piazzolla was born in Argentina but spent his early childhood in New York City. Raised on his father's albums of Argentine tango orchestras, as well as recordings of jazz and classical music, Piazzolla began to play the bandoneon at an early age. His family returned to his birth city, Mar del Plata, when he was fourteen, and he spent the next eighteen years in Argentina building his professional career in music. During this time, he took

orchestration lessons from composer Alberto Ginastera, honed his classical music skills, and grew in stature as a bandoneonist and bandleader. His later studies with Nadia Boulanger in Paris continued to develop his career. After he shared with her his early compositions, she encouraged him to employ his greatest gift of composing tangos.

Piazzolla singlehandedly reinvented the tango during the second half of the twentieth century. He melded tango's popular style with his knowledge of classical composition to produce a new type of art music. Although his compositions are considered café music, their exceptional craft shows Piazzolla's deeper understanding of form and style. Composed between 1967 and 1970, Piazzolla's *Four Seasons of Buenos Aires* pays tribute to Vivaldi, yet clearly highlights the culture and environment of his native country. The four movements were written as separate entities, each for a different purpose. The original orchestration for the *Four Seasons* is violin, electric guitar, piano, bass, and bandoneon. The arrangement for piano trio was made by Piazzolla's good friend, Argentinian cellist and composer José Bragato.

Program Notes by Danielle DeSwert Hahn

Upcoming Concerts at the National Gallery of Art

Alexander Shonert, violinist

Natalia Shonert, pianist

Music by Czech composers

Presented in collaboration with the Mutual Inspirations Festival

October 26, 2014

Sunday, 6:30 pm

West Building, West Garden Court



Prague Philharmonic Choir

Music by Brahms and Dvořák

October 31, 2014

Friday, 3:30 pm

West Building, West Garden Court