

Concerts at the National Gallery of Art
Under the direction of George Manos

October and November 2002

October

- 13 Musica ad Rhenum** Music by eighteenth-century French composers
- 20 U.S. Naval Academy Men's Glee Club** Music for men's chorus by Viadana, Schütz, Riegger, Randall
John Barry Talley, director Thompson, and other composers
- 27 Orpheus String Quartet** Mozart: *Quartet, K. 590*
Wolf: *Italian Serenade*
Beethoven: *Quartet, Op. 95*

November

- 3 Carol Wincenc, flutist** Works for solo flute by Lukas Foss, J. S. Bach, Enesco, and other composers
- 10 Jeffrey Kahane, pianist** Fauré: *Nocturne in D-flat Major*
Albeniz: *Iberia, Book I*
Hersch: *24 Variations*
- 17 Beverly Benso, contralto** Webern: *Eight Early Songs*
George Manos, pianist Poulenc: *Eight Early Songs*
Mark Fax: *Five Black Songs*
Britten: *A Charm of Lullabies*
Manos: *Kykleion Asma*

*For the convenience of concertgoers,
the Garden Café remains open until 6:30 p.m.*

*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 Sixty-first Season of
THE WILLIAM NELSON CROMWELL and
F. LAMMOT BELIN CONCERTS

National Gallery of Art



2428th Concert

NATIONAL GALLERY ORCHESTRA
GEORGE MANOS, conductor

Sunday Evening, 6 October 2002
Seven O'clock
West Building, West Garden Court

Admission free

PROGRAM

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart Overture to the Marriage of Figaro, K. 492
(1756–1791) (1786)

Gabriel Fauré Pavane, Op. 50
(1845–1924) (1887)

Gabriel Fauré Pelléas and Mélisande Suite, Op. 80
(1898)

Prélude
Entr'acte-Fileuse
Sicilienne
La mort de Mélisande—Adagio molto

INTERMISSION

Felix Mendelssohn Symphony No. 5 in D Minor (“Reformation”)
(1809–1847) Op. 107 (1829)

Andante; Allegro con fuoco
Allegro vivace
Andante
Chorale: Ein’ feste Burg ist unser Gott
Andante con moto; allegro vivace;
allegro maestoso; più animato poco a poco

Conductor, composer, and pianist **George Manos** has been director of music at the National Gallery of Art and conductor of the National Gallery Orchestra since 1985. He is also artistic director of the American Music Festival and of the National Gallery vocal and chamber ensembles, which he founded. Manos’ career as a performing pianist and teacher has included several years on the faculty of The Catholic University of America in Washington, DC, where he taught piano, conducting, and chamber music. In addition, he held the directorship of the Wilmington, Delaware, School of Music, presenting an annual jazz festival and clinic. Maestro Manos founded and directed for ten years the renowned Kilarney Bach Festival in the Republic of Ireland and was the music director of the 1992 Scandinavian Music Festival in Kolding, Denmark.

Mozart had already completed his second grand opera, *Der Schauspieldirektor* (*The Impresario*, K. 486), when he was commissioned by the emperor of Austria to compose another. *Figaros Hochzeit* (*The Marriage of Figaro*, K. 492) was first performed in Vienna in 1786, less than three months after the first performance of *Der Schauspieldirektor*. *Figaro*, although well liked by the Viennese public, was withdrawn after its ninth performance. The performances brought on so many encores that the opera lasted twice as long as originally written, and this was unacceptable to the producers. Theater managers in Prague, on the other hand, seemed to have no problem with the opera’s length when it was performed there the following year. So spectacular was its reception that Mozart could report to his father: “Here they talk of nothing but *Figaro*; scrape, blow, sing, and whistle nothing but *Figaro*....”

Critic and music writer Scott Goddard observed in his review of a performance of this superb work that “The unexpected misunderstandings, the deliberate deceptions, the heartbreak, the laughter, all those intriguing ingredients of the complicated plot are mirrored in the overture to Mozart’s masterly comedy.... The overture is an exquisitely poised example of the first movement of a symphony in shortened form,

without a slow introduction. In [such a] circumstance, that would have been out of keeping with the breathless comedy about to be played.”

Dedicated to the Viscountess Elizabeth Greffulhe and first performed in Paris in 1888, the *Pavane*, *Op. 50*, by Fauré is scored for small orchestra with a discretionary choir that is seldom used in performances. A dance genre emanating from the Renaissance period, the pavane was primarily a stately dance used during processions. According to bibliographer Linda Mack, Fauré recounted the manner in which the *Pavane* came about in a letter to his second wife, Marie: “While I was thinking about a thousand different things of no importance whatsoever, a kind of rhythmical theme in the style of a Spanish dance took form in my brain.... This theme developed by itself, became harmonized in different ways, changed and modulated; in effect, it germinated by itself.” The work opens with the strings playing a pizzicato accompaniment, which is soon joined by an exquisite flute melody that, according to one of Fauré’s chief biographers, Robert Orledge, is one of his “most memorable inventions [and is] on par with that of the contemporary *Clair de lune*.” This melody is shared alternately with the oboes and clarinets in a combination that proclaims gentility forged on to greater heights by a high degree of inspiration. However, at the same time, its quintessential enchantment appears to personify the composer’s own unique temperament.

Fauré’s incidental music for *Pelléas et Mélisande* was written for a London production of the drama by the Belgian playwright, essayist, and poet Maurice Maeterlinck (1861–1949). It was performed at the Prince of Wales’ Theatre in London on 21 June 1898. From the original score a concert suite emerged, consisting of the *Prélude (Quasi adagio)*, evoking the forest scene meeting of Golaud and Mélisande; *Fileuse (Andantino)*, a spinning song that has a Mendelssohnian overtone; *Sicilienne*, a work Fauré had written for another venture; and *La mort de Mélisande (Adagio molto)*. This concluding movement, “combining despair and resignation in face of the inevitable oppression and injustice of death, conveys all of Maeterlinck’s complex thought through the simplest and

most modest means” (Claude Rostand). The work, scored for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, timpani, two harps, and strings, was first performed by the *Orchestre des concerts Lamoureux* on 23 February 1901 in Paris and is the only stage music by Fauré that has gained eminence and a permanent place in the repertoire.

Born into a prominent German Jewish family, Felix Mendelssohn was baptized into the Protestant faith in 1816, along with a number of other members of his family. In 1830, when the composer was twenty-one years old, Protestants in Germany prepared to celebrate the three-hundredth anniversary of the Augsburg Confession, drawn up by the first generation of Lutherans in 1530. Mendelssohn’s active participation in the celebration took the form of a symphony. Originally conceived as *A Symphony for the Festival of the Reformation of the Church*, the work eventually came to be known as the composer’s *Fifth Symphony*, even though it was composed earlier than his second, third, and fourth symphonies. The so-called “Dresden” Amen from the Lutheran liturgy introduces the first movement. This motivic element also figures in Wagner’s *Parsifal* as a “Holy Grail” theme. The second and third movements have no obvious connection to religious music, but the fourth is a festive and highly contrapuntal finale that culminates in a rendition of the chorale *Ein’ feste Burg ist unser Gott*. Critic John N. Burk’s praise for Mendelssohn includes the following observation about the *D Major Symphony*: “The steady and noble chorale subject and the beautiful ‘Amen’ cadence, with all their associations, are developed in unchurchly [sic] symphonic fashion. The music bespeaks his personal style, [and is] fervid in melody, lucid in orchestration, felicitous in detail, and Mendelssohnian in every bar.”

Program notes by Elmer Booze