

The quixotic and fun-filled world of children enticed Ravel to compose a set of piano pieces that he published as his *Mother Goose Suite* and later revised as a ballet for full orchestra. *Pavane of the Sleeping Beauty* is a slow dirge played by flutes, horns, and violas. The second movement (*Hop o' My Thumb*) describes the adventure of a miniature boy who is lost in the woods. Irregular rhythmic pulses, representing chirping birds, are played by the oboe and the English horn to lend credibility to the boy's frustration. A vintage fairy tale is presented in the third movement (*Laideronette, Empress of the Pagodas*). A princess and a pagoda are placed under the spell of the wicked fairy Magotine (pagodas are a family of petite people made from a translucent variety of potter's clay). The princess is cursed in her cradle with a repugnant appearance, and the pagoda, the ruler of a tiny kingdom, is turned into a serpent. Upon regaining their former shapes (signaled by the sound of chiming cymbals that end their spell), the princess and the pagoda are united in marriage to enjoy eternal bliss. The fourth movement (*The Conversation of Beauty and the Beast*) is in waltz time with two themes, one representing the beauty, played by the clarinet, and the other representing the beast, played by the double bassoon. The fifth movement (*The Fairy Garden*) closes the suite with a reiteration of the theme from the opening movement that announced the princess' awakening.

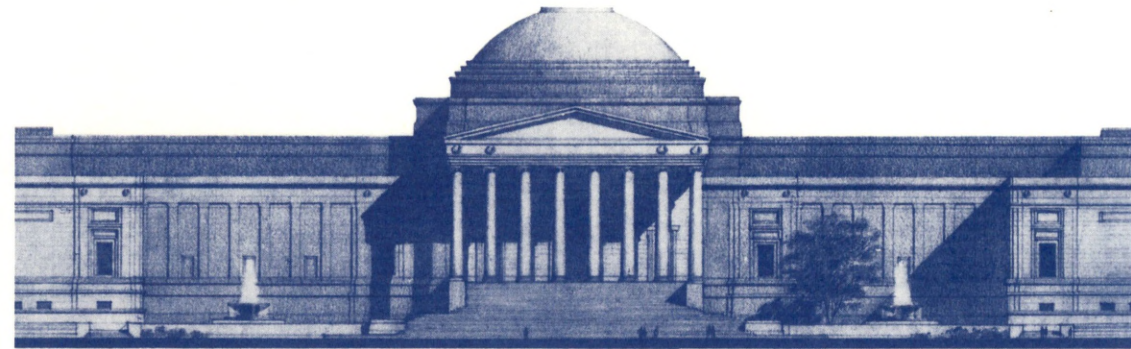
Mendelssohn was just twenty-four years old when he completed his fourth symphony, known as the *Italian*, after a visit to Italy in 1830. The first movement exudes the happy atmosphere that surrounded him in Italy. The lugubrious quality of the second movement suggests his encounter with a pilgrims' march in the city of Naples. The third movement, a smooth and elegant classical minuet with trio, is the consummate Mendelssohn, while the finale makes use of one of Italy's oldest dance forms. The sixteenth-century *saltarello* is a jovial, frisky dance, marked by a bouncing motif in triple time. The finale frolics with two *saltarello* themes, and a third theme, a *tarantella*, is gracefully executed in triplets.

Program notes by Elmer Booze

The Fifty-ninth Season of

THE WILLIAM NELSON CROMWELL and
F. LAMMOT BELIN CONCERTS

National Gallery of Art



2375th Concert

NATIONAL GALLERY ORCHESTRA

GEORGE MANOS, *conductor*

Sunday Evening, 4 March 2001
Seven O'clock
West Building, West Garden Court

Admission free

PROGRAM

Sergei Prokofiev
(1891–1953)

Lieutenant Kijé Suite, Op. 60
(1934)

Birth of Kijé
Romance
Kijé's Wedding
Troika
Burial of Kijé

Maurice Ravel
(1875–1937)

Ma mère l'oye (Mother Goose)
(Ballet Suite) (1911)

Pavane of the Sleeping Beauty
Hop o' My Thumb
Laideronette, Empress of the Pagodas
The Conversation of Beauty and the Beast
The Fairy Garden

INTERMISSION

Felix Mendelssohn
(1809–1847)

Symphony No. 4 in A Major ("Italian")
Op. 90 (1831–1833)

Allegro vivace
Andante con moto
Con moto moderato
Presto

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.

Written to accompany a Russian film bearing the same title, Prokofiev's *Lieutenant Kijé Suite* makes reference to a sarcastic tale aimed at exposing the foolishness of Czar Nicholas I, who misinterpreted a military account from one of his military assistants. Fearing that the czar would face disgrace if told of his faux pas, his assistants conjured up a military character whose last name ended in *ki* and added *je* to form the name *Kijé*. The word *je* is a contemptuous expletive in Russian. The first movement (*The Birth of Kijé*) introduces the lieutenant, whose pomp is indicated by the cornet's offstage graduated noisy display. A military fife and drum solo follows, feigning authenticity of purpose. In the second movement, a tenor saxophone solo replaces the voice of the baritone that was used in the original version. The next movement (*Kijé's Wedding*) replicates a military wedding, implying wild celebration, a soldier's grandiosity, and his incongruous sentimentality. The fourth movement (*Troika*) resonates with the bellowing of a hearty Russian pub tune, again assigned the saxophone. The finale (*Burial of Kijé*) ushers in the demise of Lieutenant Kijé, as fading trumpet sounds signal his release from this world and the end of the suite.