

77TH SEASON OF

CONCERTS

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART | DECEMBER 9, 2018





Photo by Kestutis Pleita

PROGRAM

Mettis String Quartet

With Gabrielius Alekna, piano

Kostas Tumosa, violin

Bernardas Petrauskas, violin

Karolis Rudokas, viola

Rokas Vaitkevičius, cello

Presented in collaboration with the Embassy of the Republic of Lithuania

December 9, 2018 | 3:30

West Building, West Garden Court

Remigijus Merkelys (b. 1964)

MiKonst

Gabrielius Alekna, piano

Mikalojus Konstantinas Čiurlionis (1875–1911)

String Quartet in C Minor

Allegro moderato

Andante

Menuetto

Intermission

Philip Glass (b. 1937)

String Quartet no. 2, “Company”

I. Quartet note = 96

II. Quartet note = 160

III. Quartet note = 96

IV. Quartet note = 160

Robert Schumann (1810–1856)

Piano Quintet, op. 44

Allegro brillante

In modo d’una marcia. Un poco largamente

Scherzo. Molto vivace

Allegro ma non troppo

Gabrielius Alekna, piano

THE MUSICIANS

The Mettis String Quartet is comprised of four different, charismatic personalities from Vilnius, Lithuania—musicians who give all their heart in every performance to make it extraordinary.

Founded in 2012, the Mettis String Quartet is named after the Greek goddess Metis—the first wife of Zeus, known for her cunning, wisdom, and skill. The quartet’s members have studied at the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre in Vilnius and the European Chamber Music Academy under the tutelage of Hatto Beyerle and Johannes Meissl.

In 2015, Mettis released its debut album featuring the quartets of Beethoven and Shostakovich. The group garnered international recognition with a second-place award at the 8th Bordeaux International String Quartet competition, along with a special prize for the best performance of Durosoir’s String Quartet, as well as winning the IX International V.E. Rimbotti Competition in Italy. The ensemble has traveled extensively throughout the European continent, performing in prestigious venues, including London’s Wigmore Hall, Berlin’s Konzerthaus, Hamburg’s Laeiszhalle, and festivals in Luberon, Aix-en-Provence, and Montpellier’s Radio France. In 2017, the quartet played nearly fifty concerts throughout Europe and China. This season, Mettis will perform in Israel, Canada, the United States, Panama, and Australia, and plans to release a new CD in collaboration with Lithuanian pianist Mūza Rubackytė.

Gabrielius Alekna won second place at the 2005 International Beethoven Piano Competition in Vienna and has appeared as a solo pianist in Vienna’s Musikverein with the Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Bertrand de Billy. He has been a featured soloist with the Juilliard Orchestra, the New Amsterdam Symphony Orchestra, and the Adelphi Symphony Orchestra in New York, the Wartburg Community Symphony in Iowa, the Bilkent Symphony Orchestra in Ankara, Turkey, and the Belarus State Symphony Orchestra in Minsk. In his native Lithuania, Alekna appears regularly with major orchestras, including the National Symphony, the State Symphony, and the Kaunas City Symphony Orchestras, as well as the Christopher Chamber and the Lithuanian Chamber Orchestras. Described by Daniel Barenboim as “a highly gifted pianist and musician,” Alekna has garnered more than a dozen top prizes in competitions on both sides of the Atlantic.

Alekna is passionately interested in the piano music by Lithuania’s twentieth-century, avant-garde composers, Vytautas Bacevičius and Jeronimas Kačinskas. The British label Toccata Classics has issued two volumes in an ongoing series of Bacevičius’s piano music recorded by Alekna. In recording volume one of this series (Bacevičius’s complete *Mots*, issued in 2012), Alekna collaborated with five-time Grammy-winning producer Judith Sherman and five-time Grammy-nominated pianist Ursula Oppens. Alekna’s critically acclaimed recording of Bacevičius’s Piano Concertos nos. 3 and 4 with the Lithuanian National Symphony Orchestra under conductor Christopher Lyndon-Gee was released by Naxos in 2015. Kačinskas’s piano works appeared in 2013 on another release by Toccata Classics. Alekna’s other recordings include a 2007 CD of cello and piano music recorded with Edvardas Armonas and released by the Lithuanian National Radio.

PROGRAM NOTES

As part of the Lithuanian Centennial Celebration, the Embassy of Lithuania in Washington, DC, together with the National Gallery of Art, present a musical project by brilliant Lithuanian musicians and prizewinners of international competitions—pianist Gabrielius Alekna and the Mettis String Quartet. The musicians have teamed up to present various facets of the Lithuanian modern classics, from the String Quartet by Mikalojus Konstantinas Čiurlionis, who founded professional schools in music and the visual arts in Lithuania, to Čiurlionis-inspired *MiKonst* for piano and strings by the outstanding contemporary composer Remigijus Merkelys. Lithuanian works will be complemented by American contemporary classics, the String Quartet no. 2, “Company,” by Philip Glass and an exciting masterpiece from the romantic era, Robert Schumann’s Piano Quintet.

The concert concludes a number of events that were offered by the Lithuanian Embassy to Washingtonians during 2018 to commemorate the Centennial of the Restored State of Lithuania and to celebrate the country’s long-lasting partnership with the United States.

Upcoming Events of the Seventy-Seventh Season of The William Nelson Cromwell and F. Lamot Belin Concerts

Unless otherwise noted, concerts are held in the West Building, West Garden Court.

Westminster Presbyterian Choir and Ringers

Benjamin Hutchens, director

West Building Rotunda

December 15, 1:30 and 2:30

Saint John Paul the Great Catholic High School Choir

Kelly Kingett, director

West Building Rotunda

December 16, 1:30 and 2:30

Hot Club of San Francisco

Hot Club, Cool Yule

A holiday offering of Gypsy jazz.

December 16, 3:30

Daniel Schlosberg, piano

Jessica Aszodi, soprano

Russell Rolen, cello

Sung/Unsung: Weill and Poulenc

December 23, 3:30

Eric Mintel Quartet

East Building Auditorium

December 28, 12:10

General Information

Admission to the National Gallery of Art and all of its programs is free of charge, except as noted.

The use of cameras or recording equipment during the performance is not allowed.

Please be sure that all portable electronic devices are turned off.

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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.

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Cover Louis Casimir Ladislas Marcoussis, *The Musician* (detail), 1914, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Chester Dale Collection

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