As were many of his contemporaries, Mendelssohn was overwhelmed and inspired by the late string quartets of Beethoven, from which he adopted a number of techniques for his own quartets. Although the *Quartet*, *Opus 13* was only Mendelssohn's second fully developed work in this genre, it already shares the sophistication of Beethoven's *Quartet in A Minor*, *Opus 132*, which was its model. We hear movements integrated by thematic relationships, fugal textures, and adventuresome tonal effects, all evidence of Mendelssohn's astute study of Beethoven's music.

CONCERTS AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART Under the direction of George Manos

APRIL 1995

16 No concert

The Fifty-second American Music Festival — April 23 through May 21, 1995

23 The Country Gentlemen (Presented in the East Building Auditorium at 3:00 and 7:00 p.m.) Bluegrass concert

30 National Gallery Orchestra George Manos, *Conductor*

Music by Copland, Barber, Richard Bales, and Sotireos Vlahopoulos

MAY 1995

7 National Gallery Vocal Arts Ensemble Songs and part-songs by American composers

14 The Uptown String Quartet

Jazz Concert

21 Ramon Salvatore, pianist

Works by Aaron Copland

Concerts from the National Gallery are broadcast in their entirety at 7:00 p.m. on Sundays on radio station WGTS, 91.9 FM, four weeks after the live performance. The use of cameras or recording equipment during the performance is not allowed.

The Fifty-third Season of

THE WILLIAM NELSON CROMWELL and E. LAMMOT BELIN CONCERTS

at the

National Gallery of Art



2155th Concert

PENDERECKI STRING QUARTET

PIOTR BUCZEK, violin JERZY KAPLANEK, violin DOV SCHEINDLIN, viola PAUL PULFORD, cello

Sunday Evening, April 9, 1995 at Seven O'clock West Building, East Garden Court

Admission free

PROGRAM

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)

Quartet in D Major, K. 575 (1790)

Allegretto Andante

Menuetto: Allegretto — Trio

Allegretto

Henryk Górecki (b. 1933)

Quartet No. 2 "Quasi una fantasia" (1991)

Largo, sostenuto; mesto Deciso; energico Arioso: Adagio cantabile e molto marcato; lento tranquillissimo

INTERMISSION

Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847)

Quartet in A Minor, Opus 13 (1827)

Adagio; allegro vivace Adagio non lento Intermezzo: Allegretto con moto; allegro di molto; tempo I Presto

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

Founded in 1981, the PENDERECKI STRING QUARTET received its first American exposure as a resident ensemble at the Institute of Chamber Music at the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee, at which time it was known as the Montclaire String Quartet. The ensemble has gone on to become a favorite for repeat engagements at the Oregon Bach Festival, the New Hampshire Music Festival, Houston's Lyric Art Festival, and at the International Summer Academy for Chamber Music in Hitzacker, Germany. The quartet has performed throughout Germany, France, and Italy, as well as in Poland, the home country of Mr. Buczek and Mr. Kaplanek. While participating in the Polish National Chamber Music Competition in 1986, the ensemble made such a favorable impression on conductor and composer Krzysztof Penderecki that he bestowed upon it the honor of using his name.

Mozart wrote his *D Major String Quartet* in the spring of 1789 under extremely trying circumstances. Not only was his own health deteriorating rapidly, but he was obliged to look after his wife, who was pregnant for the fifth time and unable to walk by herself, owing to a foot condition. Short of money to boot, Mozart wrote this quartet within a month of receiving a commission for six string quartets from Frederick Wilhelm of Prussia. In anticipation of the fact that the Prussian king would probably want to play the cello part himself, Mozart gave to that instrument an important role throughout the quartet.

Henryk Górecki's Second String Quartet has a metaphysical symbolism that might suggest the innovative, mystical influence of Oliver Messiaen, the French composer with whom Górecki studied for a time in Paris. A hypnotic, measured, tonally static beat and a melody that seems to contemplate the metaphysical regions of infinity combine in the lower strings to initiate the Largo. The mechanistic second movement, Deciso; energico, continues the mesmeric beat, but with more tension and acerbic repetitive phrases. The Adagio features long periods of harmonic stasis and non-resolution, but there are also phrases that remind the listener of the quiet passion of the slow movements from Beethoven quartets. Finally, the Allegro introduces a joyously brighter mood, with the melody constantly changing direction over an ostinato bass. After some fast passages that sound almost jazzy, there is a quite unexpected interjection of a familiar Christmas carol melody, leading to a sustained and eloquent ending.