

Liszt's *Six Consolations* were completed and published between 1849 and 1850. With its sumptuous key of D-flat major, the *Consolation* is reminiscent of Chopin's nocturne in the same key. It is considered one of Liszt's unofficial tributes to Chopin on the occasion of his death in 1849. It was and has remained a popular favorite of students and concert artists alike.

Liszt's *Mephisto Waltz No. 1* is a transcription for piano of the second of two pieces entitled *Episodes from [Nikolaus] Lenau's "Faust"*. With its diabolical and sorcerous flashes, it reflects the composer's preoccupation with the legend of Faust, as recounted in Lenau's poem. Although Liszt composed three other *Mephisto Waltzes*, none has reached the popularity of the first. Its "bold harmonies and vivid exploitation of instrumental color," to quote music critic Patrick Rucker, "have made it one of the most often played of Liszt's works."

- Program notes by Elmer Booze

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

For the convenience of concertgoers the Garden Café remains open until 6:30 pm.

Under the Direction of George Manos

May 1998

**THE FIFTY-FIFTH AMERICAN MUSIC FESTIVAL
MAY 3 THROUGH 31, 1998**

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| 3 National Gallery Orchestra
George Manos, <i>conductor</i> | Copland: <i>Appalachian Spring</i>
Robert Ward: <i>Symphony No. 3</i>
Sotireos Vlahopoulos: <i>Ode</i>
(World premiere) |
| 10 National Gallery Vocal Arts Ensemble
Rosa Lamoreaux, <i>soprano</i>
Beverly Benso, <i>contralto</i>
Samuel Gordon, <i>tenor</i>
Robert Kennedy, <i>baritone</i>
Francis Conlon, <i>pianist</i> | Charles Ives: <i>In the Mornin'</i>
<i>The Collection</i>
<i>Slow March</i>
<i>Kären</i>
Donald Waxman <i>Four Songs of the Seasons</i>
Nancy Daley <i>Five Amusements</i>
(World premiere)
Ned Rorem <i>Four Madrigals</i>
Steven Weber <i>Five Nursery Rhymes</i> |
| 17 Upper Valley Duo
Tim Schwartz, <i>violinist</i>
Dan Weiser, <i>pianist</i> | Wm. G. Still: <i>Suite for Violin and Piano</i>
W. C. Handy: <i>St. Louis Blues</i>
Amy Beach: <i>Sonata for Violin and Piano</i> |
| 24 New England Spiritual Ensemble
Vincent Dion Stringer, <i>artistic director</i>
Fredericka King, <i>pianist</i> | American Spirituals and Gospel songs |
| 31 Washington Men's Camerata
Thomas Beveridge, <i>conductor</i>
Michael Patterson, <i>pianist</i> | Randall Thompson: <i>Testament of Freedom</i>
Vincent Persichetti: <i>Song of Peace</i>
Billings: <i>When Jesus Wept</i>

Plus works for men's chorus by Copland, Virgil Thomson, and Thomas Beveridge |

The Fifty-sixth Season of

THE WILLIAM NELSON CROMWELL and
F. LAMMOT BELIN CONCERTS

National Gallery of Art



2268th Concert

NELSON FREIRE, *pianist*

Sunday Evening, April 26, 1998
at Seven O'Clock
West Building, West Garden Court

Admission Free

PROGRAM

Johannes Brahms
(1833–1897) Sonata No. 3 in F Minor
Opus 5 (1853)

Allegro maestoso
Andante espressivo
Scherzo: Allegro energico
Intermezzo: Andante molto
Finale: Allegro moderato ma rubato

INTERMISSION

Robert Schumann
(1810–1856) Papillons, Opus 2
(1829–1831)

Frédéric Chopin
(1810–1849) Fantasy in F Minor
Opus 49 (1841)

Scherzo No. 4 in E Major
Opus 54 (1843)

Franz Liszt
(1811–1886) Consolation No. 3 in D-Flat Major
(1849–1850)

Mephisto Waltz No. 1
“Dance in the Village Inn” (1862)

Born in Brazil in 1944, NELSON FREIRE made his first public

appearance at the age of four. His teachers at that time were Nise Obino and Lucia Branco. In 1957 he won the Rio de Janeiro International Piano Competition with his performance of Beethoven's *Emperor Concerto*. The President of Brazil presented Freire with a financial scholarship that enabled him to continue his studies with Bruno Seidlhofer in Vienna. Seven years later, Mr. Freire won the Dinu Lipatti Medal in London, as well as first prize at the International Vianna da Motta Competition in Lisbon. He made his United States concerto debut in 1970, playing Rachmaninoff's *Fourth Piano Concerto* with the New York Philharmonic, and his New York recital debut took place the next day. Since then he has performed recitals in Boston, Washington, DC, and Fort Worth, Texas, and concertos with the symphony orchestras of New York, Chicago, Cleveland, Los Angeles, Baltimore, and Denver, among others. In addition to numerous recitals throughout Europe, Mr. Freire has performed with the Berlin Philharmonic, the London Symphony, and the Orchestre National de France under such distinguished conductors as Rudolf Kempe, Pierre Boulez, André Previn, Gennady Rozhdestvensky, and David Zinman. He has recorded music of Chopin and Villa-Lobos for the SONY Classical, IPAM, London, and Teldec labels, and his newest recording was released by Berlin Classics in the summer of 1995. It features Franz Liszt's *Piano Concertos Nos. 1 and 2* and *Totentanz/Danse Macabre* with the Dresden Philharmonic, conducted by Michel Plasson. A Steinway artist, Nelson Freire appears at the National Gallery by arrangement with Columbia Artists Management, Inc., of New York.

Brahms composed all three of his piano sonatas early in his career. The third is deemed not only the most magnificent of the three, but has been placed in the same arena of greatness as the mighty *B Minor Sonata* of Liszt. Brahms' early compositions were mainly virtuosic, without a great deal of musical substance. In the *Sonata, Opus 5* we find him ripening from his early powerful expression of emotion to a compact and more comprehensive use of musical forms. His later music contains a wealth of contrapuntal devices, including canons, fugues, retrogrades, inversions, and even retrograde inversions. All are used with an uncompromising lucidity that preserves rather than obliterates the melodic and harmonic balance. As the Belgian music critic Harry Halbreich put it: "Brahms...speaks from his rich and dark pianistic style.... We have an almost orchestral outgrowing of the keyboard's possibilities. Series of parallel thirds, octaves and above all, sixths (Brahms' favorite and most idi-

omatic interval) create a sense of truly symphonic volume. Brahms' music calls for large hands and keeps all ten fingers busy most of the time. But, massive as it may be, it never becomes obscure or opaque as long as it is properly performed...." Schumann was sufficiently aroused by Brahms' music to praise him as the "young eagle [and] he who had to come" in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, a progressive journal Schumann helped to found. He described Brahms' early piano works as "...veiled symphonies, so orchestral are they both in inspiration and pianistic writing."

Papillons, Opus 2 was written shortly before Schumann permanently injured a finger, which terminated his career as a concert pianist. The work is a series of dances, some based on waltzes and four-hand polonaises Schumann had composed previously. He acknowledged the influence of a novel, *Flegeljahre*, by Jean Paul, in the conception of the work, although it has no stated program. However, there is one marginal note in the score that refers to the final scene in the novel, a masked ball. Next to a bizarre passage in the final waltz, in which six accented notes penetrate an otherwise soft, hazy texture, Schumann writes: "The noise of the carnival night grows silent. The tower clock strikes six."

Composed in 1841, Chopin's *F Minor Fantasy, Opus 49* stands alongside the fantasies of Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert in importance and historical significance. James Huneker (1857–1921), in his introductory statements to Rafael Joseffy's critical edition of the Chopin *Scherzi and Fantasy*, said: "Its melodies, though restless and melancholy, are of surpassing nobility and dramatic grandeur.... It is [Chopin's] largest canvas.... The virtuoso makes way for the poet.... The interest is not relaxed until the final bar."

Chopin wrote six *scherzi*, one each for his two sonatas and four that were published separately, which include the *Scherzo No. 4 in E Major, Opus 54*. It has been the favorite of many pianists, including Saint-Saëns, who claimed he loved it more than any other work by Chopin. It embodies the true concept of the *scherzo* as Chopin conceived it, with its myriad trills, staccato chords, and radiant *leggiero* passage-work. It is sunnier in mood than his other *scherzi*, being in the key of E Major. This scherzo contains some of Chopin's most fortuitous ideas, cultivated with his unique ability to use the keyboard as a chromatic paintbrush.

Inspired by the poems of Charles Sainte-Beuve (1804–1869),