enamored with the final outcome of his endeavor that he wrote to the publisher Härtel, saying: "I...regard them as my best work of the earlier days, and Mendelssohn often spoke to me in the same sense." Mendelssohn was the recipient of *Op. 41*'s dedication. The A Minor Quartet, perhaps the most expressive of the three, opens with an introductory statement (Andante espressivo) in a polyphonic setting. Atypically, the introduction includes no thematic reference to the following Allegro, in which chromatic major sixth chords "provide a foretaste of Loge's motive in the Ring cycle" (James Lvon, editor, The American Record Guide). The second movement (Scherzo: Presto) is a spirited gallop, unrelenting in its forward drive except for the trio section, which gives a moment of reprieve before the return of the driving gallop. The third movement (Adagio) pays homage to Beethoven, with its melodic theme that mimics the third movement of his Ninth Symphony. The finale (Presto), in sonata-allegro form, "fairly cries out for a full orchestra, and in fact, its sound and fury are just barely contained in the quartet frame" (J. Lyons).

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 p.m.

During the months of February and March, recent performances by the National Gallery Orchestra can be heard on Wednesdays at 9:00 p.m. on WETA-FM, 90.9.

Selections from concerts at the Gallery can be heard on the second Sunday of each month at 9:00 p.m. on WGMS-FM, 103.5.

The Fifty-eighth Season of

THE WILLIAM NELSON CROMWELL and F. LAMMOT BELIN CONCERTS

National Gallery of Art



2338th Concert

TOKYO STRING QUARTET

MIKHAIL KOPELMAN, violin KIKUEI IKEDA, violin

KAZUHIDE ISOMURA, viola CLIVE GREENSMITH, cello

Sunday Evening, 27 February 2000 Seven O'clock West Building, West Garden Court

Admission free

PROGRAM

Claude Debussy (1862–1918)

String Quartet in G Minor Op. 10 (1893)

Aimé et très decidé Assez vif et bien rythmé Andantino, doucement expressif Très modéré; très mouvemente

Anton Webern (1883–1945) Langsamer Satz (1905)

INTERMISSION

Robert Schumann (1810–1856)

Quartet in A Major Op. 41, No. 3 (1842)

Andante espressivo; allegro molto moderato Assai agitato Adagio molto Finale: Allegro molto vivace

Officially formed in 1969 at the Juilliard School of Music in New York City, the **Tokyo String Quartet** has a well-deserved reputation as one of the world's supreme ensembles. The quartet traces its origin to the Toho School of Music in Tokyo, where Professor Hideo Saito profoundly influenced the founding members, Hoichiro Harada, Yoshiko Nakura, Kazuhide Isomura, and Sadao Harada. Deeply committed to chamber music, the original members eventually came to the United States for further study with Robert Mann, Raphael Hillyer, and Claus Adams. Soon after its creation, the quartet won First Prize at the Coleman Competition, the Munich Competition, and the Young Concert Artists International Auditions. Violinist **Kikuei Ikeda**, who was also trained at the Toho School of Music, joined the quartet as second violinist in 1974. Born in Ukraine, violinist **Mikhail Kopelman** studied at the Moscow Conservatory and was the first violinist of the Borodin Quartet for two decades. Kopelman joined the Tokyo String Quartet in 1996. Violist **Kazuhide Isomura** studied violin with Ivan Galamian and Paul Makanowitsky, chamber music with Robert Mann and Raphael Hillyer, and viola with Walter Trampler. Cellist **Clive Greensmith**, the newest member, studied at the Royal Northern College of Music and was principal cellist of London's Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

Although much of Debussy's music is for piano, he devoted a good deal of his energy to music for other instruments, whether solo or in combination, and looked to the string quartet as a measure of his skill as a composer. The theme of the *String Quartet in G Minor*, *Opus 10*, is derived from the interval of the tritone, with the result that the tonality is ambiguous but never relinquished. Each movement has its own key signature, but Debussy's tonal center for the quartet as a whole remains G minor. The use of the whole-tone scale with its inherent tritones (inspired by Indonesian gamelan music) appears in this work parenthetically. The theme is subject to so many transformations that at times it becomes almost undiscernible. There is an Andalusian dance in the second movement, which later gives rise to an elongated, morose *Andante* that is awash in kaleidoscopic harmony.

An early work of Anton Webern, *Langsamer Satz* (*Slow Movement*) was never published or performed during his lifetime; it was published some years after his death and first performed in 1962. Written during the period when Webern began his studies with Schoenberg (1904–1908), it gives strong evidence of Schoenberg's influence, particularly in the area of compositional frugality. After 1908 Webern changed his compositional techniques, moving away from the style of Schoenberg and earning for himself a stellar position among those composers who forged paths leading to a new kind of music.

The Quartet No.1 in A Minor; Op.41, is one of only three that Schumann wrote. He completed all three in 1842 and never returned to the string quartet again, except to combine it with the piano. In 1838 Schumann wrote to his fiancée, Clara Wieck, that the pleasure he derived from hearing quartet music inspired to him write his own. Clara was presented with the first hearing of the A Minor Quartet on her birthday, 13 September 1842. She was highly impressed with his writing, noting: "My respect for his genius, for his intellect, altogether for the whole composer grow with each work. Here everything is new and at the same time lucid, finely worked out, and always in the quartet idiom." Schumann himself was so