Sarabande, the second of a group of three piano pieces that Debussy named Pour le piano, was originally one of four pieces for piano collectively titled Images. Before Images was published, Debussy reconfigured and regrouped the pieces, saving the Sarabande for later publication. One of the editions in which it appeared carried the intriguing subtitle, Souvenir du Louvre, leading to speculation that Debussy may have made an association between its quiet, majestic mood and one of his visits to that great museum. The Sarabande, and its companion pieces from Pour le piano, Prelude and Toccata, are examples of forms perfected by François Couperin and other French composers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Ravel's orchestrated version of the Sarabande dates from 1922.

Written for the 50th Anniversary Season of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Howard Hanson's *Symphony No. 2* (*Romantic*) was given its world premiere on 28 November 1930, with Serge Koussevitsky conducting. The theory that the work is a musical self-portrait is supported by Hanson's own notes for the first performance: "Concerning my *Second Symphony*, as the subtitle implies, it represents for me a definite and acknowledged embracing of the romantic phase. I recognize, of course, that romanticism is, at the present time, the poor stepchild, without the social standing of her elder sister, neoclassicism. Nevertheless, I embrace her all the more fervently, believing as I do that romanticism will find in this country rich soil for a new, young, and vigorous growth. My aim in this symphony has been to create a work young in spirit, romantic in temperament, and simple and direct in expression."

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.

The Fifty-eighth Season of

THE WILLIAM NELSON CROMWELL and F. LAMMOT BELIN CONCERTS

National Gallery of Art



2339th Concert

NATIONAL GALLERY ORCHESTRA

GEORGE MANOS, conductor

Sunday Evening, 5 March 2000 Seven O'clock West Building, West Garden Court

Admission free

PROGRAM

George Butterworth (1885–1916)

A Shropshire Lad (1913)

Claude Debussy (1862–1918)

from Nocturnes (1892–1899)

Nuages Fêtes

Debussy, arr. by Ravel

Sarabande *from* Pour le piano

INTERMISSION

Howard Hanson (1896–1981)

Symphony No. 2 ("Romantic") Op. 30 (1930)

Adagio; Allegro moderato Andante con tenerezza Allegro con brio

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

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

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 Catholic University in Washington, DC, where he taught piano, conducting, and chamber music. In addition, he held the directorship of the Wilmington, Delaware, School of Music, where he presented an annual jazz festival and clinic. Maestro Manos founded and directed for ten years the renowned Killarney Bach Festival in the Republic of Ireland, and was the music director of the 1992 Scandinavian Music Festival in Kolding, Denmark.

One of England's most talented young composers of the Edwardian period, George Butterworth died in battle during World War I. His legacy is limited to the few remaining works that he did not destroy when he was assigned front line duty; he was well aware of the chances that he might not survive and wanted to leave only his best works behind. A Shropshire Lad was inspired by a volume of poetry by the same title, written in 1896 by the English poet and classical scholar Alfred Housman. Shropshire, a county bordering Wales, was rural in the 1890s. In his rhapsody Butterworth makes ample use of English folk melodies that reflect the soft-spoken

lyricism of the poetry.

Debussy's expressive use of the term *Nocturne* does not refer to the nocturnes for piano initiated by John Field and made famous by Chopin. While those pieces are intended to create a romantic dream state with the night as the implied backdrop, Debussy had more visual images in mind. His own commentary reads: "The title Nocturnes is to be interpreted here in a general and, more particularly, in a decorative sense. Therefore, it is not meant to designate the usual form of a nocturne, but rather all the impression and special effects of light that the word suggests." The nocturne entitled Nuages (Clouds), Debussy noted, "renders the immutable aspect of the sky and the slow, solemn motion of the clouds, fading away in gray tones, slightly tinged with white." As to Fêtes (Festivals), Debussy explains: "Fêtes gives us the vibrating, dancing rhythm of the atmosphere with sudden flashes of light. There is also the episode of the procession (a dazzling, fantastic vision) which passes through the festive scene and becomes merged in it. But the background remains persistently the same: the festival with its blending of music and luminous dust participating in the rhythm."