few fail to be touched by this highly affecting music." The third movement (Scherzo: Allegro vivace con delicatezza) is a lively, charming dance that brings a reprieve from the two preceding movements of impressiveness. Its trio section is much more abstemious in texture, with an interesting rhythmic diversion in the use of syncopation in 3/4 time. A return of the Scherzo resumes the energetic drive that closes the movement. The fourth movement (Allegro, ma non troppo) is a spirited rondo that utilizes a device that is also found in the finale of the "Trout" Quintet: a repeated note (in this case a sustained G) consistently interrupts the opening theme. Beethoven used the same device in the finale of his String Quartet, Op. 130. The subordinate themes of the fourth movement are theatrically and impishly mimicked at the higher register of the keyboard. In keeping with the vivacity of this movement, the coda, marked Presto, brings the sonata to a brilliant end.

Chopin's affinity for the smaller forms in music is axiomatic. Large forces had no appeal for him; he found complete satisfaction in composing works for solo piano, excelling in the shorter musical forms (preludes, etudes, waltzes, and more). Modeled after the Well-Tempered Clavier of Bach, whom Chopin idolized, the 24 Préludes, Op. 28, cover all major and minor keys. They are, as John Gillespie (Five Centuries of Keyboard Music) says, "very much like Bach's preludes, not in technical style but in attitude and basic concept. The Préludes are fragmentary and may seem like sketches, but they faithfully reflect the soul of the romantic musician: brief portrayals, some melancholy and even desperate (No. 24), and others light and gay (No. 3)." A jeweler before displaying his collection will polish his stones to perfection. Chopin, a "musical jeweler," polished his Préludes to such a state of flawlessness as is humanly possible. In this performance, the collection is proudly exhibited in its entirety. Again quoting Gillespie: "[when] played as a set, they [the Préludes] provide a tonal mosaic, a prism of different hues. Heard singly, each emerges as a delectable inspiration born of concentrated emotion."

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



2341st Concert

## MENAHEM PRESSLER, pianist

Sunday Evening, 19 March 2000 Seven O'clock West Building, West Garden Court

Admission free

#### **PROGRAM**

Franz Schubert (1797–1828)

Sonata in B-flat Major Opus posthumous (D. 960) (1828)

Molto moderato Andante sostenuto Scherzo: Allegro vivace con delicatezza; Trio Allegro ma non troppo

#### INTERMISSION

Frédéric Chopin (1810–1849)	Twenty-four Preludes, Op. 28 (1836–1839)
No. 1 in C Major No. 2 in A Minor No. 3 in G Major No. 4 in E Minor No. 5 in D Major No. 6 in B Minor No. 7 in A Major No. 8 in F-sharp Minor No. 9 in E Major	No. 13 in F-sharp Major No. 14 in E-flat Minor No. 15 in D-flat Major No. 16 in B-flat Minor No. 17 in A-flat Minor No. 18 in F Minor No. 19 in E-flat Major No. 20 in C Minor No. 21 in B-flat Major
No. 10 in C-sharp Minor No. 11 in B Major No. 12 in G-sharp Minor	No. 22 in G Minor No. 23 in F Major No. 24 in D Minor

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.

Menahem Pressler was born in Magdeburg, Germany, and received most of his early musical training in Israel. His international concert career began when he won first prize in the Debussy Piano Competition in San Francisco in 1946. His North American concerto debut followed with the Philadelphia Orchestra under the baton of Eugene Ormandy. Pressler subsequently appeared with many of the world's leading orchestras, among them the New York Philharmonic, the National Symphony, the Cleveland Orchestra. the Orchestre de Paris, and the Orchestre National de Belgique. He has recently performed and recorded the Beethoven Choral Fantasy with the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra under the baton of Kurt Masur. In 1955 Pressler co-founded the Beaux Arts Trio. which has become one of the world's most enduring and widely acclaimed chamber music ensembles. The Beaux Arts recordings for Philips have won many coveted honors and awards, and include almost all of the piano trio literature. Menahem Pressler appears frequently in recital, including recent concerts on Carnegie Hall's Great Performers Series, at Jordan Hall in Boston, at the Ravinia Festival, and in Toronto, St. Louis, and Los Angeles. He is a frequent guest artist with chamber ensembles, including the Juilliard, Emerson, Tokyo, and Guarneri String Quartets. Since 1955 he has been on the piano faculty of Indiana University, where he holds the position of distinguished professor of music. Menahem Pressler appears at the National Gallery by arrangement with Melvin Kaplan, Inc., of Burlington, Vermont.

As the last of Schubert's three "Grand" sonatas, the Sonata in B-flat Major, Op. posthumous, D. 960, qualifies as Schubert's supreme effort in this genre. The inherent structure of its first movement (Molto *moderato*) provides an initial glimpse of its originality. Eschewing the conventional fast and energetic exposition, Schubert instead presents a movement that is quite protracted and subdued. The opening theme, with its abundance of melodic phrases, begins gently, exuding an air of secrecy that appears to be "communicating gentle yearning and peaceful resignation... with a low trill...[giving] the movement a cryptic air of mystery and foreboding" (Melvin Berger, Guide to Sonatas). The second movement (Andante sostenuto) delivers one of Schubert's most sublime musical moments. An elongated, emotionally penetrating theme rises over a rocking bass line that suggests an Italian gondolier's serenade, with a contrasting theme that is capacious and luxurious in its expression. Again quoting Melvin Berger, "[One would] find it a heart-piercing paradigm of pain and pathos....No matter how it is perceived,