



The Sixty-sixth Season of
The William Nelson Cromwell and F. Lammot Belin
Concerts

National Gallery of Art
2,655th Concert

Jeni Slotchiver, *pianist*

January 20, 2008
Sunday Evening, 6:30 pm
West Building, West Garden Court

Admission free

Program

Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887–1959)

Bachianas brasileiras no. 4 (1930–1941)

Preludio (Introdução) (Prelude: Introduction)

Coral (Canto do sertão) (Chorale: Song of the Jungle)

Aria (Cantiga) (Aria: Song)

Dansa (Miudinho) (Dance: Samba Step)

Francisco Mignone (1897–1986)

Sonatina no. 4 (1949)

Allegretto

Allegro con umore

Carlos Guastavino (1912–2000)

Las Niñas (The Girls) (1951)

Bailecito (Dance) (1941)

Gato (Cat) (1940)

Camargo Guarnieri (1907–1993)

Dansa negra (1948)

Frutuoso de Lima Viana (1896–1976)

Corta-Jaca (Brazilian Folk Dance) (1932)

INTERMISSION

Ferruccio Busoni (1866–1924)

*Indian Diary: Book One (Four Studies on Motifs of the
Native American Indians)* (1915)

He-Hea Katzina Song (Hopi)

Song of Victory (Cheyenne)

Blue Bird Song (Pima) and *Corn-Grinding Song* (Lagunas)

Passamquoddy Dance Song (Wabanakis) and

He-Hea Katzina Song (Hopi)

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor (1875–1912)

Deep River (1904)

R. Nathaniel Dett (1882–1943)

Juba (1913)

Louis Moreau Gottschalk (1829–1869)

Souvenir de Puerto Rico, op. 31 (1857)

Gottschalk

L'Union (1862)

The Musician

Pianist Jeni Slotchiver began her formal musical studies at an early age. A recipient of several scholarships, she attended the Interlochen Arts Academy and the Aspen Music Festival, before earning her bachelor and master of music degrees in piano performance at Indiana University. A frequent recipient of performance grants from the New York Public Libraries and the Smithsonian Institution, she made her solo recital debut at Carnegie Hall in 1991 as the first prize winner of the Artists International Young Musicians Auditions. A champion of twentieth-century composers, Slotchiver is dedicated to the presentation of new and rarely-heard music, and has given the world premieres of many American works. She is active as a recitalist, soloist, lecturer, and competition judge and is currently writing for *Piano* magazine and participating in its Busoni Symposium in London. In 1997 she presented an all-Busoni performance at Merkin Concert Hall, the first of its kind in New York City in thirty years.

Slotchiver has received critical acclaim in Asia, England, France, Germany, Hungary, the Netherlands, Russia, and Spain. She has been featured on NPR's *Performance Today*, WKCR's *Live Constructions*, WNYC's *The Fishko Files*, WPLN's *Live in Studio C*, and WQXR's *Reflections from the Keyboard* with David Dubal. This year, in addition to her touring schedule, she is working on a collection of essays on the life and work of Ferruccio Busoni, as well as the release of several new CDs including the third volume of *Busoni the Visionary*.

A regular guest recitalist and concerto soloist at The Americas Society in New York City, the City Universities of New York, Dartmouth College, Florida International University, New Jersey City University, and the Presidential Library in California, Slotchiver plays her second recital at the National Gallery this evening. She was the 2007 J. Donald Feagan Visiting Artist at the University of Tulsa and member of the visiting-artist faculty at Tennessee State University. She appears at the gallery by arrangement with Carl Weinberg of New York City.

Program Notes

Heitor Villa-Lobos is undoubtedly the most famous of the twentieth-century Latin- American composers. Initially self-taught, Villa-Lobos toured Europe in the 1920s where he met many of the leading composers. In 1930 he was appointed director of Brazil's National Music Academy and two years later given charge of his country's music education. In 1942 Villa-Lobos founded the Conservatorio Nacional de Canto Orfeônico, with the aim of providing qualified music teachers for Brazilian schools. Villa-Lobos' music derives strong coloring from Brazilian folk elements. It is richly imbued with Indian and African influences and has stylistic similarities to European impressionism. Essentially romantic in mood, his compositions are ethnically diverse in inspiration and are marked by polyrhythms and instrumental virtuosity.

Francisco Mignone was born in São Paulo, Brazil, of Italian parents. He studied flute, piano, and composition at the Conservatório Dramático e Musical in São Paulo. Mignone is considered, along with Villa-Lobos and Oscar Lorenzo Fernandez (1897–1948), one of Brazil's most important composers. Mignone was prolific, composing more than 700 works. He was a brilliant pianist and his craft is characterized by strong melodic intensity and rhythmic precision. His compositions reflect the evolution of Brazilian popular music from urban melodies of the Brazilian colonial period to the more stylized and refined forms of the first half of the twentieth century.

Carlos Guastavino was born in Santa Fe, Argentina, and studied at the National Conservatory in Buenos Aires. At the invitation of the BBC, he performed his piano works in London in 1947, 1948, and 1949. During these years, the BBC Symphony Orchestra premiered his *Tres Romances argentinos*. Later, Guastavino toured throughout Europe, the former Soviet Union, and China, performing his pieces for voice and piano. Guastavino's style, inherited from the luminaries of nineteenth-century Argentinian nationalist composers, was conservative, tonal, and lusciously romantic. His conscious isolation from the modernist and avant-garde movements, coupled with the overtly nationalist content of his songs, made him a model for Argentine popular and folk musicians of the 1960s.

Composer, conductor, and pedagogue Camargo Guarnieri occupies a central position in the context of Brazilian music. His influence on several generations of nationalist composers is widely acknowledged and can hardly be overestimated. The universal appeal of his style—felt immediately upon hearing his work—is primarily a result of his highly personal blending of traditional Brazilian melodies and rhythms, but his musical language has a broad cosmopolitan scope. Guarnieri’s interest in Brazilian folklore was inspired by Mário de Andrade (1893–1945), the great Brazilian scholar and critic who revitalized Brazilian cultural traditions. Andrade nurtured the career of the young Guarnieri, whom he saw as a defender against the diluting influence of European academicism. In 1947 Guarnieri conducted his *First Symphony* with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and he guest conducted other great European and American orchestras as well. In 1960 he was appointed director of the Conservatório Dramático e Musical and he continued to take a leading role in orchestral and choral organizations in Brazil until his death in 1993.

Frutuoso de Lima Viana was born in 1896 in Itajubá, Minas Gerais, Brazil. He began his musical studies at a young age with his parents, who were both ardent music lovers, and later studied at the National Institute of Music in Rio de Janeiro with Enrique Oswald. A young prodigy, he was invited to guest-conduct orchestras in Brazil and abroad when he was only seventeen. After meeting Villa-Lobos, Viana became interested in composition and studied briefly in Europe. Viana was also a professor of piano at the Conservatório Dramático e Musical and choral director of the Paulistano Choral in São Paulo. In 1942 he settled in Rio de Janeiro, where he taught, performed, and composed until his death in 1976.

Ferruccio Busoni was born in Empoli, Italy, and his prodigious natural talent as an instrumentalist and composer quickly earned him a reputation as a wonder child. As he grew to adulthood, he became the most acclaimed virtuoso pianist of his time. Although his career as an interpreter and performing artist overshadowed his life as a composer, Busoni never doubted that composition was his primary artistic expression. He was immensely prolific, composing

more than two hundred works before the age of twenty, and referred to composition as “the ultimate object of my existence.” Busoni strove to define a “universal music” that would communicate beyond all ethnic, geographic, political, and spiritual boundaries. This quest led him to ancient melodies as a pure form of music that could convey what he felt was its essence. While in New York in 1910, Busoni reunited with a former student, Natalie Curtis. Curtis presented him with a recently published edition of her ethnomusicological work, *The Indians’ Book*. Haunted by the Indian melodies he found there, he composed an *Indian Fantasy* for piano and orchestra in 1913 and *Indian Diary: Book One* two years later. In his notes on these works, he referred to the Indian motifs as perfect examples of “absolute melody [that renders] a state of mind [that] can exist independent of a text as expression.”

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor was born in London to an English mother and a Sierra Leonian father. In 1890 he entered the Royal Academy of Music as a violin student. Frequent public performances of his compositions began in 1891, after Vincent Novello published his anthem *In thee, O Lord*. In 1904 Coleridge-Taylor undertook a concert tour of the United States, which increased his exposure to music of African origin. He met the African-American poet Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872–1906) and set several of his poems to music. Throughout the rest of his short life (he died in 1912 at age thirty-seven), Coleridge-Taylor devoted his efforts to reestablishing the dignity of his African ancestors. He composed *African Dances* for violin and a number of chamber works based on African themes. Despite being named after the poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772–1834), he set only one Coleridge poem, *The Legend of Kubla Khan*, to music. Coleridge-Taylor made two additional visits to the United States, each time receiving great acclaim. American journalists of the time dubbed him “the Black Mahler.”

R. Nathaniel Dett was born in Drummondville, Quebec, near Niagara Falls. A composer, concert pianist, and conductor who devoted himself to the lifelong pursuit of music education, he was the first person of African descent to receive the bachelor of music degree from the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music, where he majored in both piano and composition. He continued his studies with Nadia Boulanger in Paris. An extremely

learned artist, Dett attended many prominent universities, among them Eastman, Columbia, Harvard, and Northwestern. Both Howard University and Oberlin College awarded him honorary doctorate degrees. Dett's most popular multi-movement work is a suite, *In the Bottoms*, which includes *Juba*, a tap dance. The suite was published and premiered in Chicago in 1913 by Fanny Bloomfield-Zeisler and popularized by Percy Grainger. *Juba* is dedicated to the memory of William Henry Lane, who is considered the father of modern tap dancing and who used the name Juba as his stage name.

Louis Moreau Gottschalk occupies a unique place in American history. Born in New Orleans of English and French-Creole parentage, he was the first American to achieve an international reputation as a virtuoso pianist and composer. At the forefront of American musical nationalism in the nineteenth century, Gottschalk incorporated the indigenous rhythms and melodies of North and South America into his piano pieces, in particular Louisiana plantation tunes and the rhythms of cakewalk, habanera, rumba, and tango. His *Souvenir of Puerto Rico* is remarkable for its unsentimental, adventurous nationalism and modern pianistic effects. Despite Gottschalk's New Orleans roots and devotion to the culture of the American South, he was an abolitionist and a unionist. His montage of union civil war melodies, *L'Union*, was dedicated to General George B. McClellan. He was invited to perform it in 1864 at a memorial service shortly after the assassination of President Lincoln. In his memoirs, the composer mentions performing this work on carefully selected occasions only; to do otherwise would have endangered his safety.

Gottschalk served as a model for American composer Richard Bales, former head of the National Gallery's music programs from 1943 to 1985. Bales regularly included works by Gottschalk in the annual American music festivals at the Gallery, beginning with the third festival in 1946, and based many of his own compositions on traditional American tunes. Bales' most notable works of this type are the third and fourth of his *National Gallery Suites*, *American Design* (1957) and *American Chronicle* (1965); and his cantatas *The Confederacy* (1953), *The Republic* (1955), and *The Union* (1956).

Next Week at the National Gallery of Art

Central Bucks High School-West Chamber Choir

Joseph Ohrt, *conductor*

Music by Cage, Caldwell, Gjeilo, Ohrt, and Samson

January 27, 2008

Sunday Evening, 6:30 pm

West Building, West Garden Court

For the convenience of concertgoers
the Garden Café remains open until 6:00 pm.

The use of cameras or recording equipment during the
performance is not allowed. Please be sure that cell phones,
pagers, and other electronic devices are turned off.

Please note that late entry or reentry of
the West Building after 6:30 pm is not permitted.

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