



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

National Gallery of Art
2,649th Concert

National Gallery Orchestra
Bjarte Engeset, *guest conductor*
Isa Katharina Gericke, *soprano*

Presented in connection with the
Norwegian Christmas Festival at Union Station

December 9, 2007
Sunday Evening, 6:30 pm
West Building, West Garden Court

Admission free

This concert is made possible in part by a generous grant
from the Royal Norwegian Embassy.

Program

Music by Edvard Grieg (1843–1907)

From *Symphony in C Minor* (1864)

Intermezzo

Lyric Suite, op. 54 (1891)

Gjetergutt (Shepherd Boy)

Gangar (Norwegian Dance)

Notturmo (Nocturne)

Trolltog (March of the Dwarfs)

From *Haugtussa*, op. 67 (1895)

Orchestrated by Sparre Olsen

Det syng (It Sings)

Veslemøy (The Little Maid)

Elsk (Love)

Vond dag (Evil Day)

Killingdans (Little Goats' Dance)

INTERMISSION

Suite for Orchestra from *Slåtter*, op. 72 (1902–1903)

Orchestrated by Øystein Sommerfeldt

Bruremarsch etter Myllarguten (Wedding March after Myllarguten)

Haugelat: Halling (*Halling* from *The Fairy Hill*)

John Vestafes springdans (Jon Vestafe's Spring Dance)

From *Six Orchestral Songs* (EG 177)

En svane (A Swan)

Fra Monte Pincio (From Monte Pincio)

Våren (Last spring)

From *Peer Gynt*, op. 23

I bryllupsgården (At the wedding—Overture to Act 1)

Brudfølget dragger forbi (Bridal Procession)

Dans av Dovregubbens datter (Dance of the Mountain King's daughter)

I Dovregubbens hall (In the Hall of the Mountain King)

The Musicians

NATIONAL GALLERY ORCHESTRA

The National Gallery Orchestra was founded in 1943 and initially consisted of approximately twenty-five players drawn from the National Symphony Orchestra. Gradually growing in numbers, the Gallery orchestra eventually reached the size and status of a large chamber orchestra. The ensemble has undertaken the full range of chamber and symphonic repertoire and has frequently presented first performances of works by American composers, most notably the 1953 premiere of Charles Ives' *Symphony no. 1* under the direction of Richard Bales and the 1990 premiere of Daniel Pinkham's *Symphony no. 4* under George Manos.

BJARTE ENGESET

Norwegian conductor BjarTE Engeset received his degree from the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki in 1989, where he studied with conductor and composer Jorma Panula. Two years later, he was chosen as a member of the Tanglewood Music Center Seminar of conductors where the faculty included Seiji Ozawa, Gustav Meier, Simon Rattle, and Marek Janowski, among others.

Engeset has been music director of the Tromsø Symphony Orchestra and the Norwegian Wind Ensemble. He has also served as artistic director of both Northern Norway's Northern Lights Festival and Opera Nord, and was permanent guest conductor of the Flemish Radio Orchestra. In 2007 Engeset was appointed chief conductor of Sweden's Dala Sinfonietta.

Engeset has performed concerts, tours, and has made recordings with leading orchestras including the Bournemouth Symphony, the Czech Philharmonic, NDR Philharmonic Orchestra, Oslo Philharmonic, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Saint Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra, and Zagreb Philharmonic. In November 2005 his Baltimore Symphony Orchestra concerts received standing ovations and superb reviews. The following year, Engeset led the Moscow Radio Symphony Orchestra in a guest performance at the prestigious Wörthersee Classics Festival in Klagenfurt, Austria.

Engeset's discography contains a number of critically acclaimed best-selling albums and includes a comprehensive recording of the orchestral music of Edvard Grieg for Naxos. He appears at the National Gallery by arrangement with Pro Arte International Management of Bergen, Norway.

ISA KATHARINA GERICKE

Isa Katharina Gericke was born in Berlin and grew up in Norway. She studied with Ingrid Bjoner and Svein Bjørkøy at the Norwegian Music Academy in Oslo, and with Ingrid Figur at the Hochschule der Künste in Berlin. In 2001 she won first prize in the national division of the Queen Sonja International Music Competition in Oslo. The following year she received the Luitpold Prize at the Kissinger Sommer, and was selected as a performer within the Norwegian Concert Institute's career-launching initiative, "INTRO-classic," for 2002–2004.

Gericke is a popular and sought-after soloist with orchestras, and has sung with most Norwegian and a number of international orchestras including the BBC Symphony, the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra. She has participated in numerous festivals in Scandinavia, as well as in Austria, Canada, Germany, and South Africa and has worked with conductors such as Sir Andrew Davis, Phillippe Herreweghe, Manfred Honeck, and Tõnu Kaljuste.

With remarkable versatility, she has sung Pamina in Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, and was a soloist in Olav Anton Thommessen's *The Hermaphrodite* in the same week. As a Lieder singer she has worked with Rudolf Jansen, Brigitte Fassbaender, and Håkan Hagegård. Her research into the field of German Lied in Norway led to her 2003 recording, *Waldabendlust*. She is artistic director of an annual chamber music festival, Glogerfestspillene, in Kongsberg, Norway, and is a driving force behind the newly established Oslo Baroque Opera. Isa Katharina Gericke appears at the National Gallery by arrangement with Scanarts Management of Oslo, Norway.

Program Notes

This concert marks the fourth time that the National Gallery of Art and the Royal Norwegian Embassy have collaborated on a concert in connection with the Norwegian Christmas Festival at Union Station. Since 2004 violinist Henning Kraggerud, accordionist Kier Draugsvoll, and the chamber choir Nordic Voices have participated in the concert. The festival, now in its eleventh year, provides the nation's capital with a taste of Norway through concerts, exhibits, a holiday bazaar, and special menus at Union Station and other venues throughout the city. To launch each year's festival, a thirty-two-foot Christmas tree is erected and decorated at Union Station—a gift from Norway to the people of Washington. The tree symbolizes the friendship between the two countries and expresses Norway's gratitude for assistance received from the United States during World War II. This is the first festival for the new Ambassador of Norway to the United States, Wegger Chr. Strommen, who arrived in Washington in October. More information on the Norwegian Christmas Festival is available at www.norway.org/xmas.

This year marks the one hundredth anniversary of the death of Edvard Grieg, who has been honored with numerous international performances and events celebrating his music and his contribution to Norwegian culture. Grieg was a lifelong proponent of Norwegian national identity, and his music is now considered an integral part of the history and culture of that country. Beginning in the 1840s, a growing movement toward nationalism in music emerged. This movement lasted for approximately 100 years and was particularly dominant in Central Europe and Czarist Russia, where it was spearheaded by well-known composers such as Mikhail Glinka (1804–1857), Aleksandr Borodin (1833–1887), and Modest Mussorgsky (1839–1881). In Norway, Edvard Grieg, along with his countrymen Christian Sinding (1856–1941) and Johan Svendsen (1849–1911), attached themselves wholeheartedly to this movement.

Encouraged by a family friend, the virtuoso violinist Ole Bull (1810–1880), Grieg entered the Leipzig Conservatory as a piano student at age fifteen. While there, he received solid training from some of Europe’s most eminent teachers, and in his fourth year studied composition with Carl Reinecke. In the two years following his studies at the conservatory, Grieg spent time in Copenhagen, which was the current center of Scandinavian cultural activity. There, he came under the influence of Niels Gade (1817–1890), the recognized leader of the Scandinavian romantic school. Gade gave Grieg the assignment of composing a symphony. Though he did not feel up to the task, Grieg completed the exercise, but notated on the score that the piece was not to be performed. The two middle movements, an *Adagio* and the *Intermezzo* with which this program begins, were first published as *Deux Pièces symphoniques*, op. 14, for piano duet.

Grieg continued to have a successful career as a pianist and toured extensively as a solo performer and accompanist. His *Piano Concerto*, op. 16 (1868), established him as both performer and composer, and works for solo piano dominated his output. The four pieces in the *Lyrical Suite*, op. 54, were originally written for piano in 1891 as one of ten sets of lyric pieces and were orchestrated in 1904 by the composer. Based on Norwegian folksongs, these charming pieces can best be described as mood sketches.

Grieg was almost as prolific as a composer of songs as he was of piano music. He wrote many songs for solo voice and piano for his wife, Nina, with whom he toured extensively, and who he considered to be the best interpreter of his vocal music. His songs are almost always strophic in form, with simple yet lyrical melodies. In later years, he began to experiment more with piano accompaniment, including longer interludes and new harmonies. Grieg spent the summer of 1895 writing most of the pieces that comprise the song cycle based on Arne Garborg’s (1851–1924) epic poem “Haugtussa.” Grieg was thoroughly enchanted when he first read the poetry, which impressed him as “a sea of unborn music.” Five of the eight published songs were orchestrated by Sparre Olsen (1903–1984). The songs tell of a young shepherdess’ first encounter with love and describe the landscape and people of western Norway.

The *Suite for Orchestra* from *Slåtter*, op. 72, is based on a group of seventeen Norwegian peasant dance tunes, which were part of the repertoire of the famed Hardanger fiddle player, Knut Dale (1849–1909). At the request of Dale, and, with the advice of violinist Johan Halvorsen, Grieg transcribed the dance tunes for piano in 1902–1903. Øystein Sommerfeldt (1919–1994) orchestrated three of the dances in 1979, emphasizing the folk element and utilizing the tambourine to bring out the dance rhythms.

Grieg orchestrated six of his own songs in the winter of 1894–1895. *En svane* (A Swan) sets a text of Henrik Ibsen (1828–1906). The second song, *Fra Monte Pincio* (From Monte Pincio), has a text by Bjørnstjerne Björnson (1832–1910). It contains impressionistically rendered images of the Pincio region of Rome. The third song, *Våren* (Last Spring), is a sentimental setting of a poem by Asmund Vinje (1818–1870) that has gained wide popularity through this orchestral transcription and one for four-voice chorus. Vinje championed the use of *landsmal*, later called *nynors*, an indigenous form of the Norwegian language that explicitly avoided Danish influences.

Grieg's name will always be linked to that of his contemporary Ibsen, who is recognized as one of the greatest dramatists since Shakespeare and who was the founder of a new concept of dramatic literature and theatrical production. Ibsen, in a letter he wrote to Grieg on January 23, 1874, expressed his desire for incidental music for his play *Peer Gynt* and asked Grieg to compose it. Grieg responded positively, but it took him a full year to complete the task. This was an unusual length of time for him, and shows how seriously he took the assignment. The full score contains twenty-six pieces, but the only well-known ones are those that were incorporated in the two *Peer Gynt* concert suites, opp. 23 and 24. Both suites are standard symphony orchestra repertoire and are easily recognized throughout the world as Norwegian music by Norway's preeminent composer.

Program notes by Danielle DeSwert and Sorab Modi

Next Week at the National Gallery of Art

Leipzig String Quartet

Music by Beethoven

November 16, 2007
Sunday Evening, 6:30 pm
East Building Auditorium

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.

Music Department
National Gallery of Art
Sixth Street and Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC

Mailing address
2000B South Club Drive
Landover, MD 20785

www.nga.gov