



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

National Gallery of Art
2,644th Concert

The Alexandria Symphony Orchestra
Kim Allen Kluge, *music director*

Presented in honor of *J. M. W. Turner*

November 4, 2007
Sunday Evening, 6:30 pm
West Building, West Garden Court

Admission free

Program

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

German Dance no. 12 (1795)

Beethoven

Symphony no. 4 in B-flat Major, op. 60 (1807)

Adagio; allegro vivace

Adagio

Allegro vivace

Allegro ma non troppo

INTERMISSION

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897)

Symphony no. 4 in E Minor, op. 98 (1884–1885)

Allegro non troppo

Andante moderato

Allegro giocoso

Allegro energico e passionato

J. M. W. Turner is sponsored by The Exhibition Circle of the National Gallery of Art. Bank of America is proud to be the national sponsor. The exhibition is made possible in part through the generous support of Access Industries. It remains on view in the West Building until January 6, 2008.

The Musicians

THE ALEXANDRIA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

The Alexandria Symphony Orchestra was founded in 1954, and has established a reputation for thematic and inter-arts programming that features a mix of classical and contemporary music. The ASO's move in 2002 to the Schlesinger Center on the Alexandria, Virginia, campus of Northern Virginia Community College established its reach and reputation as one of the region's leading arts institutions. Under the baton of maestro Kim Allen Kluge, the symphony has distinguished itself through powerful performances marked by poetry and vision.

KIM ALLEN KLUGE

Kim Allen Kluge, the music director of the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra, has made a lasting impression on audiences and critics alike through his powerful conducting style and its dramatic impact. His extensive accomplishments also include appearances with the Baltimore Lyric Opera, the Boston Pops Orchestra, the Mannheim Chamber Orchestra, the Sinfonietta de Paris, and Les Solistes Parisiens. Throughout Kluge's versatile career, he has worked as arranger, chamber musician, chorus director, composer, concertmaster, concerto soloist, organist, orchestral keyboardist, recitalist, singer, vocal coach, and wind player. He is a valedictorian of the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music, where he served as concertmaster of the Oberlin Chamber Orchestra and received the coveted Arthur Dann Award for Outstanding Pianist and the Pi Kappa Lambda Scholarship for Musical Excellence. He pursued graduate studies in piano and conducting from the University of Maryland and received a conducting diploma from the Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena. He participated in the prestigious Tanglewood conducting program, where he studied with Roger Norrington, Seiji Ozawa, and Simon Rattle. Maestro Kluge is widely recognized throughout the region as an orchestra builder. Noting his accomplishments in this regard, the *Washington Post* said: "Kluge has fashioned an ensemble with tremendous musical responsiveness, and every instrumental group... bears the mark of his intelligence and drive."

Program Notes

The program chosen for this concert in honor of the exhibition *J. M. W. Turner* focuses primarily on the music of Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827), not only because he was a contemporary of Joseph Mallord William Turner (1775–1851), but also because both men began their creative lives solidly in the classical tradition, underwent a full transformation to romanticism, and presaged postromantic developments in their late works. Turner was active over a period of six decades, and transformed the genre of landscape painting through works that heralded a new and visionary direction in nineteenth-century painting, while also claiming him a direct descendant of the old masters. Known for his technical brilliance and startling use of light and color, Turner incorporated learned references to literature, mythology, and historical events in his pictures. His late works anticipate the Impressionists and even go beyond what they accomplished in abstract organization of the phenomena of luminosity. The exhibition of his works now on view at the National Gallery through January 6, 2008 is the most comprehensive survey of Turner's work ever presented in the United States.

Beethoven was a product of the classical era of Haydn and Mozart, who were giants in their own time. When Beethoven came to Vienna as a young man in his twenties, Mozart had been dead only a few years and Joseph Haydn was at the height of his international popularity, despite being in his mid-seventies. The music of the latter composers was distinguished by a formal structure that was light and airy, and its internal workings never obscured the principal melody and harmony. What made Haydn, Mozart, and the young Beethoven stand out among their contemporaries was their ability to adapt this structure in subtle, fresh, and invigorating ways.

Beethoven's early style, exemplified by the *German Dance* on this evening's program, owes a great deal to the music of Haydn and Mozart. Although there were many composers writing in this style (among them Antonio Salieri, more famous today for his reputed role in Mozart's death than for his music), Beethoven stood head and shoulders above them. He lifted the clichéd forms out of their old patterns and took them to new

musical heights. But the young Beethoven, like so many of his generation, grew impatient with established styles and forms. A new century was on its way, and a whiff of revolution was in the air. The American Revolution in the 1770s and 1780s and the French Revolution that consumed most of the 1790s left Europe in a state of excited anticipation—what country would be next? Musicians were not immune to this fever, and their compositions reflected this driving change. Most of the art and music of earlier ages had focused on three subjects: the world of religion, the portraits of royalty and nobility, and the figures of Greek and Roman mythology. In the early nineteenth century, literature and the visual arts began to deal with issues from the lives of ordinary people.

Beethoven's early compositions are firmly rooted in the classical traditions of Haydn and Mozart. The symphonies he wrote in the first decade of the nineteenth century, however, are of a completely different nature. Two of them, *Symphony no. 3*, (the "Eroica") and the monumental and popular *Symphony no. 5*, are generally acknowledged as mountain peaks in music, with the result that his *Fourth Symphony* is sometimes regarded as a valley, albeit a beautiful one. In all three cases, the musical forms may recall an earlier era, but the melodic elements and their development are totally new.

For example, the slow opening of the first movement of the *Fourth Symphony* contains the entire movement in miniature. In the remaining ten minutes of the movement Beethoven returns to the melodic elements that he presented at first. The rhythmic impetus of the first movement is an unexpected syncopation—instead of the expected accent pattern in 4/4 time to be on the first and third beats of the measure, Beethoven surprises the listener by placing the emphasis on the second and fourth beats.

In the slow second movement, a long, sinuous melody holds the listener's interest as it passes through the different instrumental groups of the orchestra. In the third movement, Beethoven returns repeatedly to a melody that soon becomes familiar and knits the whole movement together. Short musical "excursions" tease the listener away from the melody, but it is all the more welcome with each return.

The final movement is fast and furious, akin to a rollicking roller-coaster ride that makes one sharp turn after another. One minute the ride is smooth, and the next it is a frantic rush down hill without any brakes. When the breathtaking trip is over, one realizes that the *Fourth Symphony* is a mountain peak in its own right.

Beethoven and Brahms were men from two different ages, and by rights their music should have been worlds apart as well. However, there are great similarities in the music of the two men, due to Brahms' awe and admiration of Beethoven's genius. The developmental arch that is represented in the nine symphonies of Beethoven is reflected in the four symphonies of Brahms. Brahms' *Fourth Symphony* is a culmination and *dénouement* of his symphonic work in much the same way that Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* fulfills and goes beyond all that was promised in his earlier symphonies.

Despite the fact that Brahms composed the *Fourth Symphony* when he was in his fifties, the work has all the fire and vivid muscularity of youth. It is a bold and dramatic work that uses the orchestra to create great sweeping gestures of sound. Brahms creates rich moments of contrast by using the orchestral choirs—the strings, woodwinds, brass, and percussion—sometimes in pairs, sometimes contrapuntally.

Of all Brahms' symphonies, the fourth had the coolest reception. Some critics hailed the symphony as a great work, but the audiences weren't sure they liked it, finding it difficult to relate this music to anything they had heard by Brahms or any of his contemporaries. It remained for subsequent generations to warm up to and fully appreciate this forward-looking masterpiece.

Program notes by Peter Fay

Next Week at the National Gallery of Art

Paul Badura-Skoda, *pianist*

Music by Bach, Beethoven, Haydn, and Schubert

November 11, 2007

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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COVER: J. M.W. Turner, *Mortlake Terrace, the Seat of William Moffatt, Esq.*; *Summer's Evening* (detail), 1827,
oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection