



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

National Gallery of Art
2,554th Concert

National Gallery Orchestra
José Serebrier, *guest conductor*
Raul Jaurena, *bandoneonist*

Viennese New Year Concert

January 8, 2006
Sunday Evening, 6:30 pm
West Building, West Garden Court

Admission free

Program

Johann Strauss Jr. (1825–1899)

Overture to *Die Fledermaus* (The Bat), op. 297

Johann Strauss Jr.

Kaiser-Walzer (Emperor Waltz), op. 437

Johann Strauss Jr. (1825–1899) and Josef Strauss (1827–1870)

Pizzicato-Polka

Pyotr Ilich Tchaikovsky (1840–1893)

Waltz from *Spyashchaya krasavitsa* (The Sleeping Beauty), op. 66

Johann Strauss Jr.

Tritsch-Tratsch-Polka (Tittle-Tattle Polka), op. 214

INTERMISSION

José Serebrier (b. 1938)

Tango in Blue (2001)

United States premiere performance

José Serebrier

Casi un Tango (Almost a Tango) (2002)

United States premiere performance

Jacob Gade (1869–1963)

Jalousie (Jealousy) (1926)

Astor Piazzolla (1921–1992)

Oblivion

Georges Bizet (1838–1875)

Farandole from *Suite Arlésienne*

The Musicians

NATIONAL GALLERY ORCHESTRA

The National Gallery Orchestra was founded in 1943 and initially consisted of approximately twenty-five players who were also members of the National Symphony. Gradually growing in numbers, it eventually reached the size and status of a symphony orchestra. The ensemble undertakes 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' *First Symphony* under the direction of Richard Bales and the 1990 premiere of Daniel Pinkham's *Fourth Symphony* under George Manos.

JOSÉ SEREBRIER

Winner of the 2004 Latin Grammy Award for “best classical album,” conductor and composer José Serebrier has twenty-two other Grammy nominations to his credit. His skills as a conductor attracted the attention of prominent conductors early in his career. From 1958 to 1960 he apprenticed with Antal Dorati and the Minnesota Orchestra. In 1960, at age twenty-two, he was appointed associate conductor of Leopold Stokowski's American Symphony Orchestra, and he led that ensemble in his Carnegie Hall debut in 1965 as well as numerous other concerts in his five-year tenure. In 1968 Serebrier won the Ford Foundation American Conductors Award. One of the judges on that panel, George Szell, invited Serebrier to become composer-in-residence of the Cleveland Orchestra, a post he held for two concert seasons. He went on to conduct most of the major orchestras in the world, including the London Philharmonic, the London Symphony, the New York Philharmonic, the Philharmonia Orchestra, the Royal Philharmonic, and the orchestras of Berlin, Brussels, Cologne, Helsinki, Madrid, Munich, Paris, and Sydney. One of the world's most recorded classical artists, he has more than 250 CDs to his credit. Much in

demand as an opera conductor, he has been on the podium for important productions of Ernest Bloch's *Macbeth* at London's Royal Festival Hall, Jules Massenet's *Manon* at Lincoln Center, Mozart's *Don Giovanni* in Paris, Mussorgsky's *Boris Gudonov* at the Sydney Opera House, and Tchaikovsky's *Iolanthe* at Carnegie Hall.

Serebrier has also distinguished himself as a composer, winning awards and commissions from Broadcast Music, Inc., the Harvard Musical Association, the Koussevitzky Music Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts. His concerto for harp and orchestra, *Colores magicos*, was written for the Inter-American Music Festival and premiered in Washington in 1971. *Washington Star* music critic Irving Lowens wrote at the time: "Of the fifteen new works I heard during the course of the festival, I'd rank *Colores magicos* among the best." It became an extremely successful ballet on world-wide tours by the Joffrey Ballet. Among Serebrier's other published works, which number more than a hundred, are concertos for double bass, accordion, trombone, and violin.

Born in Uruguay of Russian and Polish parents, Serebrier had his first orchestral composition performed when he was fifteen, by which time he had already organized and conducted the first youth orchestra in Uruguay. He made his conducting debut at age eleven. His biography, written by the French music critic Michel Faure, was recently published by l'Harmattan in France and Canada.

RAUL JAURENA

Raul Jaurena is a member of the Giora Feidman Quartet. His interpretations on the bandoneon are a personal tribute to the influences of his native South America and his newly adopted home, New York City, combining the traditional roots of the tango and the style of the "tango nuevo" shaped by Astor Piazzolla. He has appeared with the Bronx Arts Ensemble, with conductor Dennis Russell Davies, the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, and Yo Yo Ma, with whom Jaurena played a tango concert in 1998.

Raul Jaurena was raised in Uruguay and learned to play the bandoneon from his father. At age eight he joined a tango orchestra. As a member of and arranger for various renowned tango ensembles in the 1960s and 1970s in Uruguay, Argentina, and Chile, Jaurena laid the foundation for his concert career. He eventually joined with four friends to form the New York–Buenos Aires Connection, which developed into one of the leading tango quintets in the United States. He founded the New York Tango Trio a few years later. Jaurena’s first highly successful album with his quintet was followed by recordings with Brazilian singer Ana Caram, Cuban jazz saxophone player Paquito d’Rivera, and the Stuttgart Philharmonic Orchestra.

Program Notes

This evening's performance marks the fortieth presentation of a Viennese New Year concert at the National Gallery. Richard Bales and the National Gallery Orchestra presented the first on January 2, 1966. The inspiration for these gala events is the concert that takes place in the renowned Musikverein in Vienna, a tradition that began in 1939. The musicians who play in that historic hall enjoy an illustrious musical legacy, which includes such giants as Johannes Brahms, Anton Bruckner, Gustav Mahler, and the Strauss family. Broadcast internationally on radio and television, this annual celebration has become a world-famous event. The presence of the audience and its reaction to sublime moments, favorite tunes, and musical jokes on stage are as important as the players in this festive drama.

This New Year program departs from tradition in that it includes tangos, which are to Argentinians and Uruguayans what the waltz is to the Viennese. During the nineteenth century in Spain and several Latin American countries, the term "tango" designated various types of dances, songs, and communal festivities. Some scholars believe the word is of Castilian origin, derived from the old Spanish verb *tañer* (to play an instrument). From a musical viewpoint, particularly as regards rhythm, there is little doubt that the tango—the foremost Argentine and Uruguayan urban popular song and dance—is related to the Cuban *contradanza* and *habanera*. These dances spread rapidly throughout Latin America in the first half of the nineteenth century. In contrast to the waltz, which is closely associated with aristocratic traditions and refined though sometimes flirtatious demeanor, the tango is an erotically charged art form, in which the dancers' legs and thighs frequently make contact with one another's and many steps are improvised.

The other non-Viennese dance on this program is the *farandole*, a chain dance from southern France, particularly Provence and the region around Arles. It is usually performed on major holidays (especially the Feast of Corpus Christi) by a line of men and women in alternation, either holding hands or linked by handkerchiefs or ribbons that successive dancers hold in either hand. The chain follows a leader along a winding path, moving in long, rapid steps and passing beneath arches formed by the raised arms of a couple in the chain. Tradition holds that the *farandole* was introduced to the region around Marseille by the Phoenicians, who in turn had learned it from the Greeks.

With its nostalgic return to familiar music and its international spirit, this concert makes a delightful celebration of a milestone in time, and it is offered as a heartfelt wish, expressed in music, for a happy, prosperous, and peaceful new year.

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 after 6:30 pm is not permitted.

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