

DOLCI BY THE BAY

Concert No. 41

Ted Rust, oboe and oboe d'amore – Viva Knight, piano

Sonata for Oboe and Piano

Francis Poulenc (1899-1962)

Élégie – Scherzo – Déploration

Francis Poulenc dedicated this sonata, his last composition, to the memory of Sergei Prokofiev. Poulenc and Prokofiev had been close friends as young men in Paris until Prokofieff returned to Moscow in the 1930s.

The sonata is famously difficult for both piano and oboe. Poulenc calls for the instruments to leap between their outer limits of loudness and quiet, speed and suspension, to express angry outbursts and cries of anguish in the *Élégie*, a frenzied dance of death in the *Scherzo*, and unabashed regret in the *Déploration*. Yet each movement returns to a point of balance, and the sonata both opens and closes on a long, gentle D, the initial for both death and desire.

Minuet from String Quintet, Opus 11 No.5

Luigi Boccherini (1743-1805)

Boccherini was born in Lucca, Italy, to a family of musicians. He spent his adult life mostly in Madrid, composing for the royal court and for other wealthy patrons, many of them amateur musicians. On the strength of its unforgettable melodies, this minuet is widely performed as a short stand-alone piece for solo piano and for a variety of other instruments.

Concerto in A major for Oboe d'amore

Georg Philipp Telemann (1681-1767)

Siciliano – Allegro – Largo – Vivace

The mezzo-soprano oboe d'amore (right) is slightly larger than the soprano oboe, making its pitch a little lower and giving it a sweet, mellow color. Its bulbous bell and curved bocal (reed attachment) for all their sexiness, are merely ergonomic adaptations to make it easier to hold than a proportionally enlarged oboe would be. Its keywork and fingering are similar to a standard oboe, but reeds, breath pressure and embouchure are slightly different.

Telemann was adept at keeping up with the times throughout a long career, writing tunefully in styles that extended from high Baroque to the *style galant* of Haydn and early Mozart. This concerto, from about 1717, is in high Baroque style, though in a lighter texture than Telemann's friend Bach was using at the time. It calls on the soloist to imitate first a bagpipe, then a fiddle, then voice, and finally hunting horns. The opening *Siciliano* is a traditionally slow shepherd's dance, with the oboe d'amore cast as a bagpipe. It is followed by a quick, syncopated dance in triple meter, *Allegro*. The *Largo* is a calm reverie, until it is brushed aside by the boistrous *Vivace*.



NEXT CONCERT: JANUARY 9 AT AQUATIC PARK