

# Old First Concerts

August 24, 2014, 4 pm

**Dolci: Ted Rust, oboe and Viva Knight, piano**

**Sonata for Oboe and Piano**                      **Francis Poulenc (1899-1962)**

*Élégie*  
*Scherzo*  
*Déploration*

**Preludes for Solo Piano**                      **Nino Rota (1911-1979)**

*Allegro ma espressivo e delicato*  
*Con impeto*

**Sonata for Oboe and Piano**                      **Paul Hindemith (1895-1963)**

*Miinter*  
*Sehr langsam-Lebhaft*

— Intermission —

**Sonata for Oboe and Piano**                      **Alec Wilder (1909-1980)**

*in four untitled movements*

**Metaphors**    **Bruce Babcock (1951 - )**

*Allegro*  
*Lento*  
*Presto*

**Sonata for Oboe and Piano**                      **Peter Hope (1930 - )**

*Moderato*  
*Vivace*  
*Allegro*

## DOLCI

*“Music is a basic need of human survival. Music is one of the ways we make sense of our lives, one of the ways in which we express feelings when we have no words, a way to understand things with our hearts when we can’t with our minds.”*                      Karl Paulnack, Boston Conservatory

Dolci is Ted Rust and Viva Knight’s after-careers musical dessert. The duo performs music for oboe and piano, with particular focus on music composed during their own lives. They give a weekly concert series, Dolci by the Bay, at the San Francisco Aquatic Park Center, as well as public recitals in other venues. They commissioned “Filled With Moonlight” by Philip Freihofner, which they premiered at Trinity Chamber Concerts and performed at the International Double Reed Society’s annual conference. Dolci’s schedule is on line at <[dolciduo.us](http://dolciduo.us)>.

When she was six and living in rural Arkansas, Viva Knight heard a piano on the radio and declared that she must play one. Her grandmother bought her a piano and lessons, the family’s only luxury. Viva studied piano with Stefan Bardas at the University of North Texas, Marina Young at Rutgers University and Betty Oberacker in Santa Barbara. She produced several television series including *Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman*. She has given solo piano recitals in New York and Southampton, New York and Assisi, Italy, and recorded *Baby Aboard*, a CD of short classical works for expectant mothers.

Ted Rust sang with his parents from early childhood and learned to play several instruments by ear. On entering fifth grade, he was told that the only vacant chair in the school orchestra would be for an oboe, so he learned to play it. In his teens, he studied with Louis Speyer of the Boston Symphony. While pursuing his career as a city and port planning consultant, Ted studied further with Eleanor and Raymond Dusté, taught woodwinds and chamber music at The Crowden School, and played in the Berkeley Bach Cantata Group, the Kensington Symphony and the quintet Quorum Ventorum. For the last twenty years before retiring he published the newsletter *Music for the Love of It*.

# Program Notes

## **Sonata for Oboe and Piano (1962) Francis Poulenc (1899-1962)**

Francis Poulenc dedicated this sonata, his last composition, to the memory of Sergei Prokofiev. Many themes of the sonata are quoted from Prokofiev's works, especially from the ballet *Romeo and Juliet*. Poulenc and Prokofiev had been close friends as young men in Paris in the 1920s. Modernist, independent-minded and mostly unrecognized, they played each other's unpublished manuscripts 4-hands at Poulenc's piano and shared a great deal of wine, laughter and mutual encouragement. After Prokofiev returned to Russia in 1935, they corresponded but never again saw each other. When Poulenc recovered his religious faith in mid-life he gave up drinking and shipped his last case of wine to Prokofiev.

## **Preludes for Solo Piano (1964) Nino Rota (1911-1979)**

The Italian composer Nino Rota is best remembered for his scores for many films of Federico Fellini. Fellini wrote of Rota: "He was someone who had a rare quality belonging to the world of intuition. Just like children, simple men, sensitive people, innocent people, he would suddenly say dazzling things. As soon as he arrived, stress disappeared, everything turned into a festive atmosphere; the movie entered a joyful, serene, fantastic period, a new life."

## **Sonata for Oboe and Piano (1938) Paul Hindemith (1895-1963)**

During his last year in Germany before emigrating to Switzerland and on to America, Paul Hindemith completed several important works, including his Oboe Sonata. Its first movement is quick and frisky throughout, using overlapping 2-4 and 3-8 meters that could be the combined gaits of a little girl and her big brother hurrying hand in hand across a meadow and into a forest. As in a good Gothic tale, its sunny beginning contrasts with a dark middle section in which the harmony twists from unfamiliar to scary to downright weird passages. The hurrying theme returns, leading to a simple major triad that may feel like a sigh of relief. The gentle second movement alternates between a dreamy lullaby and a skipping 3-8 fugue. The sonata concludes in a triumphant cadence that is long-winded enough to rival a Beethoven symphony.

## **Sonata for Oboe and Piano (1961) Alec Wilder (1909-1980)**

Alec Wilder earned his living writing musical theater, band arrangements and film and radio scores. His many concert works, however, were written as gifts to individual musicians, among them his friends Mitch Miller, Stan Getz, Gary Karr, Gerry Mulligan and Ronald Roseman, to whom he dedicated this sonata.

The Oboe Sonata evokes the polyglot streets, cafes and nightclubs of mid-20th century Manhattan. The first movement quotes the familiar bells of a downtown church and uses jazz idioms throughout: bebop riffs, blues, a jazz waltz and a familiar passage from Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue." Despite Wilder's public vow never to write a twelve-tone row, the piece opens with one, probably in tribute to Roseman's fame as a master of 20<sup>th</sup>-century music. Dolci calls the sonata's four untitled movements "Downtown," "Blues," "Fred and Ginger," and "Uptown."

## **Metaphors (2005) Bruce Babcock (1951 - )**

Bruce Babcock has received an Emmy award and many Emmy nominations for his film and television music, including *King Kong*, *Die Hard* and *Spider-Man 3*. He wrote of *Three Metaphors*: "My goal is to create vibrant, sonorous, expressive pieces which immerse audience and performers alike in an inclusive and exuberant celebration of the musical art."

## **Sonata for Oboe and Piano (2009) Peter Hope (1930 - )**

Peter Hope wrote title and theme music for numerous popular British radio and TV programs, making his music more familiar than his name to the British public. About the year 2000 he returned to writing concert music, and was commissioned to write a tribute to the English oboist Lady Evelyn Barbirolli (1911-2008). She had played in the first symphony concert Peter Hope ever attended.

Hope's Oboe Sonata opens with a theme that he weaves in different guises through the entire composition. First played as an elegy, it morphs through a variety of increasingly lively dance forms, finally becoming a jitterbug over a boogie-woogie bass. This sonata challenges the performers with intricate rhythms and harmonies, and rewards the audience with a flow of singable, danceable, memorable music.