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2024-25

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Master's Recital

Jordan Spivack, horn

With:

Forrest Howell, piano

7:30 p.m., Sunday, March 9, 2025

Chamber Hall (S102)

PROGRAM

Sonata for Oboe and Piano

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)

trans. Jordan Spivack

- I. Elégie
- II. Scherzo
- III. Déploration

Forrest Howell, piano

Fantasy for Horn, Op. 88

Malcolm Arnold (1921-2006)

Intermission

Horn Concerto No. 2

Richard Strauss (1864-1949)

- I. Allegro
- II. Andante con moto
- III. Rondo: Allegro molto

Forrest Howell, piano

PROGRAM NOTES

Francis Poulenc

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963) was a French composer who lived throughout the beginning and middle of the 20th century. Poulenc decided to become a composer at the age of 14, where he met and collaborated with fellow French composer, Darius Milhaud. Most of his earlier works were shorter chamber pieces that started to become relatively well-known and popular at the time he was writing them. In particular, Poulenc loved to write for woodwind instruments, and arguably some of his best compositions are his sonatas for flute, clarinet, and oboe.

Poulenc's *Sonata for Oboe and Piano* is perhaps one of his most influential works that almost every oboist encounters in their lifetime. The sonata was Poulenc's last published composition before his passing in 1963, and the work is an elegy in dedication to Sergei Prokofiev, a famous Russian composer and pianist. The first movement, *Elegie*, opens with a calming peacefulness that starkly contrasts the fast-paced and mechanical opening of the second movement, *Scherzo*. The work ends with the third movement, *Deploration*, that Poulenc described as a "liturgical chant," that laments solemnly and fades away into silent acceptance.

Malcolm Arnold

Sir Malcolm Arnold (1921-2006) was an English composer who played the trumpet. In his early twenties, Arnold joined the London Philharmonic Orchestra, starting on second trumpet before becoming the principal in 1943, during the Second World War. At the end of the war, in 1948, Arnold fully committed to composition, writing many accompanied and unaccompanied works for virtually all orchestral wind instruments, as well as the guitar, recorder, harp, and cello. This composition, *Fantasy for Horn*, is an unaccompanied virtuosic piece commissioned by the

Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, later to be performed at the Birmingham International Wind Competition in May of 1966. The work features several characters, both warm and lighthearted yet dark and mournful.

Richard Strauss

Starting composition at age six, Richard Strauss (1864-1949) wrote some of the most performed and studied repertoire of the Romantic Era. In addition to his operas, tone poems, and lieder, Strauss composed incredible music for the horn as he was inspired by his father, Franz Strauss, a famous horn player and composer of his time. Richard Strauss wrote his first horn concerto for his father at age 18, which today remains in the standard repertoire for all professional and amateur hornists.

About 60 years after the premiere of his first concerto, Richard Strauss wrote a second horn concerto that is relatively similar to the first concerto in terms of structure. However, in his old age, this refined version of Strauss exhibits an illustrious celebration of horn through harmony and virtuosity. This concerto was written in 1942 during the Second World War, and even though he found it difficult to write music during the war, he wrote his second concerto rather swiftly. This work is highly reminiscent of his early compositional style, yet its complexity and sheer difficulty reflect his understanding of the horn's potential in this three-movement work.

ABOUT THE PERFORMER

Jordan Spivack is pursuing a Master of Music in horn performance and pedagogy at CU Boulder in the studio of Michael Thornton. He graduated with a Bachelor of Music in horn performance and music education from Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where he studied with Jeffrey Lang, Ernie Tovar, and Randy Gardner of the Philadelphia Orchestra. Spivack is the Assistant Operations Director of the Philadelphia International Music Festival and previously was a high school orchestra director in Fairless Hills, Pennsylvania. Spivack strives to perform and write music for horn at a high level and plans to continue discovering new and innovative approaches to teaching and playing the horn for all ages.

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