

ANAM RECITAL: JOSHUA WEBSTER (OBOE)

THURSDAY 31 OCTOBER 1.30PM
ROSINA AUDITORIUM, ABBOTSFORD CONVENT

Marin MARAIS (1656-1728) *Les folies d'Espagne* (c. 1701) 18'

Joshua Webster (NZ) oboe
Reuben Johnson (QLD) harpsichord

Carl REINECKE (1824-1910) Trio in A Minor, op. 188 (1887) 20'

i. Allegro moderato
ii. Scherzo. Molto vivace
iii. Adagio
iv. Finale. Allegro ma non troppo

Joshua Webster (NZ) oboe
Emma John (WA) horn
Francis Atkins (NSW) piano

Antonio PASCULLI (1842-1924) Oboe Concerto on motifs from Donizetti's
La favorita (1879) 14'

Joshua Webster (NZ) oboe
Daniel Le (ANAM Associate Faculty) piano

Approximate duration: 60 minutes

ABOUT JOSHUA WEBSTER

Josh Webster, born and raised in Auckland, New Zealand, discovered his passion for the oboe at the age of ten, captivated by its rich and distinctive tone. Josh completed his Bachelor of Music majoring on oboe at the University of Auckland in 2020 under the mentorship of Martin Lee and Robert Orr. In 2024, Josh will be undergoing his first year of training at the Australian National Academy of Music (ANAM), under the tutelage of Jeffrey Crellin. Find out more at anam.com.au/musicians

Josh is supported by an anonymous ANAM Syndicate donor

Reuben is sponsored by the Tallis Foundation and further supported through the ANAM Syndicate program by donors Lesley Hawkins, Anthony Knight OAM and Beverly Knight, Max Garrard, Julie Wehbe, Lesley Milburn, Anonymous.

Emma is fully supported by ANAM Syndicate donors Bill and Sandra Burdett.

Francis is supported by donors Elizabeth Butcher AM, Sieglind D'Arcy, Mark Debeljak and Daniel Lehrer, Andrea Goldsmith, Mike and Jane Hall, Hilary Newman.



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PROGRAM NOTES

Marin Marais was a leading French composer for the viola da gamba and was himself a master of the instrument. He wrote five books of 'Pieces de viole' which contained over 500 compositions for one, two or three viola da gambas with figured bass. His second book was published in 1701 and includes the variations of 'Les Folies d'Espagne'. Although not originally composed for oboe, in the foreword of the book, Marais wrote:

"These pieces are written in a different way to those of my first volume. I have taken great care to compose them in such a manner that they can be played by all kinds of instruments, amongst them organ, harpsichord, lute, violin and flute. I venture to declare that this plan has succeeded, since I have played them out on both the latter instruments myself."

'Les Folies d'Espagne' comprises of a series of variations on the *Folia*, a 16 bar theme which has been used by more than 150 composers over the last 300 years. The origins of the theme are thought to have arisen out of folk music of the late fifteenth century in Portugal. The theme was then standardised into its 16 bar variant by Marais' composition teacher, Jean-Baptiste Lully.

Although not so well-known today, **Carl Reinecke** was a highly influential nineteenth century German composer. By the time he was 20, he had studied with composers such as Felix Mendelssohn, Robert Schumann and Franz Liszt, and his students would later include Edvard Grieg, Leoš Janáček and Max Bruch.

Perhaps one of the reasons for him being less well-known today, Reinecke's music was more grounded in Classical styles than most of his contemporaries. As a teacher, Reinecke considered it part of his responsibility to preserve some of the traditions of the Classical period. He also greatly admired the music of pre-Classical composers, in particular Bach, and explored composers as far back as the late Renaissance's Giovanni Palestrina. Reinecke was highly regarded as a concert pianist and toured around Europe, notably unrivalled in his performances of Mozart's keyboard works.

Reinecke's trio for piano, oboe and horn (op. 188) was one of three trios that he composed in his later years for more unusual combinations of instruments, with the others being a trio for viola, clarinet and piano, and for clarinet, horn and piano. It is in four movements and follows a slightly unusual structure, where the slow movement is switched with the scherzo, giving a playful breather after the more heavy first movement and before the adagio. The finale is again more light-hearted, and when returning to the beautiful third movement melody on the horn, it is abruptly cut off on the repeat of the phrase with a playful interjection from the oboe.

Known as one of the greatest oboe virtuosos of all time, **Antonio Pasculli** has often been compared to Paganini for pushing the technical limits of the oboe. As many virtuosos were doing at the time, Pasculli primarily composed music for himself to perform and implemented many advanced techniques such as circular breathing. Pasculli's music mostly faded into obscurity after his death, but his compositions were later revived by Heinz Holliger later in the twentieth century.

Pasculli's concerto on themes from Gaetano Donizetti's opera *La Favorita* for oboe and piano, entitled *Concerto sopra motivi dell'opera 'La favorita' di Donizetti*, is one of his many transcriptions on opera themes by composers such as Donizetti, Bellini, Verdi, and Rossini for oboe and piano. Pasculli takes well-known melodies for Donizetti's opera and transforms them into a brilliant showcase for the oboe through a set of variations. Since Pasculli had an extensive understanding of the instrument as a player as well as a composer, the technical passages are challenging but fit nicely under the fingers due to his knowledge of the capabilities of the oboe.

Written by Joshua Webster