

ANAM RECITAL: ETHAN SETO (OBOE)

Sorrow and Joy

THURSDAY 23 OCTOBER 3.30PM

ROSINA AUDITORIUM, ABBOTSFORD CONVENT

Francis POULENC (1899-1963) Oboe Sonata (1962) 14'

- i. Élégie. Paisiblement*
- ii. Scherzo. Très animé*
- iii. Déploration. Très calme*

Wolfgang Amadeus MOZART (1756-1791) Oboe Quartet in F Major, K. 370 (1781) 17'

- i. Allegro*
- ii. Adagio*
- iii. Rondo. Allegro*

Johann Sebastian BACH (1685-1750) Oboe d'Amore Concerto in A Major, BWV 1055R (c. 1730) 15'

- i. —*
- ii. Larghetto*
- iii. Allegro ma non tanto*

Ethan Seto * (QLD) oboe / oboe d'amore

Daisy Wong * (NSW) violin

Daniel Casey * (VIC) viola

Boudewijn Keenan * (NZ) cello

Lachlan MacLaren * (VIC) violin

Theonie Wang * (QLD) violin

Maddison Furlan * (VIC) double bass

Liam Furey * (NZ) harpsichord

Daniel Le (ANAM Associate Faculty) piano

Approximate duration: 50 minutes

Ethan is supported by ANAM Syndicate donor Kerry Landman.

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This concert will feature ANAM's harpsichord, funded by Rosemary and the late John Macleod.

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ANAM respectfully acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands spread across Australia on which we work and live. We uphold and honour their continued relationship to these sites, we pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging, and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

PROGRAM NOTES

*"Is this how it is? Is this how it's always been?
To exist in the face of suffering and death
And, somehow, still keep singing."
—Florence Welch*

Coming to ANAM, I've held the belief that our yearly recitals are neither exams nor assessments, but are instead a special opportunity to curate and present our own concert. It is a rare chance to be able to exercise our artistic freedom in designing our own program, and also to collaborate with not only ANAM's fantastic associate faculty but peers as well. I think that every concert is, in its own way, a special event, and the chance to plan one should be made full use of.

For me, creating a program begins with considering the venue of the performance; not only the acoustic, but also drawing inspiration from the atmosphere of the space. Sitting in the audience of performances held in the Rosina Auditorium, I've asked myself the question: "What would work well here?". The result was a nicely balanced program showcasing some of the most celebrated chamber works of the oboe repertoire. Each piece is of a similar duration and each holds its own place in the concert, rather than being overshadowed by one main larger piece. The three works I have chosen, working backwards in time from Poulenc through to Bach, differ enough to provide contrast whilst also bearing enough similarities to fit a theme and tell a story. Each of them contrast slow, mournful sections with light, joyful or humorous ones. This juxtaposition of **Sorrow and Joy** is what I decided upon as the theme of the recital: two opposing experiences which contextualise one another.

In planning this concert, the first work which sprung to mind was **Francis Poulenc's** oboe sonata, with its lamenting and flowing melodies. Poulenc's three sonatas for wind instruments — one for clarinet, one for flute, and this for oboe — are some of his final works. Inscribed with a dedication to the memory of the Russian composer and pianist Sergei Prokofiev, it begins with a lyrical elegy, followed by a light scherzo, and ends with a chorale-like deploration.

Following this, **Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's** oboe quartet provides a nice contrast with its joyful energy, as well as a change in instrumentation. The quartet was written for the oboist Friedrich Ramm in order to display his virtuosic capabilities. The piece makes use of the third-octave F, a note that was considered to be extremely high on the instruments played at the time. It also features complicated virtuosic passages, particularly in the third movement, in which the oboe plays in cut common time whilst the strings continue in 6/8.

The final piece of the puzzle was **Johann Sebastian Bach's** Concerto in A major, BWV 1055, today performed on the oboe d'amore, providing a nice change in tonality as well as the chance to showcase a different instrument. This also gives a small break from playing the oboe, which can often be physically tiring due to the high air pressure that the instrument demands. Though this concerto is frequently also performed with harpsichord or piano as the solo instrument, scholars suspect it is based on music originally written for the oboe d'amore, a lesser-known instrument which Bach frequently wrote for. The oboe d'amore (the oboe of love) sits between the oboe and the larger and more mellow-sounding cor anglais (english horn). It provided a mezzo-soprano wind voice prior to the invention and popularisation of the clarinet. An instrument pitched in A, it also allowed for more ease in keys such as A major and F# minor compared to the typical C oboe. This concerto begins with a joyful first movement, followed by a mournful slow movement, and ends with a celebratory yet nostalgic finale.

It would take probably several thousand words to properly thank and give credit to everyone who made this recital possible. Unfortunately, for brevity's sake, I would like to quickly thank: my family - Wei, Elaine, Josiah; Eve, Jeff, Josh, Alex; Daniel, Daisy, Daniel, Bou, Lachy, Theonie, Maddy, Liam; Alex, Naomi, Nic, Nathan and the rest of the ANAM staff; Kerry; and everyone who came to watch.

Words by Ethan Seto.