Orchestra Seattle and the Seattle Chamber Singers present

An Evening of Mozart

featuring
The Winds of Orchestra Seattle
George Shangrow, conductor and pianist

Sunday, October 26, 1997 ♦ 8:00 PM
Shorecrest Performing Arts Center

❖ Orchestra Seattle Winds

Piano and Conductor
George Shangrow

Clarinet
Stephen McComas
Gary Oules
Cindy Renander
Mark Tomita

Oboe
Sarah Ballan
Taina Karr

Bassoon
Jeff Eldridge
Judith Lawrence

Horn
Barney Blough
Don Cervi
Jennifer Crowder
Laurie Heidt

Contrabassoon
Michel Jolivet

❖ Upcoming Performances

Handel: Saul
November 16, 3:00 PM, University Christian Church

Handel: The Messiah
December 20, 7:00 PM, University Christian Church
December 21, 3:00 PM, University Christian Church

Orchestra Winds: Poulenc/Stravinsky/Milhaud
January 25, 3:00 PM, Shorecrest Performing Arts Center

Handel: Hercules
February 8, 3:00 PM, University Christian Church

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Program Notes

The small wind band played an important part in European musical life in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Using fewer players than a full orchestra, and better suited for outdoor performance than string instruments, these groups were called upon to provide entertainment at all sorts of social occasions. Although the exact instrumentation varied depending upon local conditions, the standard wind octet featured pairs of oboes, clarinets, bassoons and horns; a double bass or contrabassoon often reinforced the bass line. Such an ensemble was given the special name Harmonie.

There was a need for a great deal of music, which was met by works from composers both major and minor in stature, as well as arrangements of popular songs, operas and instrumental music. The Harmonie transcriptions were usually made by professional arrangers, rather than the original composers, although Mozart himself prepared selections from Abduction from the Seraglio.

Mozart’s final opera, The Magic Flute, was premiered in Vienna on September 30, 1791, only two months before the composer’s death. Shortly thereafter, a Harmonie transcription was prepared by Joseph Heidenrech (1753-1821), a composer of modest reputation and a prolific arranger of operas for Harmonie and for piano. Heidenrech treated Mozart’s score rather freely; some longer numbers were divided into several parts and reordered. In fact, he omitted a central section of the Magic Flute Overture, either for brevity or because it posed too great a challenge for his arranging skills. Despite this omission, the octet version still maintains the playfulness and exuberance of the original.

The only thing more amazing than the fact that Mozart actually wrote a quintet for the unorthodox combination of wind instruments and piano is that it is so effortlessly constructed. Not only is wind scoring more problematic than writing for strings, Mozart had no prior experience in combining these solo instruments with piano and little, if any, precedents for how to do so. Yet, the Quintet in Eb, K. 482 is one of the jewels of all chamber music. Mozart himself counted it among his favorite works, and it made such a strong impression on the young Beethoven that he wrote another work in the same form and the same key.

Among the original works written for Harmonie, were several by well-known composers such as Haydn, J. C. Bach, Beethoven, Reicha and Krommer. By any measure, however, the three greatest works of this kind are the wind serenades of Mozart.

The Serenade No. 11 in Eb, K. 375, was originally composed for a sextet (pairs of clarinets, horns and bassoons) and later reworked for octet. Although the work has several unusual features, it remains true to the spirit of the light entertainment the Harmonie were asked to provide. Its counterpart, the Serenade No. 12 in C minor, is quite the opposite: as profound and tightly constructed as any of Mozart’s symphonies, its serious demeanor is far removed from mere “party music.”

Although the B♭ Serenade is widely known as “No. 10” and was cataloged as K. 361 (and later as K. 370a), more recent scholarship has demonstrated that the work is in fact the last of Mozart’s great works for wind ensemble. While the exact date is not known, it probably dates from late 1783 or early 1784, placing it shortly before the K. 452 Quintet. It is today known as the Gran Partita, a phrase written on the autograph score, but not in Mozart’s hand.

The serenade is remarkable for both its length (seven movements, including two minuets, each with two trios) and its expanded instrumentation: four horns instead of two, the addition of two bassett horns (a lower-pitched cousin of the clarinet — modern clarinets are used in tonight’s performance), and an independent part for double bass or contrabassoon.

As in the Quintet, a Largo introduction opens the first movement, followed by what one writer has called “the most perfect example of sonata-allegro form”. The first minuet is also in B♭; its first trio showcases the clarinets. The third movement is an Eb Adagio, perhaps the single most beautiful example of wind writing in all of music. A second minuet returns to B♭, but the trios are in B♭ minor and F major. At this point another slow movement is presented for contrast, but it is an unorthodox one: an Eb Adagio episode is followed by a faster, C minor section featuring the first bassoon. Mozart concluded his Eb Serenade with a rondo and the C Minor Serenade with a theme and variations; the Gran Partita incorporates both! A stately theme undergoes six variations, the last of which is yet another minuet! A sprightly rondo concludes the work.

OS SCS
Orchestra Seattle ♦ Seattle Chamber Singers
George Shangraw, Founder and Music Director
25th Season

PROGRAM
Sunday, October 26, 1997 ♦ 8:00 PM
Shorecrest Performing Arts Center

Overture to The Magic Flute
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(arr. Joseph Heidenreich)

Quintet in Eb for piano and winds, K. 452
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Largo — Allegro moderato
Larghetto
Rondo: Allegretto

Sarah Ballan, oboe
Gary Oules, clarinet
Laurie Heldt, horn
Jeff Eldridge, bassoon
George Shangraw, piano

INTERMISSION

Serenade in B♭ for 13 winds “Gran Partita”
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Largo — Molto allegro
Menuetto
Adagio
Menuetto
Romanze (Adagio — Allegretto — Adagio)
Tema con variazione
Finale: Molto Allegro

OS SCS gratefully acknowledges the support of the Washington State Arts Commission, the King County Arts Commission, the Seattle Arts Commission, Corporate Council for the Arts, Seattle First Bank, The Boeing Company, Microsoft Corporation, Davis Wright Tremaine LLP, and Classic KING-FM.

Special thanks to Otto Eifert for his help and to Paul Scott, piano tuner/technician.
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29th Season

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Overture to The Magic Flute Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
[Arr. Joseph Heidenreich]
Quintet in Eb for piano and winds, K. 452 Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Largo — Allegro moderato
Larghetto
Rondo: Allegretto

Sarah Ballan, oboe
Gary Oules, clarinet
Laurie Heldt, horn
Jeff Eldridge, bassoon
George Shangrow, piano

INTERMISSION
Serenade in Bb for 13 winds "Gran Partita" Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Largo — Molto allegro
Menuetto
Adagio
Menuetto
Romanze (Adagio — Allegretto — Adagio)
Tema con variazione
Finale: Molto Allegro

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