The School of Music
presents the 10th program of the 1991-92 season

Facility Artist Recital

Alex Klein
Oboist

assisted by

Lisa Bergman, piano

and

The Soni Ventorum
Wind Quintet

October 8, 1991
8:00 PM, Meany Theater
Eugene Bozza (born in Nice, France, 1905) is well known for his compositions for winds and chamber music. Bozza was also a successful conductor and composer of larger scale works for most of his life. He composed four symphonies, three operas, two ballets, and numerous choral, educational and chamber music works. A Prix de Rome came in 1934 for his "Legende de Roukman." He conducted the Paris Opera-Comique for several years and was also director of the National School of Music in Valenciennes. In 1956, he was honored as a Chevalier of the French Legion of Honor.

Bozza's Oboe Sonata, composed in 1971, differs from his usual wind chamber music in the character of the first three movements. The first movement, "Très Calme," is unequalled among his other works involving oboe. This song-like introduction to the sonata sets the mood for the rest of the four movement piece. However, in the last movement, "Animé," his original wind style is back as if with a vengeance, and the musical style reverts to the more common search for new technical possibilities for both instruments.

English composer Thomas Attwood Walmisley (1814 - 1856), although relatively unknown to 20th century audiences, was a musician and teacher of extraordinary abilities, responsible for a clear turnaround in the way music and musicians were recognized in England.

Noticing his musical talent, Walmisley's father, Thomas Forbes Walmisley, then the organist at St. Martin-In-The-Fields, sent his son to study with his godfather, Thomas Attwood, who was himself a student of W. A. Mozart. This student-to-teacher inheritance left a strong mark on Walmisley's career, as the music of Mozart was of great influence to his own.

Walmisley was also known in his time for his extreme dedication to his causes. After being appointed to the chair of professor of music at Trinity College—at the age of 22, while still an undergraduate student at that institution—he was the first musician to be awarded the Master of Arts degree. His music lectures, for which he received no compensation, included music quotes and presented J. S. Bach as an unsung genius whose works would be recognized world wide—both ideas being new to English audiences which for the most part had never even heard of Bach.

His Oboe Sonatine, composed in 1848, clearly shows him as a deeply romantic composer, with a sensitive personality and complete command of the music's harmonic flow. His extreme sensitivity as an individual eventually led him to depressions and finally to alcoholism, which is blamed for his early death.
Antonino Pasculli (1842-1924) has been recognized as “The Paganini of the Oboe” and “the greatest oboist of all time.” His incredible control of oboe techniques is still a source of amazement for today’s oboists who, with all the oboe improvements brought by this century, still encounter difficulty in performing Pasculli’s works. Pasculli, on the other hand, performed his own works on a boxwood oboe with roughly a third of the keys available to the oboist of the 1990’s. At the age of 14, Pasculli dazzled the audiences of Italy, Germany, Austria and other European countries in much the same way as his fellow countryman Paganini did with the violin. Besides expanding the technical possibilities of the oboe, Pasculli was also an innovator in the application of the “circular breathing” technique which allows the oboist to breathe and play at the same time.

Not finding repertoire to suit his abilities, Pasculli composed most of the works he performed. Relying on the famous melodies from the operas of Verdi, Donizetti, Bellini and Rossini, he composed concertos and fantasias with variations on those same melodies, thus captivating the public’s interest and providing a good means of introduction to his oboe embellishments.

The Gran Concerto after Verdi’s “Sicilian Vespers” is no exception to all of the above. Through variations, cadenzas and the original Verdi arias, the music of Pasculli comes alive with a distinctive oboe voice.

Anton Reicha’s wind quintets created a sensation in Paris and throughout Europe in the second and third decades of the 19th century. He wrote no fewer than 24 such works during these years for a bold new chamber ensemble composed of one each of the principal woodwind instruments plus French horn. The quintets were premiered in the foyer of the Paris Opera and these occasions bore a social and musical significance widely noted at the time. Reicha himself was highly regarded as a professor of composition and theory at the Paris Conservatoire, and his pupils included such names as Hector Berlioz, Adolphe Adam, Charles Gounod, and the young Cesar Frank. His stature was duly recognized by the French Academy, which elected him to membership a year before his death. Such recognition did not prove to be long lasting however, as it has only been in the last 25 years or so that he and his music have undergone a revival, with the wind quintets leading the way.

The Quintet in e minor is one of the monuments of his contributions to the genre. In it, one finds all the elements that show Reicha at his best: an abundance of melody and expanse of form (first movement); characteristic and idiomatic variations for each instrument (second movement); the wit and invention of his scherzi as demonstrated here by a veritable kaleidoscope of modulations (third movement); and the breathless excitement and energy of his finale movements, complete with fanfare flourish at the end. Running through the whole is the thread of virtuosic demand on instruments and performers alike; wind-writing unequalled in its day and still a source of wonder and challenge in ours.

--- notes by Alex Klein and Felix Skowronek

Artist Profile

Tonight’s performance marks Brazilian-born oboist Alex Klein’s debut at the University of Washington. Klein will replace retiring Professor Laila Storch as oboe instructor and also join the Soni Ventorum Wind Quintet. Storch said, “Alex Klein is an outstanding musician and one of the few international oboe soloists. He was a student of James Caldwell, who was a member of the quintet before I joined the group in 1965. I feel sure that his appointment will bring the Soni Ventorum a sense of continuity.”

In September 1988, Professor Klein became the first oboist in 29 years to win the First Prize in the Concours Internationale d’Execution Musicale, Geneva, Switzerland, since Heinz Hollinger in 1959. Other first prizes include the 1987 Aspen Music Festival Wind Competition, the 1986 Lucarelli International Competition for Solo Oboe Players, and the 1986 Femand Gillet Oboe Competition.

For his musicianship, Klein has received wide critical acclaim. Tribune de Genève praised “his great musicality and superior maturity, as well as the charming freedom of his interpretation.” The Philadelphia Inquirer described his playing as “exemplary . . . following a seemingly spontaneous flowing curve.”

Klein plays a repertoire that includes virtually every major concerto and recital work for oboe. He was featured on the Dame Myra Hess Memorial Concert Series in Chicago and Los Angeles, and has also given recitals in Aspen, Boston, Cleveland, and New York. His orchestral work includes a performance at Carnegie Hall as guest soloist at the 100th Anniversary of the modern oboe, as well as appearances with the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, and several other ensembles in the U.S. and abroad.

Klein comes to the University of Washington from a faculty position at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music, Oberlin, Ohio. His teachers include James Caldwell, Walter Bianchi, and Richard Woodhams. Klein earned his Bachelor of Music in 1987 and his Artist’s Diploma in 1989 from the Oberlin Conservatory of Music. He completed additional studies at the Curtis Institute of Music and São Paulo State University. Klein’s solo career is represented by Columbia Artists Management, Inc.