ONE HUNDRED TWENTIETH SEASON

Chicago Symphony Orchestra

Riccardo Muti Music Director
Pierre Boulez Helen Regenstein Conductor Emeritus
Yo-Yo Ma Judson and Joyce Green Creative Consultant

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Thursday, April 28, 2011, at 8:00
Friday, April 29, 2011, at 8:00
Saturday, April 30, 2011, at 8:00
Tuesday, May 3, 2011, at 7:30

Nicholas McGegan Conductor
Eugene Izotov Oboe
Amy Briggs Piano
Hubbard Street Dance Chicago
Glenn Edgerton Artistic Director
Alejandro Cerrudo Choreographer

Vivaldi
Concerto in G Major *(alla rustica)*, RV. 151
Presto
Adagio
Allegro

Marcello
Oboe Concerto in C Minor
Andante e spiccato
Adagio
Presto

EUGENE IZOTOV

Corelli
Concerto grosso in D Major, Op. 6, No. 4
Adagio—Allegro
Adagio—Vivace
Allegro

Vivaldi
Oboe Concerto in F Major, RV. 455
[Allegro]
[Grave]
[Allegro]

EUGENE IZOTOV

INTERMISSION

Blanco

Choreography by Alejandro Cerrudo

Music: Prelude in E Minor, Op. 35, No. 1 by Mendelssohn
Prelude in A-flat Minor, Op. 31, No. 8 *(Chanson de la folle au bord de la mer)* by Alkan

AMY BRIGGS
HUBBARD STREET DANCE CHICAGO

As few as 3000

Choreography by Alejandro Cerrudo

Music: Toccata e Due Canzoni by Martinů
Toccata: Allegro moderato
Canzone No. 1: Andante moderato
Canzone No. 2: Allegro (poco)

CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
HUBBARD STREET DANCE CHICAGO

CSO Tuesday series concerts are sponsored by United Airlines.

Steinway is the official piano of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

This program is partially supported by grants from the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Antonio Vivaldi

Born March 4, 1678, Venice, Italy.
Died July 28, 1741, Vienna, Austria.

Concerto in G Major *(alla rustica)*, RV. 151

The most original and influential Italian composer of his time, Vivaldi was very quickly forgotten. Within a hundred years of his death, he had achieved the ultimate fate of most composers—complete oblivion. After he was finally rediscovered in the early twentieth century and eventually became one of the most performed of all composers *again,* he often was written off as excessively prolific and facile. Stravinsky famously dismissed his entire career as "the same concerto four hundred times," an assessment that was not just unkind, but also unfair. We now know that he wrote more than five—not four—hundred concertos, in addition to operas (he once claimed ninety-four, no doubt with characteristic exaggeration; some twenty survive), cantatas, and trio sonatas.

Vivaldi began his career as a violin virtuoso (he studied with his father, who played at the great Saint Mark's Basilica in Venice), but he also prepared for the priesthood and took Holy Orders at the age of twenty-five. (He soon became known as the "Red Priest," after the color of his hair.) That same year, he accepted a job as music director, violin teacher, and composer at the Ospedale della Pietà, a Venetian orphanage for girls—a post he would keep for more than thirty-five years, nearly the remainder of his life. At the height of his career, Vivaldi was as highly regarded as any living composer, including J.S. Bach, who admired Vivaldi's music, copied out several of his scores for performance, and arranged others for different instruments.

The G major concerto *alla rustica* that opens this week's program is one of Vivaldi's nearly sixty "ripieno" concertos—that is, concertos designed not for one or more soloists, but simply for an orchestra of strings. These pieces, normally with three movements (in the standard fast-slow-fast sequence, like the more common solo concertos), are actually very close stylistically to the sinfonias that open baroque operas. The short and festive *all rustica* concerto, with its bucolic countryside air, has become one of Vivaldi's most frequently played works. ■

The date of composition and first performance are not known

These are the first CSO performances

INSTRUMENTATION
strings, with continuo

APPROXIMATE PERFORMANCE TIME
4 minutes

Arcangelo Corelli

Born February 17, 1653, Fusignano, near Bologna, Italy.
Died January 8, 1713, Rome, Italy.

Concerto grosso in D Major, Op. 6, No. 4

The most popular Italian composer of his time—and, remarkably, a writer exclusively of instrumental pieces when vocal music was all the rage—Arcangelo Corelli did not live to see the publication of his largest and most important work, the set of twelve concerti grossi to which this D major concerto belongs. Corelli was fanatical about withholding his scores until he was satisfied that they were meticulously polished—this in a day when just being published at all was a triumph—and anticipation was running very high for this new collection. "The greatest glory of the century," Adami di Bolsena wrote in 1711, "is at present occupied in bringing to perfection his sixth work of concertos, which will shortly be published and render his name forever more immortal." But when Corelli died two years later, he had still not finished fussing with his masterpieces, all of which had no doubt already been performed. Released as his op. 6 in 1714, these concertos were almost immediately acclaimed as the standard-bearer for this quintessential baroque form.

In this collection, Corelli demonstrates his peerless skill at creating endless variety within the formal architectural framework of the concerto grosso, with its dialogue between a large group of players, the concerto grosso, and a group of soloists, the concertino, which consists here of two violins, cello, and continuo. Although the movements in the D major concerto are characteristically short, they are richly varied in texture and even tempo—the middle movement, for example, begins as a solemn Adagio and then shifts to a brilliant Vivace. The directness and simplicity of Corelli's language made a deep impression on his contemporaries, who understandably marveled at how such deceptively natural, singing music was so rigorously—indeed perfectly—constructed. ■

The date of composition and first performance are not known

These are the first CSO performances

INSTRUMENTATION
strings, with continuo

APPROXIMATE PERFORMANCE TIME
9 minutes

Alessandro Marcello

Born August 24, 1669, Venice, Italy.
Died June 19, 1747, Venice, Italy.

Oboe Concerto in C Minor

Composed by Alessandro Marcello, advertised under his pseudonym Eterio Stinfalico, rearranged and transposed by his brother Benedetto, transcribed for harpsichord by J.S. Bach, and often attributed to Vivaldi, this concerto has become one of the landmarks of the oboe repertoire, despite its muddled pedigree. It is by far the best-known work in Alessandro Marcello's modest catalog, even though he often is not credited with composing it at all.

The son of a Venetian nobleman—and the descendant of a fifteenth-century Doge—Alessandro was a diplomat, artist (specializing briefly in allegorical paintings for the family palaces), poet (his eight books of couplets were published in 1719), collector (he maintained an impressive gallery of musical instruments), violinist, and composer. His output often is described as small and distinguished. Small it certainly is—not more than a dozen or so works apiece in a handful of different forms—but it is distinguished primarily by this felicitous oboe concerto. Alessandro wrote it in the key of D minor, and it was printed in that key in an anthology published in 1717. The transcription for solo keyboard that Bach made of the score also is in D minor. (It was published in Weimar in 1713–14, as part of a set of arrangements of works by other composers, including Vivaldi, and is identified in the later Bach catalog as BWV 974.) But at some point, the concerto came into the hand of Alessandro's younger brother Benedetto, who, although forced to pursue a career in law by his father, composed a large number of pieces on the side and apparently felt the need to put his own imprint on Alessandro's work as well. Benedetto made an edition of the oboe concerto, transposing it to C minor in the process, and it is in this key that it is most often performed today.

Regardless of its key and despite the complexities of its provenance, this oboe concerto is a justly celebrated work, with a particularly haunting slow movement (often transcribed for other instruments) framed by the two brilliant outer sections. ■

The date of composition and first performance are not known

FIRST CSO PERFORMANCE
January 13, 1962 (popular concert), Orchestra Hall. Ray Still, oboe, with Walter Hendl conducting

INSTRUMENTATION
solo oboe and strings, with continuo

APPROXIMATE PERFORMANCE TIME
10 minutes

Antonio Vivaldi

Oboe Concerto in F Major, RV. 455

Vivaldi's apparent specialty was the concerto, for one or more solo instruments, which he composed in abundance and with unusual ease, even by his own standards. (Vivaldi claimed he could compose a concerto faster than a scribe could copy it.) It was the publication in Amsterdam in 1711 of a collection of twelve concertos called *L'estro armonico* that first spread Vivaldi's name throughout Europe; it became the best-selling music title of the early eighteenth century. (Bach copied and arranged six of these concertos for organ or harpsichord.) Vivaldi is said to have established the conventional three-movement baroque concerto form; he didn't invent it, but by constant use from one work to the next, and with endless variety in its handling, he certainly set in place the pattern others would follow for decades to come. He also is the first composer to make regular use of ritornello form—the use of a repeating "refrain" in different but related keys for all the instruments, alternating with freer, modulating passages that are dominated by the soloist.

More than two-thirds of Vivaldi's five hundred-plus concertos are for solo instrument—violin (most plentifully, at more than 230 concertos!), bassoon, cello, oboe, and even mandolin (but no keyboards). Most of them are still relative rarities in the concert hall (even *The Four Seasons,* one of the most familiar works of classical music today, was almost unknown in 1947, when Louis Kaufman, a Portland-born violinist, made the first recording of these four violin concertos).

The oboe was introduced to Italy when Vivaldi was still a young man; it quickly became popular as a solo instrument and was welcomed into the official musical establishment. Ignazio Rion was engaged as an oboe teacher at the Ospedale della Pietà in 1703—one of Venice's four famous foundations for the education of orphaned girls—the same year as Vivaldi's appointment there as violin instructor. Vivaldi probably began to compose oboe

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INSTRUMENTATION
solo oboe and strings, with continuo

APPROXIMATE PERFORMANCE TIME
10 minutes

concertos soon after that (the first ones published appeared in 1716 and 1717). There is no way to know how many he eventually wrote, but more than a dozen survive—the exact number keeps changing as new works are discovered and others discredited over time—including several for two oboes. In the F major solo concerto, Vivaldi spares nothing in writing for this relatively "new" instrument—runs, intricate rhythmic figures, quick passagework, long-breathed melodies, rapid-fire strings of sixteenth-notes. It is all put together with great assurance, elegance, and panache. The two outer movements are pure bravura; the central slow "aria" is an expressive monologue for oboe, accompanied very simply by violins alone. ■

Symphony Center Information

The use of still or video cameras and recording devices is prohibited in Orchestra Hall.

Latecomers will be seated during designated program pauses.

Please use perfume, cologne, and all other scented products sparingly, as many patrons are sensitive to fragrance.

Please turn off or silence all personal electronic devices (pagers, watches, telephones, digital assistants).

Please note that Symphony Center is a smoke-free environment.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Note: Fire exits are located on all levels and are for emergency use only. The lighted Exit sign nearest your seat is the shortest route outdoors. Please walk—do not run—to your exit and do not use elevators for emergency exit.

Volunteer ushers provided by The Saints—Volunteers for the Performing Arts (www.saintschicago.org)

Blanco

Alejandro Cerrudo, Choreography
Felix Mendelssohn and Charles Valentin Alkan, Music
Nicholas Phillips, Set and Lighting Design
Branimira Ivanova, Costume Design

APRIL 27, 29, AND 30:
Penny Saunders, Jessica Tong, Meredith Dincolo, Robyn Mineko Williams

APRIL 28 AND MAY 3:
Penny Saunders, Jacqueline Burnett, Ana Lopez, Kellie Epperheimer

The development of *Blanco* was supported in part by the Choreographic Fellowship, made possible by a gift from the Davee Foundation. Created for and premiered by Hubbard Street Dance Chicago at Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival August 25, 2010.

Felix Mendelssohn

(February 3, 1809–November 4, 1847)

Prelude in E Minor, Op. 35, No. 1

Felix Mendelssohn was the most astonishing child prodigy among composers. Born into a wealthy German Jewish family—his father Abraham was a prosperous banker and his grandfather was the famous philosopher Moses Mendelssohn—Mendelssohn made his own name with the Octet he composed at sixteen and the overture to Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* he wrote the following year. The E minor prelude was probably composed in the early 1830s, and was published in 1837 as part of a set of six preludes and fugues for piano. ■

Charles-Valentin Alkan

(November 30, 1813–March 29, 1888)

Prelude in A-flat Minor, Op. 31, No. 8 *(Chanson de la folle au bord de la mer)*

The French pianist Charles-Valentin Alkan was a childhood sensation, but rarely performed in public later in his life. A close friend of Chopin, and admired by Liszt and Schumann, he was widely regarded as one of the great virtuosos and most important composers of piano music in his time. The Prelude in A-flat minor, subtitled *Song of the Madwoman by the Sea,* was composed in 1847 as part of a set of preludes in all the major and minor keys. ■

As few as 3000

Alejandro Cerrudo, Choreography
Bohuslav Martinů, Music
Matt Miller, Lighting Design
Branimira Ivanova, Costume Design

Jesse Bechard
Jacqueline Burnett
Christian Broomhall
Meredith Dincolo
Jonathan Fredrickson
Kellie Epperheimer
Jason Hortin
Ana Lopez
Kevin Shannon
Penny Saunders
Benjamin Wardell
Jessica Tong
Robyn Mineko Williams

***As few as 3000* is sponsored by Bill and Orli Staley with additional support provided by members of the Choreographer's Circle: Linda Hutson and Sallyan Windt. The development of *As few as 3000* was supported in part by the Choreographic Fellowship, made possible by a gift from the Davee Foundation. Created for and premiered by Hubbard Street Dance Chicago with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, April 27, 2011.**

Bohuslav Martinů

(December 8, 1890–August 28, 1959)

Toccata e Due Canzoni

Bohuslav Martinů was born 193 steps above the ground in a bell tower, where his father served as watchman of the village church. Bohuslav, who lived in the tower overlooking the streets of the tiny Bohemian town of Policka until he was thirteen, was reclusive and shy, with little curiosity about the world beyond his immediate view. All that changed when he heard the new French music by Debussy and Ravel and decided to go to Paris. He left Policka in 1923 on a state grant that would support him for three months, and ended up staying in Paris for seventeen years. Martinů thrived in Paris, then the artistic capital of Europe. He studied with Albert Roussel, and made the acquaintance of Serge Koussevitzky, who would later introduce his music to the United States. In 1930, he married Charlotte Quennehen, a seamstress, and his life began to fall into place. His music was performed more regularly, both in Europe and in the U.S.

In 1940, Martinů was blacklisted by the Nazis. On June 10, four days before the Germans entered Paris, the Martinůs fled the city, leaving all their possessions behind. For the next several months, they were homeless and often slept on railway platforms. They finally gained passage on the *Exeter,* which left Lisbon for Hoboken, New Jersey, on March 21, 1941. (His American visa described him as a "blacklisted intellectual.") As a kind of welcome gesture, Koussevitzky immediately commissioned Martinů to compose his first symphony, which was premiered in Boston in 1942. Martinů would stay in the States for the next twelve years.

Martinů began the Toccata e Due Canzoni in 1946. Work was interrupted when he took a serious fall while he was teaching at Tanglewood that summer. He finished the score, but did little other work for the next two years, as he suffered from tinnitus, headaches, and depression. He returned to Europe in May 1953 and died in Switzerland on August 28, 1959. ■

These are the first Chicago Symphony performances of Toccata e Due Canzoni.

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