

### Arts Renaissance Tremont presents Cleveland Orchestra winds and pianist Cicilia Yudha

by Mike Telin



On Sunday, April 27 beginning at 3:00 pm in Pilgrim Congregational Church, Arts Renaissance Tremont presents a concert of chamber music for woodwinds and piano performed by Cleveland Orchestra members Mary Lynch, oboe, Robert Woolfrey, clarinet, Barrick Stees, bassoon and Richard King, horn, with Cicilia Yudha, piano.

The program includes Oskar Morawetz's *Clarinet Sonata* (1981), Heinrich von Herzogenberg's *Trio in D for Oboe, Horn & Piano*, op. 61, Poulenc's *Trio for Oboe, Bassoon & Piano* (1926) and Mozart's *Quintet in E-flat for winds and piano*, K. 452 (1784).

Cicilia Yudha, who is an Assistant Professor at the Dana School of Music Faculty at Youngstown State University and coordinator of the keyboard musicianship program, pointed out during a recent telephone conversation, "As a pianist, it is rare to play chamber music with woodwinds. There is a lot more repertoire in the piano trio and quartet area. But this music is such a joy to play and of course these players are all top notch. I'm just very happy to be doing it."

Oboist Mary Lynch who along with Yudha spearheaded the program added, "I'm very excited about the whole program. I think it presents a good picture of the repertoire for winds and piano. And we're all just very happy to be playing this music together and excited to bring it to people."

Both players agree that they received a lot of help from the other performers in choosing the program for the concert, although it was the opportunity to play the Poulenc and the Mozart that was the initial motivation for the performance. "Mary and I played Poulenc's *Sextet* when we were both in Boston studying at the New England Conservatory, and now that we have found ourselves in Ohio we wanted to do a concert together and Poulenc

had to be part of the program,” Yudha recalled, adding that she is “a little obsessed with Poulenc.”

Does Lynch share Yudha’s obsession with Poulenc? “I wouldn’t call it an obsession, but I do remember when we were planning the program we knew we wanted to play the Mozart Quintet and she really wanted to do the Poulenc Trio. I love the piece, it’s just so funny, quirky and so much fun to play.”

A second trio on the program that is new to both Lynch and Yudha is the Herzogenberg. Both players agree that the piece reminds them of Brahms. “I had never heard of Herzogenberg but Rich King suggested the piece,” Lynch said. “So I listened to a recording and I couldn’t believe I had never heard it before. It’s really a nice piece. He was a contemporary of Brahms and you hear that in the music. And to me it sounds like Mahler must have heard this piece — for example, in the last movement, it sounds like a Mahler symphony. It’s really beautiful and sounds very outdoorsy to me. I have a picture of fields of flowers and mountains running through my head.”

Mary Lynch and Cicilia Yudha both think that Mozart’s Quintet in E-flat is a standout in all of the chamber music repertoire, not just that for winds. “I feel it is one of the greatest pieces of chamber music every written,” Yudha said. “The way the instruments blend together and respond to each other is remarkable. Mozart was a genius.”

Lynch’s experience of playing the piece was at Marlboro a few years ago. “I remember that we talked about every phrase, dynamic and articulation marking. And although that was a great way to get to learn the piece for the first time, the next summer I played it again, but we sort of just read through it. And it’s funny because the experience felt so different, just playing it rather than sinking in to it so intensely. I almost think that the beauty of Mozart is better served from a more simple interpretation.”

Finally, how did the Morawetz find its way onto the program? “We needed an opening piece and Robert Woolfrey suggested it,” Yudha recalled. “Richard King also thought it was a great idea — he knows Morawetz’s music and also his granddaughter. We had a lot of help from Richard King in putting this program together I would say. But what I like the program is the diversity. Every piece has a unique character. The Morawetz is dark and the Poulenc is bright and lively, but it also draws so much from the Mozart. The second movement is very similar to the second movement of the Mozart quintet. I think after hearing the Poulenc, when we get to the Mozart audiences will say, ah! that was in the Poulenc.”

While I had her on the telephone I took profit of the occasion to learn more about pianist Cicilia Yudha.

*Mike Telin: I was intrigued by the title on your website: “Indonesian concert pianist and educator.”*

Cicilia Yudha: Even though I’ve lived in the United States for a while and in fact, I’ve now lived longer here than in Indonesia, deep down I still feel my Indonesian roots. My family is still there and my journey into music began there as well. I was very lucky because even though the classical music scene in Indonesia is only a fraction of what it is in the western part of the world, I was deeply rooted in the tradition thanks to my family and my teachers.

*MT: When did you first know you wanted to be a pianist?*

CY: Performing is something that I’ve loved doing ever since I was a kid. And along with that is the educating part because I do feel that I was put into this world to share this with others, but not just by entertaining, but also by educating. The two go hand in hand. My mom is a piano teacher so from early on I’ve seen that aspect of pedagogy. Sharing music as a way of communicating but also enriching someone’s life.

*MT: You came to Cleveland when you were 15: what led you to do that?*

CY: I was very fortunate. When I was 13 or 14 saw a friend who had been studying in Cleveland with Olga Radosavljevich (Miss Olga). She was first introduced to Miss Olga by Jaha Ling, who is also Indonesian, but they met at a music festival and he recruited her to Cleveland. When my friend came back to Jakarta to play a recital I saw her and she told me that if I was going to be really serious about music that I should try go outside of Indonesia to study.

It turned out that Miss Olga ran a camp during the summer so I came and that was when my eyes opened. I thought, wow, all these people my age who are really serious about music, not only about playing their instruments but also learning about music history and theory. For me it was an environment that I didn’t know existed.

*MT: You eventually enrolled in the Young Artist Program at the Cleveland Institute of Music.*

CY: It’s funny because my mother had come with me to the summer camp and the director of the prep department at CIM and Miss Olga took her to tour Hathaway Brown and gave her an overview of what the Young Artist Program (YAP) was like. So we returned to Indonesia and I didn’t know that they had used the video of my last recital during the camp as my audition for the YAP until I received a letter offering me a scholarship.

It was such an honor and it opened up a whole new world. My teacher at that time told my parents that this was a golden opportunity that might not happen again soon. So that's how the love story with Cleveland began.

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