

Jesús Torres (b.1965)— *Silentium Amoris* para oboe y piano (2018)

Programme notes for Oboe Classics
Sarah Roper, April 2020

Jesús Torres, wrote *Silentium Amoris* for oboe and piano in 2018. The work was dedicated to Sarah Roper and was premiered by her and Jerry Steichen in 2019 during the *48th Annual Conference of the International Double Reed Society* in Tampa, Florida, U.S.A. The Spanish premiere was performed by Sarah and Ignacio Torner in January 2020, during the *IX Encuentros Sonoros Festival* in Sevilla, organised by the *Taller Sonoro Ensemble*. As a result of this performance, Sarah and Ignacio recorded *Silentium Amoris* in February 2020 on a rainy day in Seville with José Antonio González in the *Mercuryalilea Piano estudio de grabación*.

When speaking about the style of his music, the composer, Jesús Torres comments that he wrote *Silentium Amoris*, during a compositional phase when he was “breaking away from what is considered to be the European Postwar Avantgarde style” and “influenced clearly by Hispanic roots, in a very personal way, without folkloric character or any direct influence (from any particular school or composer)”. *Silentium Amoris* is based on the poem by Oscar Wilde. The 5 minute long piece is technically demanding for both oboist and pianist and although brief in duration, is a brilliant, intense and compact work, full of emotions and elements that can be understood when reading Wildes poem. In the opening section of the piece, it is possible to hear how the poets voice is unable to express himself fully: “So doth thy beauty make my lips to fail, And all my sweetest singing out of tune”. In the central section, the music portrays the wind which is used as a metaphor for his “stormy passions” and “excessive love” that silence his voice. The music finalises, as does the poem, with a sense of acceptance, love and respect, closing with a positive and peaceful feeling.

Oscar Wilde (1854-1900) - *Silentium Amoris*

As often-times the too resplendent sun
Hurries the pallid and reluctant moon
Back to her sombre cave, ere she hath won
A single ballad from the nightingale,
So doth thy Beauty make my lips to fail,
And all my sweetest singing out of tune.

And as at dawn across the level mead
On wings impetuous some wind will come,
And with its too harsh kisses break the reed
Which was its only instrument of song,
So my too stormy passions work me wrong,
And for excess of Love my Love is dumb.

But surely unto Thee mine eyes did show
Why I am silent, and my lute unstrung;
Else it were better we should part, and go,
Thou to some lips of sweeter melody,
And I to nurse the barren memory
Of un-kissed kisses, and songs never sung.

Jesús Torres (<http://www.jesustorres.org/site/es/index.php>) was born in Zaragoza in 1965 and at present lives and works in Madrid. He completed his music studies at the Conservatorio Superior de Madrid and studied musical analysis with Luis de Pablo and later took composition classes with Francisco Guerrero. At present (2019) his catalogue of compositions consists of at least 120 works, including seventeen orchestral works, of which five are concertos (for piano, accordion, violin, percussion and clarinet) and chamber music works, scored for various combinations of instruments. He is particularly interested in the musicalization of texts, above all texts taken from the poetry of Vicente Aleixandre. Torres has won many awards for his music which has been performed throughout the world and recorded by labels such as Naxos, Kairos, Verso, OCNE, IBS Classical and Tritó. He was resident composer of the Centro Nacional de Difusión Musical during 2017/2018 and is resident composer of the Orquesta Sinfónica de Zaragoza during the 2019/2020 season. 2019 - 2020 his works were premiered and performed by the Orquesta Sinfónica del Principado de Asturias and artists such as the clarinetist Joan Enric Lluna and flautist Emmanuel Pahud.

Other significant works by Jesús Torres including oboe:

Cuarteto con Oboe (2009), recorded by Cuarteto Emispherio (<https://cuartetoemispherio.wordpress.com>) for Oboe classics in 2019 (<http://www.oboeclassics.com/digital/>). A video of the quartet with Cuarteto Emispherio can be seen here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z5wW8uNTIRE>

Trío for oboe, cello and piano (2017), dedicated to and premiered by Cristina Gómez- Godoy (oboe), Pablo Ferrández (violonchelo) y Juan Pérez Floristan (piano) in Madrid in 2018) ([Listen to the live recording here: https://youtu.be/WW-MtMOUoWg](https://youtu.be/WW-MtMOUoWg)).