Blues for D.D.

for Solo Oboe

by

Jeffrey Agrell
Blues for D.D.

Program Notes

Blues for D.D. was written for oboe virtuoso Diana Doherty at her request. It starts slow and easy, and then takes off, transmogrifying the blues through sections of catchy swing, lilting Latin, and blistering bebop before crashing to earth with a nearly three octave chromatic swoop and concluding with a sassy bit of tongue in cheek.

The piece was designed to be fun to play and fun to listen to, and to test the outer limits of the possible in oboe technique. Thus, the principal requirements for undertaking this piece are a sense of humor and considerably more technique than God. The Blues is an oboist’s Everest, and only an elite few are capable of making it to the top. A live performance of Blues for D.D. is a breathless and thrilling experience for all concerned. (Be sure to check out Diana Doherty’s CD Blues for D.D. with two versions of this piece (ABC Classics ABC4657822). Blues for D.D. was named a required work for the 2019 Fernand Gillet-Hugo International Competition of the International Double Reed Society (https://www.idrs.org/competitions/gillet-fox/)

About the Composer

Jeffrey Agrell has been horn professor at The University of Iowa School of Music since 2000 after a first career as professional symphony musician. He has won awards as both a writer and composer, with dozens of compositions published, recorded, and performed worldwide, plus over one hundred articles and nine books, including Improvisation Games for Classical Musicians (2008) & Vol. II (2016). Besides standard horn repertoire and technique, he also teaches classical improvisation and frequently gives lectures, concerts, and workshops in this type of improvisation nationally and internationally.