

## DUO

## stephanie ho & saar ahuvia, pianists

The collaboration of pianists Stephanie Ho and Saar Ahuvia in both piano four-hand and two-piano repertoire brings them to New York's cutting-edge *Le Poisson Rouge*, the Czech Republic's Pilsen Radio Symphony Orchestra performing Bohuslav Martinu's *Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra*, engagement with Cultural Center of Chicago's *Dame Myra Hess* series, and a live radio interview and performance on WNYC's *Soundcheck* with John Schaefer.

This season DUO Stephanie and Saar were awarded a grant by the Foundation for Contemporary Arts in New York to present a special concert at *Le Poisson Rouge* featuring *Celestial Mechanics* by George Crumb in celebration of the composer's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. DUO was also invited for a three-concert residency for *Composers Collaborative* at Cornelia Street Café in NYC. Other highlights include an appearance on *In the Gardens of Spain*, a live WQXR broadcast concert from New York City's Cervantes Institute, a live broadcast concert from Chicago on WFMT presented by *PianoForte* Foundation and a special concert in Miami for the Murray Dranoff International Two Piano Foundation. Highlights from the 2008-9 season include concerts with the Regensdorf Chamber Orchestra (Switzerland) performing Mozart and Bach Concertos for Two Pianos and engagements at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Catonsville Presbyterian Concert Series in Baltimore and Keneseth Israel Community Series in Philadelphia.

While pursuing Graduate Performance Diplomas at the Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University, the couple was inspired by Leon Fleisher to explore the string quartets of Beethoven in a duo piano setting. From that motivation came several concert appearances of Beethoven's String Quartet Op.18 No.6 and a mentorship by Mr. Fleisher who was joined in his efforts by both Julian Martin and Boris Slutsky, faculty members at the Juilliard School and Peabody Institute respectively.

In order to focus on developing a duo repertoire, Stephanie and Saar completed two Performing Artist Residencies at the Banff Centre in Canada in 2005 and 2006 where they performed as well as recorded music by Debussy, Mozart, Brahms, Messiaen, Schubert, Stravinsky and more. Selections from these performances were chosen for broadcast on WQXR's *Young Artist Showcase* in New York.

Interested in programming a wide variety of music, DUO has been exploring a variety of music from Guillaume de Machaut to György Kurtág, Messiaen's monumental *Visions de l'Amen*, as well as their own four-hand transcription of *A Time for Love* by jazz pianist Bill Evans. Deeply committed to playing new music, DUO has premiered works by Hywel Davies, Michael Harrison, Philippe Bodin, Matt van Brink, Jay Anthony Gach, Paul Hefner, Dana Richardson, Henry Martin and Joel Mandelbaum. They were awarded a grant from New York City Department of Cultural Affairs to present *Sounds of New York* – a concert devoted to New York composers at Queens College. DUO presented special programs of music and letter readings. These include *Intimate Letters – the Piano Music of Leos Janáček* and *A Life in Letters – Clara Schumann and Johannes Brahms*.

In conjunction with their performing careers, both Stephanie and Saar are currently faculty members at Concordia College's Conservatory of Music in Bronxville, New York and Kean University in Union, New Jersey. They reside in Forest Hills - Queens, NYC. Please visit them at [www.stepsaarduo.com](http://www.stepsaarduo.com).