

## 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 Baltimore's premier *Concerts at Second Presbyterian* series, an orchestral debut with the Czech Republic's Pilsen Radio Symphony Orchestra in Winterthur, Switzerland with Bohuslav Martinu's *Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra*, engagement with Cultural Center of Chicago's *Dame Myra Hess* series, and regular appearances at Baltimore's intimate yet cutting-edge *An die Musik LIVE!*

DUO has been awarded a New York City Department of Cultural Affairs Individual Artist Grant through the Queens Council for the Arts Community Arts Fund. In order to further enrich the cultural life of New York City, DUO will present a concert of four-hand and two-piano music by local New York City composers at Queens College during the fall of 2008. DUO will commence the 08-09 season with an appearance with the Regensdorf Chamber Orchestra (Switzerland) performing Mozart's Concerto for Two Pianos in E-flat Major.

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 small 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

The artistic development of these fine young musicians as a piano duo was augmented by performances in such cities as Washington, New York, Zürich, Honolulu, Portland and Baltimore as well as other venues in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. In order to focus on developing a duo repertoire, they completed a Performing Artist Residency at the Banff Centre in Canada where they performed as well as recorded a four-hands CD that includes Debussy's *Petite Suite*, Mozart's *Sonata in C Major, K. 521*, and three *Hungarian Dances* by Brahms. Selections from this CD were heard on the *Young Artist Showcase* on WQXR FM in New York.

Interested in programming a wide variety of music, DUO has been exploring Bach chorale preludes for two-pianos, four-hand transcriptions of late Beethoven String Quartets, Messiaen's monumental *Visions de l'Amen*, prepared piano works such as George Crumb's *Celestial Mechanics*, as well as four-hand transcriptions of solo recordings of the jazz pianist Bill Evans. Deeply committed to playing new music, DUO already inspired British composer Hywel Davies to write original works for them: *Prelude and Variation* and *Still Life*. *Prelude and Variation* received its world premiere by DUO in September of 2005. Philippe Bodin's *Double Salt Variations* (written for DUO) premiered in spring 2007 concerts in Baltimore, New York and Baden, Switzerland.

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. They reside in New York City. Please visit them at [www.stepsaarduo.com](http://www.stepsaarduo.com).