

### Duo Yamamoto

The sisters Yuka and Ayaka Yamamoto have been performing together as a piano duo since 2009 and have won numerous prizes in national and international competitions, including the gold medal prize at the 12th Dranoff International 2 Piano Competition in Miami, Florida. Within the first year after founding the duo, the Yamamotos won first prize and a special prize at the PTNA Piano Competition and the Grand Prize at the 3rd Yokohama International Music Competition. In 2010, they received first place and the Critic's Award at the 13th Concorso Internazionale "Pietro Argento" in Italy as well as the Grand Prize at the 16th International Piano Duo Competition in Japan. The duo was accepted into the second round of the 59th International ARD Competition in Munich 2010. In 2011 they received a special honorable mention at the "Liszt 200" International Piano Duo Competition in Chicago.

Duo Yamamoto has performed at various venues throughout Italy, Austria, and Japan, including the Gläsernen Saal (Magnum Auditorium) of the Musikverein in Vienna in 2011. In addition to their performance career, the sisters have also participated in masterclasses with Professor Matti Raekallio and Professor Dmitri Alexeev.

Yuka and Ayaka are currently studying at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater in Rostock under the duo professors Hans-Peter Stenzl and Volker Stenzl.

For more information, please visit <http://pianoduoyamamoto.jimdo.com/>.

### Duo Yoo & Kim

The Piano Duo Yoo & Kim (Jaekyung Yoo and Yoon-Jee Kim) are the silver medal winners of the 12<sup>th</sup> Dranoff International 2 Piano Competition. Duo Yoo & Kim has rapidly established itself as a team that finds no equals among its generation; barely two months after its formation, the duo won 1st prize in both four-hands and two-piano categories at the International Piano Competition "Rome 2010." In 2011, they triumphed at the International Piano Duo Competition in Białystok, Poland, where they won both 1st prize and the special prize for the best interpretation of Lutosławski's Paganini Variations. Duo Yoo & Kim has additionally garnered prizes at the International Valberg Competition for Four Hands, and San Marino International Piano Competition.

In 2010, the duo made a concert appearance at the United Nations of Geneva, winning such praise as "the South Korean performers cast a spell upon the Geneva audience." The duo has also appeared on the NDR radio broadcast in Germany and continues to perform numerous recitals in Europe as part of concert series such as the "Weltklassik am Klavier!" and "Young Professionals."

Having been close friends for years, Jaekyung and Yoon-Jee formed a duo team in July 2010 with a strong support from Matti Raekallio, their former piano teacher. They currently study with Duo Genova & Dimitrov at the Hochschule für Musik, Theater in Medien Hannover. They also reside in Manchester, UK, where both are enrolled at the Royal Northern College of Music; Jaekyung is part of the International Artist Diploma program, and Yoon-Jee is pursuing a Master's degree in conducting.

For more information, please visit <http://www.yooandkim.com>.

### Duo imPuls

Barbara and Sebastian Bartmann have been playing together for 11 years now. Their most recent accomplishment has been in the 12<sup>th</sup> Dranoff International 2 Piano Competition, where they succeeded remarkably as the bronze medal winners, and were awarded the Best Performance Prize for all three commissioned works of the competition. They can be heard in concert halls throughout Europe, at famed festivals such as the Ludwigsburger Schlossfestspiele, the Musikfest Stuttgart, the Oberstdorfer Musiksommer, the Festspiele Mecklenburg-Vorpommern or the Edvard-Grieg Festival Oslo. Together, Barbara and Sebastian have performed at such concert halls as the Konzerthaus Berlin, the Cankarjev Dome Ljubljana, the Kraków Philharmonic, the Gulbenkian Lissabon, or the Palais des Beaux-Arts Brussels. In October 2010, duo imPuls made its debut at the Merkin Concert Hall in New York City.

In addition to their success on the concert stage, Barbara and Sebastian Bartmann have achieved highly in many international competitions. In 2009, they were awarded 1st Prize in the International Competition for Contemporary Chamber Music Kraków 2009, in which they formed Flügelschlag-Quartett together with percussionists Ákos Nagy and Claudius Heinzemann. In 2008, duo imPuls was awarded 1st Prize in the Concours Valberg Nizza for the first time in the history of the competition. In September of 2007, it received 1st Prize, the “Grieg-Prize”, as well as special prize for best performance of a contemporary work in the Edvard-Grieg Competition Oslo.

Barbara and Sebastian Bartmann are artistically influenced by their work with Klavierduo Stenzl, Duo Tal-Groethuysen, Duo Genova-Dimitrov as well as André Marchand, Konrad Elser, Michael Seewann, Mauricio Kagel, and Sian Edwards.

For further information, please visit <http://www.duoimPuls.com>.

### Duo Stephanie and Saar

Pianists Stephanie Ho and Saar Ahuvia collaborate as DUO Stephanie and Saar in performances noted for their versatility, elegance and intellectual curiosity. They were finalists in the 2008 Dranoff International 2 Piano Competition.

The New York Times praised their “beautifully understated performances” of the György Kurtág transcriptions of the music of Bach, featured on their 2012 CD *Bach Crossings*. Glowing reviews for the album have followed suit; Laurence Vittes writes in the Huffington Post “In addition to being drop dead gorgeous, these performances explain what voicing is in Bach”, and International Piano Magazine notes “It is clear from the precision and elegant phrasing on this disc that this is a tight partnership between pianists who have developed an implicit understanding of each other’s musicality.”

Performance highlights in recent seasons include a special collaboration with the New World Symphony Percussion Consort of an arrangement of Stravinsky’s *Petrouchka* by Michael Linville, and a recital in Washington DC’s prestigious Dumbarton Oaks concert series. The duo has been featured twice at the Portland Piano International Festival, and also the Dranoff Two Piano Foundation’s outreach event *Piano Slam* at the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts, Chicago’s *Dame Myra Hess* Memorial Concert Series, and Baltimore’s Yale Gordon Center for the Performing Arts, and in a recital they performed at the residence of the United States Ambassador in Berlin, Germany. The duo made their orchestral debut as soloists with the Czech Republic’s Pilsen Radio Symphony Orchestra, performing Bohuslav Martinů’s *Concerto for Two Pianos*.

While pursuing Graduate studies at the Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University,

Stephanie and Saar were inspired by Leon Fleisher to explore the Beethoven string quartets in a duo piano setting. Mr. Fleisher's mentorship was furthered by support from Julian Martin and Boris Slutsky of The Juilliard School and Peabody Institute, respectively. Two Performing Artist Residencies at Canada's Banff Centre in 2005 and 2006 helped solidify their creative partnership. Saar Ahuvia, a native of Israel, studied in Israel's Tel Aviv Academy and Switzerland's Schaufhausen Conservatory before coming to the United States to pursue a Graduate Performance Diploma with Leon Fleisher at Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University. Stephanie Ho, of Taiwanese descent, grew up in Portland, Oregon before obtaining degrees from Oberlin College and Northwestern University. She received a Graduate Performance Diploma from Peabody Institute, under the direction of Julian Martin. Stephanie and Saar, who are married to each other, reside in New York City.

For more information, please visit <http://www.stepsaarduo.com>.