



Duo Concertante

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Duo Concertante Short Biography

Nancy Dahn and Timothy Steeves, Canada's premiere violin and piano ensemble, are partners in music and in life. The Duo's busy international touring schedule takes them throughout North America, Europe, the UK and China, with performances at the Wigmore Hall, Weill Recital Hall, Roy Thomson Hall, the National Arts Centre, and the Forbidden City Concert Hall in Beijing. Duo Concertante have released 12 CDs on the ATMA, Centrediscs, and Marquis labels. The all-Canadian album *Incarnation* was named one of CBC Radio's Top 10 Classical Recordings of 2017, and was also recognized by the East Coast Music Association, which awarded Duo Concertante Classical Recording of the Year for three consecutive years. Nancy and Tim have consistently supported new music, commissioning over 65 works for violin and piano from many of Canada's leading composers, including R. Murray Schafer's Duo for Violin and Piano, which won a JUNO award on their 2011 CD *Wild Bird*. Fellows of the Royal Society of Canada, they are also both Research Professors at Memorial University and Artistic Directors of the Tuckamore Festival.

DUO CONCERTANTE

Nancy Dahn, violin • Timothy Steeves, piano

“Grace and fire... fury and repose... a triumphant mass of non-stop energy”

– *WholeNote*

“Majesty, passion and excitement. Inspiring!”

– *Wiener Zeitung* (Vienna)

“Splendid... a miracle of knowledge and poetry”

– *Gramophone*

For over twenty years, violinist Nancy Dahn and pianist Timothy Steeves have built an international career as the acclaimed Canadian chamber ensemble Duo Concertante. Their name comes from the inscription over Beethoven’s “Kreutzer” sonata, “in stilo molto concertante,” which implies the two performers are equal, dynamic voices. This defines their unique artistic relationship and the “deeply integrated performances that flow naturally as if the music were being created on the spot” (*Gramophone*).

After their first concert in 1997, the Halifax Chronicle-Herald called them “two packages of musical dynamite that would credit any stage on the planet.” Since then, they have performed more than 600 performances around the world, at such prestigious venues as the Wigmore Hall (London), Carnegie Hall’s Weill Recital Hall (New York City), Shanghai City Theatre (Shanghai), the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (Los Angeles), Roy Thomson Hall and the Four Seasons Performing Arts Centre (Toronto), the National Arts Centre (Ottawa), and the Forbidden City Concert Hall (Beijing).

Duo Concertante have produced 12 albums, recorded on the Centrediscs, ATMA and Marquis Classics labels, creating a formidable oeuvre of new works and definitive classics. *Beethoven: Complete Sonatas for Violin and Piano* received critical praise in German, Austrian, British and Canadian media, and was described by Gramophone as “a miracle of...knowledge and poetry.” In 2017, *J.S. Bach Six Sonatas for Violin and Keyboard* was named ECMA’s Classical Recording of the Year, the first of three consecutive ECMA wins in that category, followed by *Incarnation* (2018) and *Perfect Light* (2019). The just-released *Franz Schubert Music for Violin and Piano* (May 2020) has already gained attention from the CBC for being “heart-rending...thrilling”, and with “uncanny unity of purpose.”

Nancy and Tim are stalwart advocates for Canadian composers, and have commissioned, premiered and recorded over 65 new works to date. Composers such as Chan Ka Nin, Kati Agócs, Andrew Staniland, Alice Ping Ho, Randolph Peters, Andrew MacDonald, are just a few of the many distinguished artists they have worked with. *It Takes Two* (2009), described as “spectacular” by American Record Guide, is a collection of encore pieces arranged by Clifford Crawley, and *Wild Honey* (2011) featured their commissioned work *Duo for Violin and Piano* by R. Murray Schafer, which won a 2011 JUNO Award (Classical Composition of the Year). In 2020, the Duo launched “Ecology of Being,” a dynamic program of music and words inspired by climate change and mankind’s reliance on the earth not only for survival but for resilience, mental health and spirituality. New works by Melissa Hui, Ian Cusson, Bekah Simms, Dawn Avery, and Carmen Braden reflect on the state of our world and what we may be leaving the next generation through music and poetry.

Duo Concertante are the artistic directors, founders, performers, and mentors of the Tuckamore Festival – an internationally acclaimed chamber musical festival held for two weeks each August. For almost 20 years, Tuckamore -- a major contributor to the cultural life of Newfoundland and Labrador-- has welcomed leading artists and emerging musicians worldwide to St. John's. In addition to featuring extraordinary performances by artists such as Janina Fialkowska, Jon Kimura Parker, the Danish String Quartet, the Miro Quartet, and Louie Lortie, it also offers an inspiring and intensive educational experience for more than 20 young chamber musicians and composers. Duo Concertante also regularly perform and collaborate with other artists of international stature, at other summer music festivals throughout North America, including the Ottawa International Chamber Music Festival, Cactus Pear Music Festival, Toronto Summer Music, Festival of the Sound, Indian River Festival, Domain Forget and Music Niagara.

Throughout their artistic endeavours and achievements, Nancy and Tim have maintained a full studio of students drawn from across North America. Their students have been accepted for graduate studies at the Juilliard School, Rice University, the New England Conservatory, the Royal Academy of Music, the Guildhall School and the Peabody Conservatory. Duo Concertante have given hundreds of master classes and workshops in Canada, the US and China.

Duo Concertante's artistic excellence and contributions throughout their 20-year career have been acknowledged with the receipt of Royal Society of Canada Fellowships, being named University Research Professors by Memorial University of Newfoundland and singled out by the Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council as Artists of the Year in 2009.

Press

“Splendid...The lasting impression they make is of deeply integrated performances that flow naturally as if the music were being created on the spot. Both Dahn and Steeves speak from within; they listen to where Beethoven is going and align themselves instantaneously to his direction. They can be engagingly rustic and emotionally sweet...or breathe fiery dialogues into easily clichéd sonatas. They mine Beethoven’s lyrical vein throughout. The opening bars of the final sonata, op. 96, are a miracle of such knowledge and poetry.” – GRAMOPHONE

“One doesn’t listen to a program of violin music here, but to real chamber music, as it should be. Suspended between poetry and romance, the fluidity of the piano intertwines intimately with the poignancy of the violin. Never do [they] sacrifice beauty of sound for the sake of virtuosity, making it obvious that, for [Dahn and Steeves], impeccable technique never gets in the way of artistry.” – LA SCENA MUSICALE

“Dahn and Steeves are superb musicians” – THE WHOLENOTE MAGAZINE

“Duo Concertante play exceptionally well together...The unifying element here is not so much the attractive repertoire as the exceptional warmth and intimacy of its presentation.” – THE OTTAWA CITIZEN

“Vigorous, passionate, red-blooded and romantic. Dahn and Steeves make a strong, sympathetic and like-minded pair.” – CBC SOUND ADVICE (RICK PHILLIPS)

“Their approach is serious, free of fuss and showiness; both have plenty of technique which they put entirely at the service of the music. In close rapport, their phrasing and expression are unanimous. These two fine players deserve a much wider hearing.” – NEW YORK CONCERT REVIEW (EDITH EISLER)

“The wonderful teamwork of this pair [brings] out subtleties and nuances that are lost when lesser teams attempt them. Their level of preparation is really stunning, the fruit of close partnership for some years now. They work together with uncanny perfection, and they get everything right. Splendid concert!” – THE GAZETTE, WATERLOO

“Two excellent players!” – STRINGS MAGAZINE

“This [Beethoven’s Kreutzer Sonata] was the highlight of the evening – sensitive, meticulously well-prepared, playing together with an impressive flair for the inherent dramatic contrast and emotion this music comprises...the performance of both musicians was superb...” – THE EVENING TELEGRAM, ST. JOHN’S

“Duo Concertante made a powerful case for thinking of violin/piano sonatas as duo music, rather than as music for a pianist and a violinist...” – SAN FRANCISCO CLASSICAL VOICE

“Two packages of musical dynamite that would credit any stage in any city in any continent on the planet!...They [play] with the kind of virtuosity that doesn’t draw attention to itself but makes you hold your breath anyway.” – THE CHRONICLE HERALD, HALIFAX

“[This] young violin piano duo is among Canada’s finest!... Whether trading themes back and forth, or exchanging dynamic and textural nuances, Steeves and Dahn wove their way through all three movements [of Mozart’s K.378] with a warm, gracious ease that veterans of decades together might envy.” – THE WATERLOO CHRONICLE, KITCHENER WATERLOO

“Dahn and Steeves have reached that enviable plateau in any chamber music collaboration where each thinks the other’s thoughts” – THE SUNDAY HERALD, HALIFAX

“Dahn and Steeves have outstanding command technically and musically, and the tight quality of the ensemble playing speaks to years of successful collaboration. Throughout there is an intense energy to the playing, coupled with a remarkable ability to project a spacious quality in open-textured passages. Even in dark passages, the playing is never overbearing. This duo has an exceptional ability to hold every note in suspense and captivate the listener, no matter how disparate the compositional styles that are present on this disc.” – CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF MUSIC LIBRARIES

Repertoire (* indicates Canadian composer)

Abreu, Zequinha	Tico Tico, arr. Clifford Crawley
Agócs, Kati*	Supernatural Love (2008) <i>(written for and commissioned by Duo Concertante with the assistance of the Canada Council)</i>
Avery, Dawn	Onekha'shòn:a, Ya'kòn:kwe (2020) <i>(written for and commissioned by Duo Concertante with the assistance of the Canada Council's New Chapter program)</i>
Bach, J.S.	Sonata in B minor, BWV 1014 Sonata in A major, BWV 1015 Sonata in E Major, BWV 1016 Sonata in C minor, BWV 1017 Sonata in F minor, BWV 1018 Sonata in G major, BWV 1019
Bártók, Bela	Rhapsody no. 1 Sonata no. 1 Sonata no. 2 Rumanian Folk Dances
Beethoven, L. van	Sonata in D major, op. 12, no. 1 Sonata in A major, op. 12, no. 2 Sonata in E-flat major, op. 12, no. 3 Sonata in A minor, op. 23 Sonata in F major, op. 24 ("Spring") Sonata in A major, op. 30, no. 1 Sonata in C minor, op. 30, no. 2 Sonata in G major, op. 30, no. 3 Sonata in A minor, op. 47 ("Kreutzer") Sonata in G major, op. 96
Bonfá, Luiz	Black Orpheus, arr. Clifford Crawley
Bouchard, Linda*	Spill Out (2006) <i>(written for and commissioned by Duo Concertante with the assistance of the CBC)</i>
Braden, Carmen*	The Seed Knows (2020) <i>(written for and commissioned by Duo Concertante with the assistance of the Canada Council's New Chapter program)</i>
Brahms, Johannes	Scherzo WoO 2 Sonata no. 1 in G major, op. 78 Sonata no. 2 in A major, op. 100 Sonata no. 3 in D minor, op. 108

Chan, Ka Nin*	<p>Cool Mountain Water (2001) <i>(written for and commissioned by Duo Concertante with the assistance of the Laidlaw Foundation)</i></p> <p>Late in a Slow Time (2006)</p> <p>Incarnation (2014) <i>(written for and commissioned by Duo Concertante with the assistance of the Canada Council)</i></p>
Chausson, Ernest	Concerto for Solo Violin, Piano, and String Quartet
Crawley, Clifford*	<p>Christmas arrangements: God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen, Nowell, Lo How a Rose, In Dulci Jubilo, Barbara Allen, Coventry Carol, O Come All Ye Faithful, Lo He Comes with Clouds Descending, Good King Wenceslas, Once in Royal David's City, We Three Kings, O Little Town of Bethlehem, While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night, Away in a Manger, Hark the Herald Angels, Silent Night, We Wish You a Merry Christmas, In the Bleak Midwinter (fragment) (2017)</p> <p>Comme de longs echos (2012)</p> <p>Eneffeldy (20140) <i>(both written for Duo Concertante)</i></p>
Current, Brian*	<p>Faster Still for Solo Violin, Piano, and String quartet (2006) <i>(written for and commissioned by Duo Concertante with the assistance of the CBC)</i></p>
Cusson, Ian*	<p>The Garden of Earthly Delight (2020) <i>(written for and commissioned by Duo Concertante with the assistance of the Canada Council's New Chapter program)</i></p>
Daniel, Omar*	<p>Wild Honey (2001) <i>(written for and commissioned by Duo Concertante with the assistance of the Canada Council)</i></p>
Debussy, Claude	Sonata for Violin and Piano
Dvořák, Anton	Ballad op.15, no.1
de Falla, Manuel	Suite populaire espagnole
Fauré, Gabriel	Sonata in A major
Franck, César	Sonata in A major
Gershwin, George	Lady Be Good, arr. Clifford Crawley

Gillespie, Dizzy	Night in Tunisia, arr. Clifford Crawley
Gougeon, Denis*	Chants du Coeur (2008) <i>(written for and commissioned by Duo Concertante)</i>
Grieg, Edvard	Solveig's Song, arr. Clifford Crawley
Hétu, Jacques*	Sonata (1996)
Ho, Alice*	Double Concerto for Violin and Piano "Capriccio Ballo" (2005) <i>(written for and commissioned by Duo Concertante with the assistance of the CBC)</i> Coeur à Coeur (2011) <i>(written for Duo Concertante)</i>
Ho, Vince*	Maples and the Stream (2013) <i>(written for and commissioned by Duo Concertante with the assistance of the Manitoba Arts Council)</i>
Janáček, Leos	Sonata for Violin and Piano
Khachaturian, Aram	Sabre Dance, arr. Clifford Crawley
Lesage, Jean*	Portrait of a Sentimental Musician in a Distorting Mirror (2000) <i>(written for and commissioned by Duo Concertante with the assistance of the CBC)</i>
MacDonald, Andrew*	Double Concerto for Violin, Piano, and Orchestra, op. 51 (2000) <i>(written for and commissioned by Duo Concertante with the assistance of the Canada Council)</i> Sonata no. 2 "The Phoenix" (1999)
Morlock, Jocelyn*	Petrichor (2013) <i>(written for and commissioned by Duo Concertante with the assistance of the Canada Council)</i>
Mozart, W.A.	Sonata in B flat major, K. 378 Sonata in G, K. 397 Sonata in B flat, K.454 Turkish March, arr. Clifford Crawley
Mozetich, Marjan*	Desire at Twilight
Mendelssohn, Felix	Concerto for Violin and Piano in D minor
Murphy, Kelly – Marie*	Dance Me to Your Beauty with a Burning Violin (2002) <i>(written for and commissioned by Duo Concertante with the assistance of the CBC)</i>
Parker, Michael*	In Memoriam, op. 43 (1991)

Pärt, Arvo	Fratres
Peters, Randolph	Frisson (2018) <i>(written for and commissioned by Duo Concertante with the assistance of the Canada Council)</i>
Piazzolla, Astor	Le grand tango, arr. Nancy Dahn
Prokofiev, Sergey	Five Melodies, op. 35 Romeo and Juliette: Dance of the Knights, arr. Clifford Crawley Sonata no 1 in F minor, op. 80
Puccini, Giacomo	Hummers Chorus (Madame Butterfly), arr. Clifford Crawley
Ravel, Maurice	Sonata for Violin and Piano
Rodgers, Richard	It's a Grand Night for Falling in love with the Most Beautiful Girl in the World on a Carousel (in Vienna), arr. Clifford Crawley
Robinovitch, Sid*	Meditation for Violin and Piano (2003)
Ross, Clark*	Three Pieces for Violin and Piano (1997) <i>(written for and commissioned by Duo Concertante with the assistance of the Newfoundland Arts Council)</i>
Saint-Saëns, Camille	Danse macabre Mon coeur s'ouvre à ta voix (Samson and Dalila), arr. Clifford Crawley
Schafer, R. Murray*	Duo for Violin and Piano (2008) <i>(written for and commissioned by Duo Concertante with the assistance of the CBC, Ottawa Chamber Music Festival and Tuckamore Festival: Chamber Music in Newfoundland)</i> Wild Bird (1997)
Schubert, Franz	Sonatina No. 1 in D major for Violin and Piano, D. 384 Sonatina No. 2 in A minor for Violin and Piano, D. 385 Sonatina No. 3 in G minor for Violin and Piano, D. 408 Rondo for Violin and Piano, Op. 70, D. 895 Fantasy for Violin and Piano in C Major, D. 934 Sonata for Violin and Piano in A major, D. 574
Schumann, Robert	Sonata in A minor, op. 105
Scott, David R.*	Balance (2004) <i>(written for and commissioned by Duo Concertante with the assistance of the Manitoba Arts Council)</i>
Shostakovich, Dmitri	Three Dances for Violin and Piano
Simms, Bekah*	Shedding as if Sloughed (2020) <i>(written for and commissioned by Duo Concertante with the assistance of the Canada Council's New Chapter program)</i>

Staniland, Andrew*

The River is Within us (2011)
*(written for and commissioned by Duo Concertante
with the assistance of the CBC)*

The Ocean is Full of its own Collapse (2015)
*(written for and commissioned by Duo Concertante
with the assistance of the Canada Council)*

Strauss, Richard

Sonata for Violin and Piano, op 18

Tchaikovsky, Piotr

Barcarolle (June), arr. Clifford Crawley

