

DuoKeira Piano Duo was formed in 2008 by Michela Chiara Borghese and Sabrina De Carlo, two pianists who are both passionate about chamber music, but are very different in temperament and by training. Michela brings to the partnership absolute precision, strong sound, unflinching stamina and rhythmic drive. Complementary to these qualities are Sabrina's melodic elegance, sense of timing and imaginative spacing, her unceasing quest for true quality of sound, and sense of deep bonds with the composers whose work they play.

The name DuoKeira derives from the Greek word for "hand", and from Chiron, the name of the centaur learned in both the arts and the sciences whose double nature, as both animal and human, fused together the qualities of reason and intuition. The concept of doubleness or duality sums up perfectly DuoKeira's approach to their music, which is on the one hand the site of ongoing intellectual exchange and a meeting place between the musical sensibilities of Michele Chiara and Sabrina, and on the other, a space for the dialogue which, during performance, develops between the two musicians and their public.

It is in this spirit of dialogue that, as well as giving concerts in traditional, prestigious venues (Carnegie Hall New York, the Vatican Museums, the Cappella Paolina in the Quirinal Palace, the Steinway Hall Boston, the Auditorium of the Accademia Nazionale di Danza and Teatro Eliseo in Rome, at the UNESCO building in Paris, Brandeis University in Waltham, and at the Community Music Works Hall in Providence), DuoKeira regularly puts on informal and experimental performances in public and private spaces of industrial wastelands and fragile environments (the Centro culturale Voltaire in Rouen, the Espace Saint-Sauveur in the Corentin Celton Hospital in Issy-les-Moulineaux, Paris, the Ridotto of the Teatro Comunale of L'Aquila in the wake of the terrible earthquake of 2009). On these occasions, DuoKeira offers a public unlike that which usually frequents concert halls an original approach to classical music: one which takes the tradition as a starting point from which to create ever new and unexpected emotions.

This desire to innovate is also what pushes DuoKeira to renew their repertory constantly, making as musicians an effort that also involves developing intellectually. To this end Michela Chiara and Sabrina juxtapose to classic works for piano duos transcription of orchestral pieces and works by contemporary composers. This is reflected in their choice of compositions to record: *Giochi di Piano a Quattro Mani* (RES 2009) is a selection of pieces from different epochs linked by the theme of play; the CD dedicated to the music of Mendelssohn (*Brilliant Classics* 2020), was greeted by the *Sole 24 Ore's* music critic, Quirino Principe, as "a tale of the supernatural reinvented by DuoKeira with a charm I would say is now rare, perhaps altogether forgotten"; the story-line of their latest CD, *Barber, Borodin, Debussy, Ravel* (*Aulicus Classics* 2021) is supplied by the Ballets Russes.

Engaging also in creative dialogue with other arts, DuoKeira has designed a number of exhibition-events - "Vulnerabili all'amore", "Vision", "Il giardino incantato", "Dream for two", "Danza con 20 dita!" - which combine music with acting, dance and video projections in a complex, variegated mosaic of sensory stimuli supported by the synaesthetic power of music. Several of these were performed during the two "Villa Torlonia Roma Piano Duo Festivals" (VTRP²) which DuoKeira organized and directed at the Villa Torlonia Theatre in Rome in 2015 and 2016. The first of these was opened by the Duo with the world première of Samuel Barber's *Fantasy for Two Pianos*, with which they had been entrusted by the International Center for American Music and the Capricorn

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Society. Other marks of recognition include special commendations for their executions of works by Samuel Barber and Darius Milhaud on the occasion of the "IBLA Grand Prize World Music Competition", and the Silver Medal for Outstanding Achievement awarded in November 2017 for their performance of Barber's Souvenirs.