

Chicago Duo Piano Festival

Celebrating 33 Years!



**MUSIC INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO
NICHOLS CONCERT HALL**

**AEBERSOLD AND NEIWEEM
GALA OPENING CONCERT
JULY 9, 2021**

90 Music Institute of Chicago

Celebrating 90 Years • 1931-2021

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2021 CHICAGO DUO PIANO FESTIVAL
CLAIRE AEBERSOLD AND RALPH NEIWEEM PIANO DUO
FRIDAY, JULY 9, 2021 » 7:30 PM

Variations on a Theme by Haydn, Op. 56b

Johannes Brahms
(1833-1897)

From Nocturnes for Orchestra

Claude Debussy
(1862-1918)

I. *Nuages*

II. *Fêtes*

Arrangement for two pianos by Maurice Ravel

INTERMISSION

Cries and Whispers (World Premiere)

Robert Chumley
(b. 1954)

*Co-commissioned by the
Chicago Duo Piano Festival and the Dranoff Foundation*

Symphony No. 9, Op.125

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770 - 1827)

IV. "Ode to Joy"

Arrangement for two pianos by Franz Liszt

CLAIRE AEBERSOLD AND RALPH NEIWEEM, PIANO DUO



Aebersold and Ralph Neiweem are among the most accomplished and acclaimed piano duos of their generation. Described as “consummate practitioners of pianism” (*The Washington Post*) they met in Italy in 1970 as young solo performers at a music festival in Umbria, were married in 1973, and this year celebrate 40 years as a piano duo, having devoted themselves to the exclusive study of the duo repertoire since 1981. In 2020,

Aebersold and Neiweem were awarded the inaugural career achievement award in Piano Duo by the Josef and Rosina Lhévinne Legacy Foundation.

The duo are founders and directors of the NEA award-winning Chicago Duo Piano Festival, held annually at the Music Institute of Chicago. They have also established and direct the Chicago International Duo Piano Competition, most recently held in June, 2016.

The duo has commissioned significant new works for the piano duo, including Joseph Turrin's *Symmetries for Two Pianos*; “Great Movements” Sonata for Piano, Four Hands by Patrick Byers, and *Cries and Whispers* by Robert Chumbley. Aebersold and Neiweem's CDs on the Summit label include *Four-Hand Reflections*; the world premiere recording of the Brahms Piano Concerto No. 1 in the composer's own arrangement for piano, four-hands, and volumes 1 and 2 of a complete traversal of Schubert's four-hand music, praised by *Gramophone Magazine* as “utterly charming...warmly recommended.” Their editions of four-hand arrangements by Brahms and Mendelssohn have been published by Dover, International, and they have written award-winning articles for *Clavier Magazine*.

They are frequent guests on WFMT Radio in Chicago, where they performed a series of over thirty live broadcast concerts covering virtually the complete four-hand repertoire of the 19th and 20th centuries. The duo has appeared with orchestras internationally, including the Chicago Philharmonic and the Vienna Tonkünstler. Highlights of the duo's past performances include the University of Vermont Lane Series, the Detroit Institute of Art, and the Gina Bachauer series in Salt Lake City, Utah, and many recitals at the International Music Festival “PittenClassics” in Austria.

They have been heard in recital in many cities throughout the USA and Europe, including Chicago, New York, Detroit, Washington, D.C., Santa Fe, Vienna,

Rome, Florence and Odessa, Ukraine. In Italy alone they have given over 200 recitals throughout Tuscany and Umbria. Performances in New York include a pair of all-Schubert recitals at the Goethe Institute, and a 25th anniversary celebration concert at Merkin Hall. Claire Aebersold is a native of Oak Ridge, Tennessee and is a graduate of the New England Conservatory. Ralph Neiweem hails from Evanston, Illinois and is a graduate of the Juilliard School. Their common teachers include Irwin Freundlich, Theodore Lettvin, John Browning and Orazio Frugoni, at whose urging they became a duo. They are currently Artists-in-Residence at the Music Institute of Chicago.



ROBERT CHUMBLEY

Hailed by critics from the *Chicago Tribune*, *New York Times* and *Paris Match*, Robert Chumbley is one of the most versatile musicians of our day. Equally at home conducting and composing for the musical theater, opera, ballet and symphony, Chumbley has served as Music Director for Atlanta Ballet for five seasons, and for Cleveland Opera. He has appeared as guest conductor with the Breckenridge Music Festival

(Colorado), American Repertory Ballet, Norwegian National Opera, the Royal Ballet Orchestra (London), the Carolina Chamber Symphony, Winston-Salem Symphony and the Prague Chamber Orchestra among other groups.

In 2019, Chumbley and librettist Carey Scott Wilkerson were awarded the operatic rights for Carson McCullers' masterpiece, *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter*, by the McCullers Center for Writers and Musicians. He has served as Artistic Director of An Appalachian Summer, the North American New Music Festival and ArtsIgnite!, and as composer-in-residence at Atlanta Ballet, the North Carolina Symphony, the Nestle/Musical Encounters Festival (Lisbon) and the Entrecasteaux Festival (Nice). As a pianist, Chumbley's concert appearances have taken him throughout Europe, Japan, the United States and Africa. He has performed by invitation at Carnegie Hall, Kaufmann Hall at the 92nd St. Y, and the second inauguration of President Bill Clinton.

Chumbley has appeared as soloist with orchestras across the United States and performed the world and North American premieres of works by Pulitzer Prize winning composer Michael Colgrass (*Tales of Power* for solo piano at the 92nd St. Y in New York and *Memento* for two pianos and orchestra with the Minnesota Orchestra, Leonard Slatkin conducting) and Alfred Schnittke (Concerto with the Buffalo Philharmonic, Gerhardt Zimmermann conducting). Chumbley has served on the faculties of Appalachian State University, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the State University of New York at Buffalo.



Chicago Duo Piano Festival

*Thank you to the Friends of Chicago Duo Piano Festival
for their generous support!*

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CHICAGO DUO PIANO FESTIVAL

Founded in 1988, the Chicago Duo Piano Festival mission is to foster a deeper interest in the repertoire, performance, and teaching of music for piano, four hands and two pianos, in a fun and supportive atmosphere. The Chicago Duo Piano Festival presents an annual summer festival and winter mini-fest, youth and adult competitions, master classes, and concerts featuring national and international guest piano duos. The festival has hosted many of the world's most formidable piano duos, including the Paratore brothers, Hans-Peter and Volker Stenzl, Tal and Groethuysen, the Contiguglia brothers, and Anderson and Roe.

Called a "duo piano mecca" by *Pioneer Press*, the world-renowned Chicago Duo Piano Festival was founded by Music Institute of Chicago faculty members and piano duo in residence Claire Aebersold and Ralph Neiweem. Aiming to establish a project dedicated to the study of piano duo repertoire, the Chicago Duo Piano Festival has grown from a small workshop to a multifaceted annual festival.

Music Institute of Chicago

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The Music Institute of Chicago is partially funded by the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency.

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If you are interested in learning more, please contact: Lisa Brown at lbrown@musicnist.org

A photograph of a man with dark hair and a beard, wearing a grey blazer over a dark shirt, leaning over a black Steinway grand piano. He is pointing at a sheet of music on the piano's music stand. A young girl with long dark hair, wearing a light blue shirt, is seated at the piano, looking down at the keys. The background is a warm, wood-paneled wall.

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AWAKEN TOMORROW'S SONG.

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