

# Bekkers Piano Guitar Duo

Robert Bekkers, guitar

Anne Ku, piano

**2 November 2010**

George Frideric Handel  
(1685 – 1759)

Arrival of the Queen of Sheba\*

Augustin Barrios-Mangore  
(1885 – 1944)

El Ultimo Tremolo

Gijs van Dijk (b. 1954)

Abstract and Dance (2007)

Antonio Vivaldi  
(1678-1741)

Winter from the Four Seasons\*

Anne Ku (b. 1964)

Adieu to a Piano (2005)  
Opus 13 (2005)

Manuel de Falla  
(1876-1946)

Danse Espagnole from La Vida Breve

Johann Nepomuk Hummel  
(1778-1837) and  
Mauro Giuliani (1781-1829)

Grand Potpourri National

\* arranged by Robert Bekkers

**Duo CD “Summer” released in 2010, for sale – over 70 minutes of music recorded in the Netherlands:**

- Hummel: Potpourri
- Vivaldi: Summer from the Four Seasons
- Torroba: Sonatina
- Rodrigo: Fantasia para un Gentilhombre
- Giuliani: Polonaise from Variationen Opus 113 (65)

## Program Notes

“**Arrival of the Queen of Sheba**” comes from Handel’s oratorio Solomon which was written in 1748 and premiered a year later in London. The libretto is based on biblical stories of the wise King Solomon. The Queen of Sheba visits King Solomon in the third act. “The Arrival of the Queen of Sheba” was originally scored for flutes, violins, violas, cellos, and basses.

“**Abstract and Dance**” is a kind of rendered piece. The first movement develops in the direction of twelve tone music which suddenly changes into a stylized Spanish dance in the second part. Born in Delft, Gijs van Dijk studied composition and music theory with Tristan Keuris at the Hilversum and Utrecht Conservatory. He works as a composer, an improvising musician, a classical & jazz guitar player and teacher in Amsterdam. van Dijk has worked with many leading Dutch musicians, mainly as a composer for chamber music ensembles but also in various improvised music ensembles.

Antonio Vivaldi composed **The Four Seasons** in 1723 and published them as a set of 4 violin concertos (with three movements each) in 1725. They were inspired by four sonnets, which most authorities believe Vivaldi wrote himself.

### Winter – Concerto in f-minor

#### **Allegro non molto**

*Aggiacciato tremar trà neri argenti  
Al Severo Spirar d' orrido Vento,  
Correr battendo i piedi ogni momento;  
E pel Soverchio gel batter i denti;*

#### **Largo**

*Passar al foco i di quieti e contenti  
Mentre la pioggia fuor bagna ben cento*

#### **Allegro**

*Caminar Sopra 'l ghiaccio, e à passo lento  
Per timor di cader gersene intenti;  
Gir forte Sdruzziolar, cader à terra  
Di nuove ir Sopra 'l ghiaccio e correr forte  
Sin ch' il ghiaccio si rompe, e si disserra;  
Sentir uscir dalle ferrate porte  
Sirocco Borea, e tutti i Venti in guerra  
Quest' è 'l verno, mà tal, che gioja apporte.*

### Winter – Concerto in f-minor

#### **Allegro non molto**

*Shivering, frozen mid the frosty snow in biting,  
stinging winds;  
running to and fro to stamp one's icy feet, teeth  
chattering in the bitter chill.*

#### **Largo**

*To rest contentedly beside the hearth, while those  
outside are drenched by pouring rain.*

#### **Allegro**

*We tread the icy path slowly and cautiously, for  
fear of tripping and falling.  
Then turn abruptly, slip, crash on the ground and,  
rising, hasten on across the ice lest it cracks up.  
We feel the chill north winds coarse through the  
home despite the locked and bolted doors...  
this is winter, which nonetheless brings its own  
delights.*

Manuel de Falla’s “**La Vida Breve**” (*life is short or the brief life*) is a one hour opera in two acts and four scenes, first performed in Nice in 1913. There is as much instrumental as vocal music in this work. The Danse Espagnole, part of the wedding celebrations, was made famous as a violin showpiece by Fritz Kreisler. Incidentally de Falla wrote only one piece for guitar --- a solo Homenaje Le Tombeau De Claude Debussy.

As far as we know, there is no commercial recording of the half-hour long **Grand Potpourri National**. So rare it is to find a piece that’s a joint collaboration two composers, and in this case, two virtuoso performers, too. Hummel, a student of Mozart and a teacher of Mendelssohn, was a famous concert pianist who had written a Potpourri on famous opera themes for piano and guitar.

Together with the celebrated guitarist Giuliani, this potpourri on national anthems was born and played in the Dukaten Concert Series at the gardens of the Schönbrunn Palace in Vienna.

**About Bekkers Piano Guitar Duo**

When musicians meet, they want to play music together. When pianist Anne Ku and guitarist Robert Bekkers met in Spring 2001 in Amsterdam, they owned only one piece arranged for keyboard and guitar --- Vivaldi's Guitar Concerto in D Major. Thus began their quest for piano and guitar music.

Born in Brunei of Chinese parents, Anne Ku grew up on the island of Okinawa, Japan. She won a full scholarship to study at Duke University where she gave her senior recital of French impressionist works. Anne furthered her studies in London and more recently graduated from Utrecht Conservatory in composition. She specialises in the teaching of sight reading, the subject of her teaching diploma. She also has a duo with French horn.

Born near Eindhoven, Robert Bekkers obtained his performance and teaching degrees in classical guitar from Maastricht Conservatory. He has toured with the Berdien Stenberg Orchestra, Amstel Guitar Quartet, and other ensembles. Besides his duo with Anne Ku, he is also active as a chamber musician in several duos and accompanying choirs and singers. His solo programme includes works such as Bach's Chaconne and Leo Brouwer's Dacameron Noire.

Bekkers Piano Guitar Duo founded their own concert series in Utrecht, the 4<sup>th</sup> largest city in the Netherlands also famous for the International Liszt Piano Competition that takes place every three years. The Monument House Concert Series at <http://www.pianoguitar.com/concerten/> is known for its international diversity, 20 nationalities at the last house concert in which some 80 guests attended the 4 different chamber music concerts held in May 2010.



More information about the duo at <http://www.pianoguitar.com>