

About the Bekkers Piano Guitar Duo

The PIANO and GUITAR, two of the most popular instruments, once accompanied each other in 19th century chamber music. Nowadays it is a rare but special occasion to see this unusual combination in the classical music scene.

Anne Ku and Robert Bekkers formed their **PIANO GUITAR DUO** in 2001, reviving this almost forgotten tradition of music making. This once favourite pastime of bringing together performers, composers and enthusiastic audiences has left a largely untapped legacy of published music specifically written for the piano and guitar.

Next concerts:

Sunday 20 September 2009 at 12 noon: Oosterkerk, Amsterdam (free)

Saturday 26 September 2009 at 20:00: House concert in Amsterdam (reservations)

More at <http://www.pianoguitar.com>

About Robert Bekkers, guitar

A graduate of the Conservatory of Maastricht, **Robert Bekkers** also studied contemporary music with Angelo Gilardino in Italy. While accompanying flamenco dance classes, Robert formed the group "IMPETU" consisting of 9 musicians and dancers, mixing flamenco and classical music. He has toured with Serenata Mexicana, Amstel Guitar Quartet, and Berdien Stenberg Orchestra. Since 2001, he and pianist Anne Ku have taken their Piano Guitar Duo to London, North Cyprus, Cape Town, Italy, Spain, Houston and Hawaii, and throughout the Netherlands. Bekkers plays a 2005 Jeroen Hilhorst concert guitar, custom-made for the duo. Robert is actively involved in chamber music with mezzo-soprano, flute, violin, choir, and another guitar, as well as arranging music for his various chamber groups.

About Anne Ku, piano

Born in Brunei of Chinese parents, **Anne Ku** studied piano under Betsy Hermann in Okinawa and Randall Love at Duke University. She began accompanying choirs from age 12, followed soon after by wedding engagements as pianist and organist. A graduate of London Business School and London School of Economics, she brings her passion for producing thematic house concerts from Houston and London to the Netherlands. Anne concluded her composition studies in June 2008 at Utrecht Conservatory with a premiere of her second chamber opera, Culture Shock! and a piano teaching thesis on sight-reading. She reviews operas, competitions, and music festivals for Le Bon Journal, an online publication she founded in 2001. In March 2009, she launched a new blog about her piano guitar duo, at <http://www.pianoguitar.com/blog>

Bekkers and Ku founded the **Monument House Concert Series** in 2006, a private nonsmoking venue for masterclasses, workshops, recital and bi-annual thematic house concerts. The next event is on Saturday 3 October 2009, with guitar masterclass and workshop followed by an evening concert programme by South African guitarist Derek Gripper. Details and reservations at <http://www.pianoguitar.com/concerten/>

Utrecht Uitfeest

zondag 13 september 2009

13:00 – 13:30

Centrum Muziek XXI

Loevenhoutsedijk 103, Utrecht

Bekkers Piano Gitaar Duo

-Pull, pluck, strum, bang!-

Robert Bekkers, guitar -- Anne Ku, piano

Abstract and Dance (2007)

Gijs van Dijk (b. 1954)

When Bach, Stravinsky and The Who Met (2005)

Allan Segall (b. 1959)

Drizzle (2007)

Lan-Chee Lam (b. 1982)

Suite Rio de la Plata (2004)

Erik Otte (b. 1955)

Danza de la pareja enamorada, lento ma non troppo
Candombe del amor recuperado, allegro giusto

Abstract and Dance (2007)**Gijs van Dijk (b. 1954)**

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.

“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.

When Bach, Stravinsky and The Who Met (2005)**Allan Segall (b. 1959)**

Born in Brooklyn, New York, Dutch/American composer Allan Segall grew up in Denver, Colorado, and has most recently served as Concert Director at the Engelse Kerk in Amsterdam where he lives. He received his Doctorate of Musical Arts from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He acquired Dutch citizenship in 2007.

Segall wrote "When JS Bach, Igor Stravinsky and The Who Met" for the Baby Boomer Generation and those young at heart who love The Who. This amazing work is a synthesis of art music and rock, a work where the guitar actually surpasses the piano in volume as guitarist demonically strums to an exhilarating climax that recalls Segall's favorite Who album, *Tommy*.

Drizzle (2007)**Lan-Chee Lam (b. 1982)**

Born in Hong Kong, Lan-Chee Lam's music often combines traditional Chinese and contemporary Western techniques, exploring new dimensions of the sound world. Her works have been performed in Hong Kong, Canada, United States and Italy. She is currently pursuing a DMA at University of Toronto.

Drizzle, as in light rain, makes use of guitar harmonics and the insides of a grand piano. There are pentatonic passages which make the piano sound like a Chinese instrument. Lam wrote, “The main challenge of writing for guitar and piano is the balance issue. Therefore, I try to use more high register from the piano which has a thinner sound. It surprisingly works well with the guitar harmonics, as well as the inside piano plucking. This sounds like the bell. The main idea for writing Drizzle is to reflect the beauty of light rain with its transparent texture.”

Suite Rio de la Plata (2004)**Erik Otte (b. 1955)**

Born in Leiden, home to the oldest university in the Netherlands, Erik Otte played the violin as a child but made his final choice for guitar at age 16. After graduating from the Royal Conservatory (The Hague) and the Conservatory of Rotterdam, he followed an international performance career before settling into composing for chamber music in recent years.

Suite Rio de la Plata, which consists of four dance movements about the various stages of love (from heart break to new love), was written for Anne Ku and Robert Bekkers as a present. It is the first work dedicated to the duo.

Abstract and Dance**Gijs van Dijk (1954)**

Gijs van Dijk studeerde compositie en muziek theorie bij Tristan Keuris aan het Conservatorium van Hilversum en Utrecht. Hij werkt als componist, improvisatieartiest, klassiek- en jazzgitarist en muziekdocent in Amsterdam. Van Dijk schrijft vooral muziek voor bestaande kamermuziekensembles, maar is als gitarist ook zeer actief in verschillende improvisatiegroepen.

“Abstract and Dance” is een soort ‘gerendered’ muziekstuk. Het eerste deel ontwikkelt zich in de richting van 12-toonmuziek en verandert dan plots in een gestileerde Spaanse dans tijdens het tweede deel.

When Bach, Stravinsky and The Who Met (2005)**Allan Segall (1959)**

Geboren in Brooklyn, New York is Allan als Amerikaanse componist sinds 2007 genaturaliseerde Nederlander. Niet al te lang geleden was hij nog concert director bij de Engelse Kerk in Amsterdam, waar hij resideert. Zijn Doctorate of musical Arts behaalde hij bij University of Illinois te Urbana-Champaign

Segall schreef "When JS Bach, Igor Stravinsky and The Who Met" voor de “Baby-boom’ generatie, maar ook voor “the Who” fans. Dit fascinerende werk is een synthese van rock en ‘kunst’muziek. In dit muziekstuk passeert de gitaar zelfs de piano in volume wanneer de gitarist in demonische slagritmes een climax bereikt die herinneringen oproept aan Segall’s favoriete Who album: “Tommy”.

Drizzle (2007)**Lan-Chee Lam (1982)**

Lan-Chee, geboren in Hong-Kong, onderzoekt nieuwe klanken in haar muziek door de traditionele Chinese muziek te combineren met hedendaagse westerse technieken. Haar werken zijn veelvuldig uitgevoerd in Hong-Kong, Canada, de Verenigde Staten en Europa. Momenteel studeert ze aan de Universiteit van Toronto voor haar DMA.

Drizzle, als in druilerige regen, gebruikt onder andere gitaar harmonieën en het tokkelen van de pianosnaren. Ook hoorbaar zijn pentatonische passages als van een Chinees instrument. “De grootste uitdaging bij het schrijven voor piano en gitaar is de balans. Ik laat de piano een hoog register spelen, waar het geluid dunner is. Dit werkte verbazend goed met de harmonieën van de gitaar. Net zoals het plukken van de snaren. Dit klinkt als belletjes. Het idee achter Drizzle is om de schoonheid van lichte regenval met zijn transparantie uit te drukken.”

Suite Rio de la Plata (2004)**Erik Otte (1955)**

Erik Otte is geboren in Leiden, de oudste universiteitsstad van Nederland. Als kind speelde hij viool, maar koos op 16-jarige leeftijd voor de gitaar. Na het afsluiten van zijn opleiding aan het Koninklijk Conservatorium te Den Haag volgde een internationale carrière als concerterend gitarist. Tegenwoordig richt Otte zich op het componeren van kamermuziek en lesgeven.

Suite Rio de la Plata, in vier delen die verhalen over de verschillende stadia van de liefde (van scheiden tot nieuwe liefde) is opgedragen aan Anne Ku en Robert Bekkers. Hiermee was het tegelijk ook het eerste aan het duo opgedragen stuk.