

DUO PEHLIVANLI & SAFONOVA

ESRA PEHLIVANLI Viola
ANASTASIA SAFONOVA Piano



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The Viola & Piano duo by Esra PEHLIVANLI and Anastasia SAFONOVA was founded in 2002. Since then the duo has been giving numerous performances in Europe and Asia.

PEHLIVANLI (Turkey, 1977) studied with the eminent violist Mikhail Kugel and holds diplomas of Master Degree from the *Gent Conservatory* in Belgium and the *Maastricht Conservatory* in the Netherlands, finishing both degrees with the highest distinction. SAFONOVA (Russia, 1976) received her first piano lessons at the age of 4 from Musa Denisova. 8 years later was her successful début performance of Mendelssohn piano concerto with the Moscow Junior Symphonic Orchestra. She graduated cum laude from the Gnessins Institution in Moscow and completed her Master degree by Naum Grubert at the Royal Conservatoire in The Hague (The Netherlands).

Both artists are prize winners at international music competitions. Esra PEHLIVANLI has been awarded several prizes such as the *Krzysztof Penderecki International Contemporary Music Competition* (Poland), *Torneo Internazionale di Musica* (Italy) and the first prize in *Premio Valentino Bucchi International Viola Competition* (Italy), where she also received the Medaglia del Presidente della Repubblica Italiana. Recently she was awarded as “The String Player of the Year “ in Donizetti Classical Music Awards 2013. Anastasia SAFONOVA received a diploma at the *International Cidade de Porto Competition* (Portugal) and appeared as a first prize winner at the *Gnessin Competition* (Russia), *Yamaha Music Competition* (Benelux), and *Yuori Egorov Foundation Competition* (the Netherlands). Since 2000 she is teaching at the *Maastricht Conservatory* (NL).

In 2011, the Turkish label A.K Müzik released the CD album “Power of Women” with the works by J. Brahms, P. Hindemith and R. Clarke. In 2012, duo celebrated the 10th year anniversary with an extended tour in China where they performed at the major concert halls of the country.

The Viola & Piano duo performs a wide variety of music from Baroque up to early 20th century. Most recent concert programs include a fine selection of outstanding masterworks by composers such as Schumann, Brahms, Hindemith, Clarke, Schostakovitch, Schubert, Milhaud, Britten and Rachmaninov.