

duets were played from memory. We invited them to our home the following day and asked whether they would consider teaching us. They replied that they had not taught before, but that if we would care to come to their home in Paris, Tennessee, renting a house for about two months, they would accept us. That was summer, 1959. We took our baby along, needless to say.

They were most helpful to us—Allison Nelson was an exceptionally musical pianist who showed us many technical approaches specific to piano ensemble. Harry Neal taught us much about making a concert career. Together, they suggested that we specialize in the one piano, four-hand medium, since all other touring piano ensembles in the U.S. were two-piano teams. The advantages were in 1) being unique in the American concert scene, and 2) playing whatever piano was available, rather than transporting two grand pianos, as they and most other two-piano teams were doing.²⁸

A dinner party in Huntington, Indiana in 1959 led to the acquisition of Weekley and Arganbright's first New York-based manager. A representative for the Community Concerts Series had arrived from New York for a fund-raising drive. She heard the Weekleys play at the dinner party and believed they would be well received on the company's concert circuit. Arganbright describes the popularity of the Community Concerts Series in the 1960s.

Community Concerts, a subsidiary of Columbia Artists Management (NYC), provided concert series for hundreds of communities throughout the USA and Canada for many years. One [representative] would go into each town, staying there for a week, running a fund-raising campaign for the following year's series and guiding the local presenters in choosing the artists for that year. Most of the artists under the Columbia Artists Management were available through Community Concerts, including many of the renowned artists of the day. A few artists would be invited each year to present themselves in a mini-recital before the NY 'reps' in the hope of being promoted in those communities. We benefited from being known to them by playing at one of their NY conventions.²⁹

The representative who heard the Weekleys in Huntington asked whether they could meet and audition for a friend of hers, an agent in New York City. They could not afford such a trip, but the agent was planning to visit family in Cincinnati, Ohio, over the upcoming Christmas holiday. The Weekleys decided that they could manage the drive from Indiana to Cincinnati to meet the prospective agent at her family's home. Again, they took the baby along. Their meeting with the agent was a success, and they signed their first contract with a New York management on January 1, 1960.³⁰

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Nancy Arganbright, email correspondence with author, March 24, 2009.

³⁰ Dallas Weekley and Nancy Arganbright, interview by author, Daytona Beach, FL, February 23, 2009.