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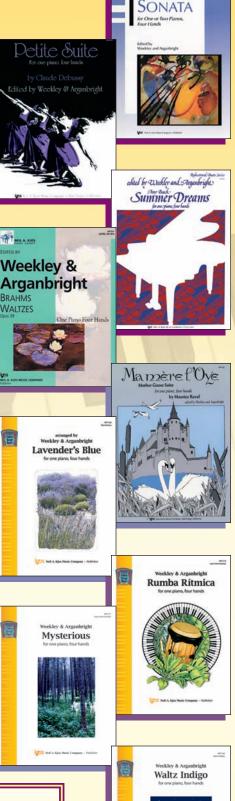
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Francis Poulenc

The Renaissance of the Piano Duet - An Interview with Weekley & Arganbright

Selections from the article printed in *Keyboard Companion*, Autumn 2005, Vol. 16 #3 Written and edited by Helen Smith Tarchalski



"Dallas Weekley and Nancy Arganbright are credited with the renaissance of the piano duet. [They] have performed more duet concerts than any other team in the history of the medium, and they have edited and published much of the duet masterpiece lit-

erature. Married [50] years ago, their story is one of dedicated teamwork woven throughout all aspects of their life, coupled with hard work and passion for the duet literature."

The History of Weekley & Arganbright and the Neil A. Kjos Music Company

DALLAS WEEKLEY: "We knew that if duets were to gain popularity, the music had to be available. For many years we had been disappointed that piano duet scores were sometimes poorly printed and edited. Many didn't even indicate whether the piece was original or a transcription or arrangement. Most of the composers, even the best ones, were more involved in compositional techniques than in being alert to problems of awkward or "clashing" hand positions. [Then,] we were approached by the Neil A. Kjos Music Company to collect and edit music originally composed for piano duet."

NANCY ARGANBRIGHT: "We began with three volumes called *Twice as Nice*, convincing Neil Kjos that score form (primo and secondo parts on the same page) rather than the old way of parts on opposite pages would contribute greatly to a player's understanding. We wanted our students to see the whole picture, and their own parts within the whole context. With score form, it's easier to help pianists analyze. Neil believed in us and began to print duets we had edited in score form, at great cost to himself."

General guidelines for introducing, teaching, and performing duets

DALLAS WEEKLEY: "First, it's important to understand that playing duets well is not just about staying together. Duettists must listen carefully to layers of sound when they practice, to think orchestrally with different colors for different instruments. They must listen carefully for balance and voicing, and how to respond to each other for a good conversational effect."

NANCY ARGANBRIGHT: "Teachers should begin duets very early in a student's lessons. Students must learn about listening carefully for exact rhythm and balance, and in their individual practicing, they must be instructed to sit as they will when they play with the partner as opposed to sitting in the center of the keyboard. We like to sit on separate benches angled slightly inward because this provides more elbow room and freedom."

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References and Texts

The Piano Duet – A Learning Guide (WP381) \$8.95

The definitive guide to teaching & performing piano four-hand music

The piano duet is an unparalleled opportunity to provide training in musicianship and ensemble playing, sight reading, rhythmic control, and independence. Weekley & Arganbright have provided teachers with the tools needed for effective teaching and for artistic performance.

Schubert's Music for Piano Four-Hands (WA1) \$23.50

A Comprehensive Guide to Performing and Listening to the Duet Music of Franz Schubert

Weekley & Arganbright have traced the development of the one-piano, four-hand compositions of Schubert, presented biographical and historical events related to their composition, and analyzed them from the standpoint of performance problems. This landmark reference work includes a valuable listing of selected books and articles, information on the manuscripts, first editions, available editions, and recordings.





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