

Duo poised for dynamic show

By Cam Fuller
SP Arts & Life Editor

They're a duo and, indeed, dynamic. Pianist Timothy Steeves and violinist Nancy Dahn do it all in the world of classical and modern music. The couple, who teach at Memorial University in St. John's, N.L., also record and tour. As Duo Concertante, they are just as comfortable with the towering classics as they are with new work that's never been heard before. In fact, one of their projects is Bow Ties, in which they play with two fiddlers. It's enough to leave more limited musicians reeling.

Variety doesn't just spice up a career, it sustains it through recessionary times. Teaching, meanwhile, gives the two the luxury of taking chances.

"It's going really, really well," Steeves said this week. The couple have performed in China twice, Europe and the U.S. After this weekend's concert in Saskatoon, they will be playing in France — sort of: The islands St. Pierre-Miquelon south of Newfoundland.

But Friday's show is a homecoming for Steeves, who grew up in Saskatoon, where his parents still live. He left for school at 18, studying in Ontario and Germany. Dahn studied at Juilliard and earned her doctorate in violin performance from the Cleveland Institute of Music. The two have two children aged 10 and 7, who are also musical.

Dahn and Steeves are the next guest artists in the Lyell Gustin Recital Series, named after the legendary Saskatoon piano teacher. There are fewer than six degrees of separation between Steeves and Gustin; his childhood piano teacher Tom Day was a Gustin student.

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Though they often commission new work, Dahn and Steeves have chosen classics from Beethoven, Prokofiev and Mozart for this concert.

"They're all big, big pieces for violin and piano," says Steeves. "We really stole the greatest of the repertoire for the concert Friday."

They'll manage, however, to also do a piece from their well-received new album *It Takes Two*. Their fourth CD, it features pieces arranged by Canadian composer Clifford Crawley. Their next album, as yet untitled, will feature the voice of CBC's Barbara Budd reading poetry.

Dahn and Steeves did their last Gustin series concert five or six years ago. The fact they've been asked back means they must have done well, Steeves laughs.

"We're delighted to be coming back."



Nancy Dahn and
Timothy Steeves
—Photo Supplied

Gustin House presents:
Duo Concertante
Friday, 7:30 p.m.
St. James Church
Tickets \$25 (students \$20)
www.gustinhouse.ca